



Overtourism and Covert Prostitution Practices: A Case Study in the Tourist Area of Lembang, West Bandung

Siti Nurbayani¹, Sri Wahyuni^{2,*}, Puspita Wulandari³

^{1,2,3} Indonesia University of Education, Bandung, West Java, Indonesia

*swyuni@upi.edu

Abstract. The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy has inspired the Indonesian government to develop 1,000 tourist villages, one of which is in Lembang, West Bandung Regency, known for its natural attractions and cool air. Although Lembang attracted 3.8 million visitors in 2023, it has the potential to experience overtourism, which could negatively impact the environment and local communities, including an increase in social deviations, such as covert prostitution. The aim of this research is to explore and analyze the impact of overtourism by identifying and understanding the covert prostitution practices associated with the phenomenon of overtourism in tourist destinations. To investigate covert prostitution practices and overtourism in the tourist destination of Lembang, this study employs a qualitative approach using a case study method. We collected data through interviews with sex workers, pimps, and villa caretakers, as well as observations at tourist locations. Research findings indicate that covert prostitution practices in Lembang have transformed from traditional physical locations, such as guesthouses and hotels, to digital platforms like the MiChat app. This technology allows sex workers to have greater freedom in choosing their locations and to rely on their own operational costs, such as boarding houses. In addition, the strategies employed by pimps and sex workers, such as intensive communication and meeting emotional needs, serve to create a satisfying experience for clients, enhancing loyalty and frequency of visits, becoming a form of hospitality in tourism. The increase in tourist attractions has led to a rise in demand for prostitution services, especially during holidays and weekends, becoming part of the overtourism phenomenon.

Keywords: Overtourism, Covert Prostitution, Transformation of Prostitution Practices, Tourist Destinations.

1 Introduction

The government took inspiration from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy's plans to develop 1,000 tourist villages across Indonesia [1]. However, the lack of necessary professional knowledge and skills hinders the evolution of this tourist village into sustainable tourism [2]. Lembang is one of West Bandung Regency's areas that responds to that policy. Lembang is located in a highland area and has many tourist attractions, supported by cool air and beautiful scenery. It's not surprising that the Lembang area attracts many visitors. The Tourism and Culture Office of West Bandung Regency recorded that 3.8 million tourists from various regions visited Lembang throughout 2023 [3].

© The Author(s) 2025

A. R. Cangara and S. Muhammad (eds.), *Proceedings of the Asia Pacific Sociological Association Conference (APSA 2024)*, Atlantis Highlights in Social Sciences, Education and Humanities 35, https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-680-2_7

Lembang has many tourist attractions, such as Bosscha, Puncak Pluncut, Dusun Bambu, Grafika Cikole, Floating Market, Orchid Forest, and Jendela Alam. At these destinations, the management has implemented visitor management through entrance tickets, policies for regulating visitor behavior, and the centralization of tourism activities [4]. This implementation has not been optimal because tourist activities have not been distributed to avoid overcrowding in one place while others remain quiet. This indicates that the effectiveness of the tourist visit flow in the Lembang area is not yet optimal and still has the potential to experience overtourism.

Local communities experience disruption due to the increasing number of tourists, a condition known as overtourism [5]. Overtourism is characterized by a rapid increase in tourist arrivals and density, posing a threat to the sustainability of tourist destinations. For example, in Bali, the tourism industry tends to exploit Balinese women [5]; fishermen and local guides are marginalized as they lose land and livelihoods due to the privatization of underwater natural resource wealth for dive tourism activities in Labuan Bajo [6]. Overtourism, a phenomenon characterized by high tourist numbers at tourist destinations, not only negatively impacts the environment, culture, and local communities but also contributes to an increase in social deviations. The 4S (Sun, Sea, Sand, and Sex) refers to the representation of social deviations in tourist destinations, particularly sexual ones. Tourists often combine the allure of cultural arts and hospitality with elements such as sunlight, beaches, sand, or even sex to draw them to a tourist spot [7]. Although elements like the sun, sea, and sand attract tourists for a fun holiday, the concept of "sex" can lead to some forms of social deviance at tourist destinations.

Prostitution, or sex tourism, has become a phenomenon in several tourist destinations, including Puncak Cianjur and Pangandaran. The presence of actors such as brokers who facilitate sex tourism activities is one of the factors that drives the continued existence of covert prostitution practices in these tourist destinations [8]. Covert prostitution practices often occur in tourist areas such as Songgoriti, Batu City, and Malang [9]. Prostitution in tourist areas occurs discreetly and not very conspicuously, making it difficult to detect. Villa owners and motorcycle taxi drivers (tour guides) often get involved in social networks that facilitate covert prostitution practices in tourist areas [9]. In Sleman Regency, Yogyakarta, salons, spas, and massage parlors frequently serve as venues for covert prostitution [10]. In Tanjung Pinang, taxis play a crucial role in the integration of covert prostitution with transportation [11]. Particularly, the Lembang region, boasting natural beauty and mountainous tourist destinations, experiences an average temperature below 24 degrees Celsius. This paper aims to explore the facts of overtourism and the depiction of covert prostitution practices in tourist destinations in Lembang, West Bandung Regency.

2 Method

This research employs a qualitative approach with a case study method as it seeks to reveal the unique characteristics of the cases studied in the tourist destination of Lembang. This aligns with the research objective of exploring the practices of covert prostitution and overtourism in the tourist destination of Lembang, West Java. Lembang's natural potential and tourism are key factors that draw visitors to the area.

In addition to having a positive impact, tourists' high interest also contributes to deviations as a result of overtourism.

This research utilizes an extension of Arikunto's framework, which encompasses person, place, and paper [12]. At the research stage, the researcher engaged and interviewed 4 sex workers (FF, 20 years old; MR, 22 years old; RK, 39 years old; and TW, 23 years old), 1 person who is both a pimp and a sex worker (BN, 48 years old), and 1 person (AS, 44 years old) who is a villa caretaker and also acts as an intermediary between sex workers and clients to gather data on covert prostitution and overtourism. The research is situated in the tourist area of Lembang, West Bandung Regency. The tourist destinations that are the focus of the research are Floating Market, Farm House, The Lodge Maribaya, Tangkuban Perahu, The Orchid Forest, and The Great Asia Africa. Next, in the paper stage, the researcher used a literature review from various sources to determine the indicators for the interview and observation instruments.

We conducted the research procedure following the steps of case study research, which include: 1) pre-research, 2) data collection (interviews and observations), 3) data reduction, 4) data presentation, and 5) conclusion drawing.

3 Findings and Discussion

3.1 The Transformation of Covert Prostitution Practices in Lembang from Physical Locations to the Digital World

Understanding this location is critical to contextualizing the processes and dynamics involved in the practice of covert prostitution in the Lembang area. Researchers discovered that prostitution activities take place in a variety of settings, such as guesthouses, villas, lodgings, apartments, hotels, houses, and boarding houses, depending on the preferences of the guests.

Covert prostitution practices have become commonplace at the building. An interview with BN (48 years, a pimp and a sex worker), revealed that the rental rates at Lodge X vary based on the location of the room and the duration of the rental. The rental rate for rooms in the front area starts at Rp100,000 for a duration of 3 hours, and around Rp250,000 for a full-day rental. In the meantime, guests can rent rooms in the back area for approximately Rp100,000 for a 4-hour stay and Rp150,000/Rp200,000 for a full-day rental. This variation in rates reflects the flexibility in meeting the diverse needs of customers. According to BN's account, when asked by the researcher if there were other lodgings besides Wisma X that were used for prostitution, BN mentioned Wisma Y. BN explained that Wisma Y is also a place for prostitution and is located very close to Wisma X, just about a 2-minute distance away. BN stated, "Yes, Wisma Y," confirming the existence of this alternative location.

Meanwhile, in other places, like whole villa rentals, AS mentioned that the rental rates are adjusted according to the budget of the guests. AS said,

"Tergantung sih, ada budgetnya berapa. Kan villanya ada yang 3000 (3 juta) Iyaa ada yang 3jt semalem ada yang 6jt itu tuh villa doang ga sama cewenya. Karena fasilitasnya kan muat buat 20-30 orang villanya. Kalo masalah cewe kan kadang cuman kayak saya butuh cewe untuk karaokean aja gitu." ("It depends; what's the budget?" Yes, there are villas that cost \$3 million. Last

night, there were villas available for \$6 million, but this price does not include the cost of the villa or the girl. The villa has the capacity to host 20–30 individuals. "Sometimes, it's as though I just need a girl to go karaoke with, you know?")

AS explained that renting a whole villa, which can accommodate 20–30 people, is rarely used for prostitution practices. Guests often rent this villa for enjoyable events like karaoke, requiring only women to accompany them. The use of this facility is highly dependent on the specific requests of the guests, indicating that rental purposes vary according to needs.

Other on interviews with the broker and four other sex workers, other locations frequently used for prostitution are villas and inns. As TW expressed,

"Ada, di luar banyak. Engga disini aja, ada di ciater banyak lah vila, di maribaya banyak vila. Terus kan disana juga, yang kaya mau ke ledeng juga kan, ada penginapan-penginapan gitu kan. Ada apartemen kan. Aku dulu punya apartemen, yang di dekat ledeng itu, itu lah. Aku pernah diurus disitu, cuman aku gamau, udahannya segalla dibawa. Sama laki-laki nya segala di bawa." ("There are many outside. No, it's not limited to just this area; there are numerous villas in Ciater and Maribaya. Continue your journey there; for those seeking lodging, there are accommodations and other amenities available, correct? There is an apartment, right? I used to have an apartment near that faucet; that's it. They used to take care of me there, but I didn't want to; they just took everything away. All the men were taken away.")

During an interview, TW disclosed that the Lembang area is home to a variety of covert prostitution practices. In addition to villas and accommodations, based on an interview with FF (20 years old), it was explained that FF usually works in Cimahi in various apartments and hotels without staying in one specific location. She moves from place to place as needed.

"aku biasanya di cimahi di apartemen, hotel, dan aku mah gak stay di satu hotel atau apartemen, jadi ya dimana aja. Kalau gak ya disini wisma ini harganya kalo kamar yang disini dari Rp 60.000 sampai Rp 70.000-an." ("I usually stay in Cimahi in apartments or hotels, but I don't stay in one hotel or apartment, so it's really anywhere." If not, then there's this guesthouse; the prices for the rooms here range from Rp 60,000 to around Rp 70,000.")

The flexibility of the work location demonstrates an adaptation to the demands and conditions in the field. This is supported by the statement of another commercial worker, namely RK (39 Years), which states that:

"Gimana orangnya sih itu mah, misalkan di sini ya di sini, kalau di sana yu main okey di sana. Jadi ga terus-terusan di sini. Ada pernah yang ke rumah juga." ("What's that person like, for example, here? If you're here, you can play okay over there." So, it's not going to be continuous here. "Someone's been to the house before.")

Meanwhile, AS (48 years old) explained that other locations commonly used for prostitution are hotels and boarding houses. This is due to practical and economic considerations. Renting rooms has become a popular choice because sex workers do not have to incur additional costs for a place, considering they already live there. In addition, with applications like MiChat, commercial workers can easily arrange meetings with customers right at their homes, which also offers advantages in terms of security and operational flexibility. AS said:

“Iya hotel, villa, kos-kosan di daerah sini mah. kalo sekarang kan kebanyakan di kos-kosan kebanyakan di daerah Lembang sini pada ngekos jadi langsung ke kosannya. Kan kalo kosan ga perlu bayar tempat juga gratis karena tempat dianya. Ada aplikasi michat juga jadi kebanyakan di kosan” (“There are hotels, villas, and boarding houses in this area. Nowadays, most people prefer to stay in boarding houses, particularly in the Lembang area, so they tend to go straight to these establishments. Well, if you rent a room, you don't need to pay for the place because it's free since it's their space. Also, most boarding house residents use the Michat app.”)

Upon closer examination, the MiChat application transforms covert prostitution in Lembang. Applications like MiChat demonstrate how technology facilitates covert prostitution practices in Lembang. Commercial workers do not hesitate to bring service users into their immediate surroundings, in this case, their place of residence. If traditionally the practice of prostitution in Lembang relied more on fixed physical locations, such as guesthouses and inns that offered rooms for short periods or a full day, this was before the advent of modern communication technology like MiChat. For example, Guesthouse X and Guesthouse Y offer different room rental rates depending on the length of stay and the location of the room, indicating that there is flexibility to meet the varying demands of clients. Commercial workers and distributors usually set up meetings with clients through more traditional channels, relying on direct arrangements on-site. This limits the mobility of commercial sector workers and concentrates their activities in certain places.

However, the emergence of applications like MiChat has significantly changed the organization and conduct of covert prostitution. MiChat allows sex workers to have more freedom in choosing their workplaces, no longer limited to homes or lodgings. For example, commercial workers like FF and RK explain how they can move workplaces according to customer demands and market conditions, ranging from apartments, hotels, to boarding houses. This application also allows commercial workers to directly arrange meetings with customers at their own residences, such as boarding houses, without incurring additional rental costs. This not only lowers operational costs but also improves security and privacy by enabling direct and more private meeting arrangements. The use of MiChat has transformed the covert prostitution business from a centralized model to a widespread one, demonstrating how digital technology can alter the economic and social dynamics in the informal sector.

3.2 The Role of Actors and the Flow of Service Demand Shaping Covert Prostitution Practices in Lembang

The demand for prostitution services in the tourist area of Lembang goes through several stages involving a number of key actors. These actors play a crucial role in connecting customers with service providers, creating an organized network. There are several key actors who play an important role in the practice of covert prostitution. One of them is AS (46 years old), who works as a villa agent and caretaker of Wisma X. AS clarified that he prefers to refer to himself as a "facilitator" or "arranger for the children" instead of a pimp, as he lacks direct control over the commercial sex workers he rents out. AS explains:

"Iyaa, bisa dibilang iyaa gitu yang ngelola sama euu apaa pengatur anak-anak lah kalo gitu mah. Hehehehe cuman bukan istilahnya bukan gremo. Kalo gremo mah kan misalkan jual sekian ke saya sekian. Bapak mah nggak yaa istilahnya ngasih ke tamu ikhlas aja ridho aja kalo mau ngasih terima kalo nggak gapapa, saling membutuhkan." ("Yes, you could say that it's similar to managing the children's arrangements or something similar." It's just that it's not referred to as gremo. If it were called Gremo, it would be equivalent to selling this amount to me for that amount. If they want to give, that's fine, and if not, that's okay too. We all need each other.")

In addition to AS, there is also BN (48 years old), who acts as both a pimp and a commercial sex worker in the Lembang area. BN is known as "the children's mom." for the sex workers who work with her. Both the US and BN have complete information about sex workers, and both play their roles with a flexibility that does not constrain the rented women. AS and BN are two individuals who act as intermediaries between guests and commercial sex workers in the Lembang area. AS explained that he is currently the main focus of the agent, considering that other agents are no longer active.

"Kalau agen lain sekarang mah nggak, fokusnya ke saya. Heeh gitu, jadi anak-anak kadang ke Bunda kalau nggak ke Bunda ke saya gitu. Sekarang mah kebanyakan aplikasi, kalau dulu-dulu mah nggak, door to door ke Bapak," ujar AS. ("It's okay if other agents aren't paying attention to me at the moment." So, the kids sometimes go to Mom, and if not to Mom, then they come to me like that. "In the past, it was different, going door to door with your father," said AS.)

The statement from the AS was supported by BN when researchers asked if there was anyone else playing a role like BN in the Lembang area. BN replied,

"Ohh nggak di sini, Bunda aja, jadi semua orang juga taunya Bunda aja. Jadi kalau ada apa-apa juga suka nanya ke Bunda, Bun butuh cewe aja gitu. Cuman Bunda kan udah jarang mau yaa, paling ini ada anak ini ajaa gitu. Karena ada Michat." ("Oh, you're not here, just Mom, so everyone only knows Mom." So if anything happens, they usually ask Mom, because she just needs a girl like that." But Mom, you rarely want to, right? This is solely about the child in question. "Because there is Michat.")

This sentence describes the US and BN's central role in managing the prostitution network in Lembang. In the process of requesting services, there are two service request

flows: *first*, the flow that involves intermediaries or pimps. *Second*, the flow of direct requests to sex workers through the MiChat application.

The *first* flow becomes one of the main mechanisms in the practice of covert prostitution in the tourist area of Lembang. Intermediaries and pimps play a key role in connecting clients with sex workers, ensuring smooth transactions, and organizing the necessary logistics. AS, as an intermediary, revealed that requests often come from hotel security, after which AS will send photos of available sex workers for customers to choose from. This reflects how organized and efficient the service request system operated by AS is. In addition to security guards, motorcycle taxi drivers often inquire about rental women from AS. The motorcycle taxi drivers serve as intermediaries connecting guests with the providers. Typically, guests will ask the motorcycle taxi drivers for information, who then contact AS to obtain details about the rental women. AS sees this as part of a fair profit-sharing system, as motorcycle taxi drivers also need to earn a living. This business is profitable for both parties. As explained by the US:

"Ada ojeknya yang nganter ke sana (tempat prostitusi). Jadi istilahnya bukan langsung ada dari tamu, ada perantara seperti tukang ojek lah satpamnya juga kan itu perantara dulu. Ada cewe ga dari satpam bilang gitu ke saya atau dari tukang ojek juga nanyain ke saya. Iyaa ke Bapak (tukang ojek bertanya), istilahnya cari rupiah juga lah mereka (tukang ojek)" ("There's a motorcycle taxi that can take you there." (tempat prostitusi). Therefore, the information does not originate directly from the guest; intermediaries such as motorcycle taxi drivers and security guards also play a role. A girl approached me, questioning whether the information came from the security guard or the motorcycle taxi driver. "Yes, sir (the motorcycle taxi driver asked); it's also a way for them to earn some money (the motorcycle taxi drivers).")

Motorcycle taxi drivers not only serve as intermediaries between guests and sex workers, but they also play an important role in transporting sex workers to the locations requested by the guests. Thus, motorcycle taxi drivers have become an integral part of the operational network, ensuring that sex workers can arrive safely and on time at the locations desired by their clients. This dual role illustrates how motorcycle taxi drivers significantly contribute to the smooth operation of covert prostitution practices in the Lembang area. Not only do motorcycle taxi drivers serve as security guards, but RK, a 39-year-old sex worker, also occasionally assumes the role of a driver, such as a bus or minibus driver, in the process of acquiring clients. For instance, when a driver acquaintance inquires about RK's friend's contact details, the driver will reach out to RK and inquire about her willingness to meet with the customer. If RK agrees, she will ask the driver to arrange a meeting with the customer. The role of intermediaries (US) and pimps (BN) not only ensures that transactions run smoothly but also prioritizes the comfort and safety of sex workers. This experience makes sex workers feel safe and protected. Sex workers feel more comfortable and confident with BN's neatly organized and guaranteed service.

The second trend is a direct request to sex workers through the MiChat application. Through MiChat, sex workers can now search for and choose guests according to their own preferences, indicating a significant shift in the *modus operandi* of prostitution practices in the area. MR (a 22-year-old commercial sex worker) explained that the

demand for services heavily depends on the sex workers themselves. Each sex worker's needs determine whether they choose to use intermediaries or seek clients directly. If they use intermediaries like the US or BN, they will receive a discount. However, if they find customers independently, the sex workers will receive the entire payment without any deductions. MR explains:

"Ya gimana kitanya itu mah. Kalo kita dicariin sama orang lain(tamu nya) pasti ada potongan potongan kek gitu. Kalo misalnya kita nyari sendiri, otomatisakan uangnya untuk kita(full)" ("Well, how about us then?" There will be pieces like that if guests are looking for us. "If we look for it ourselves, automatically the money will be for us (fully).")

Furthermore, AS, as an intermediary, also provides insight into the changes in the way sex workers operate today, which have shifted to application platforms like MiChat. AS explained that most sex workers now live in boarding houses, particularly in the Lembang area. By using boarding houses as their operational base, sex workers do not have to pay additional costs for a venue since they are utilizing their own living space. AS states:

"kalo sekarang kan kebanyakan di kos-kosan kebanyakan di daerah Lembang sini pada ngekos jadi langsung ke kosannya. Kan kalo kosan ga perlu bayar tempat juga gratis karena tempat dianya. Ada aplikasi michat juga jadi kebanyakan di kosan". ("Nowadays, most people in boarding houses around the Lembang area are living in them, so they go straight to their boarding houses. Since boarding houses don't require payment for the place, it's free because it's their own space." There's also the Michat app, so most people are using it in the boarding house.

However, this second path carries a high risk of criminality. In this regard, TW provides further insight into personal experiences involving security and risk. TW explains that although he sometimes receives direct requests from customers, he still has to be cautious given the high crime risk that exists.

The practice of covert prostitution in Lembang is a complex social phenomenon. This practice is not only about economic interaction but also about power, identity, and adaptation to the social environment. Individual choices, interactions with others, and social perceptions shape the identity of a sex worker, pimp, intermediary, or client of prostitution. For instance, sex workers may internalize their identity as "workers" through their interactions with clients and brokers, and their societal perceptions.

The negotiation of meaning and social identity leads to prostitution practices in Lembang [13]. AS and BN prefer to be referred to as "facilitators" or "child organizers" as well as "mamih" rather than pimps, which indicates an effort to avoid the negative stigma typically associated with the role of a pimp. By redefining their roles, the US and BN are trying to create a more socially acceptable identity. This is also evident in the way sex workers choose to seek clients through the MiChat app or through intermediaries, depending on their preferences and perceptions of control and safety.

The practice of covert prostitution in Lembang also involves various key actors, including intermediaries (AS), pimps (BN), motorcycle taxi drivers, drivers, and the

sex workers themselves, as well as utilizing digital technology such as the MiChat application. Each actor involved treats prostitution as a career they pursue, rather than merely a side job. Upon closer examination, in the practice of covert prostitution in Lembang, each actor has a specific role and function in maintaining the continuity and smooth operation of the prostitution network. This indicates the characteristics of a work organization that is quite structured, even though it is informal. For example, the US and BN act as intermediaries that manage logistics, clients, and sex workers. The role of the US as the "distributor" or "regulator of children" and BN as the "mother of the children" indicates an organized division of labor and leadership roles in managing sex workers. This structure is similar to the career hierarchy in formal organizations, where each individual has specific roles and responsibilities to ensure smooth operations. For sex workers themselves, it allows for work flexibility. Sex workers can choose according to their needs, whether it is using intermediaries that provide additional security and comfort or working independently to gain greater financial profit without cuts from intermediaries, even though this increases the risks of violence, fraud, or even exploitation.

3.3 Hospitality in Prostitution: Social Interaction Strategies to Create Comfort and Customer Satisfaction

Covert prostitution has become a common practice among service providers. It is also important to understand the strategies used by pimps, guests, and sex workers in building interpersonal relationships. This relationship not only serves to maintain business continuity but also to ensure trust and loyalty among all parties involved. The strategies used vary from intensive communication, meeting emotional needs, to providing personalized services. In this way, sex workers and pimps try to create a strong bond with their clients, which can ultimately increase the frequency and duration of their relationships as well as ensure a stable flow of income.

To maintain positive interpersonal relationships with both customers and sex workers, AS (Villa Agent, 46 years old) explains that he always behaves kindly towards customers. AS emphasizes the importance of friendliness and humor in interacting with customers, as well as avoiding any form of coercion toward them. Similarly to BN as a broker, the mothers of the children, and sex workers, BN employs the same approach strategy towards both guests and sex workers. BN emphasizes the importance of providing comfort to guests. BN always ensures that the atmosphere remains calm and undisturbed. BN is patient, especially when dealing with guests who require more time or have specific preferences in service. BN explains:

"Jadi ya, yang diliat sama tamu mah kenyamanan, ngga rusuh cenah jeung Bunda mah. Bunda mah orangnya sabar, emang iyaa sabar kadang kalo tamu yang suka lama mainnya atau mainnya keras sabar aja Bunda mah." ("So, the guests perceive a sense of comfort; they report that their interactions with Bunda are not chaotic." Bunda is a patient person; indeed, she is patient, especially when there are guests who like to play for a long time or play roughly; Bunda just stays patient.")

This approach makes guests feel more valued and comfortable, which often becomes the reason they choose to use the services again. BN implements a strategy that emphasizes several key aspects to PSK within its network. As explained by BN:

“Yang penting ke tamu nomor satu itu sopan, berbicara sopan kedua jangan ngeburu-buru, ketiga sabar jangan ada kata kasar itu kalo gitu tamunya nyaman. Bunda suka ngasih tau gitu ke anak-anak jangan mabok, ai rokok mah da umumnya gitu biasa”. ("The most important thing is that the guest is polite, speaks politely, doesn't rush, and is patient without using harsh words; if that's the case, the guest will feel comfortable." "Mom likes to tell the kids not to get drunk; smoking is just something common.")

BN also reminded that sex workers should not be drunk while working, even though smoking is considered a common and more accepted practice. By implementing these strategies, BN strives to ensure that guests feel valued and satisfied with the services provided, so that they will return as customers. The strategies used by sex workers in building relationships with clients vary, reflecting individual preferences and approaches. FF, MR, RK, and TW have their own ways of creating comfort for their guests. Researchers summarize several approaches taken by villa agents, pimps, and sex workers as follows:.

Table 1. Strategies for Approaching Customer Relationship Building

Informan	Interpersonal Approach/Relationship Strategies	Description
AS (Agen Villa, 46 Years Old)	Friendly and Humorous	AS always behaves kindly towards customers, often joking and never imposing. AS also follows the customers' wishes, as long as they do not involve illegal drugs.
BN (Mucikari and Commercial Sex Workers, 48 years old)	Polite, Patient, and Gentle	BN stresses the importance of providing comfort to guests, maintaining a calm atmosphere, and being patient, especially when dealing with guests who take longer or have specific service preferences.
FF (Commercial Sex Workers, 20 years old)	Pre-Service Conversation	FF prefers to approach their guests through conversation before engaging in sexual activities to avoid awkwardness and ensure the guest's comfort.
MR (Commercial Sex Workers, 22 years old)	Direct to Service	MR prefers to engage in sexual activities directly, without any small talk, because he is forced to do this job for money, even though he often feels disgusted by his clients.
RK (Commercial Sex Workers, 39 years old)	Chatting and relaxing	RK prefers to build relationships with his guests by talking about various topics, including health, and

often engages in drinking and smoking activities together without rushing.

Source: Researcher, 2024

Social interaction builds the process of meaning and identity formation, which in turn shapes the relationship between pimps, sex workers, and clients [14]. Pimps and sex workers use various strategies, such as intensive communication, fulfilling emotional needs, and providing personalized services, to create and maintain relationships with clients. The relationship between pimps, sex workers, and guests involves many emotional and personal elements in addition to transactional ones. Strategies such as "fulfilling emotional needs" and "intensive communication" indicate that these interactions are not just about the services provided, but also about how each party interprets their interaction.

The concept of hospitality helps us understand the strategies built around the practice of covert prostitution in tourism development. Hospitality plays a crucial role in the development of tourism. The implementation of hospitality concepts can enhance customer satisfaction, generate significant economic benefits, and promote sustainability in tourist destinations [15]. Hospitality encompasses elements such as personal service, warmth, special relationships, attention to detail, and a sense of comfort [15]. Understanding the application of guest service principles in the interaction between sex workers and their clients is crucial in the practice of prostitution. Creating customer experiences is critical to ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. This also applies in the context of prostitution, where sex workers use various strategies to create a positive experience for their clients.

3.4 Overtourism and the Increase of Covert Prostitution: A Case Analysis during Long Holidays and Weekends

According to an interview with AS, a villa agent, overtourism significantly increases the demand for prostitution services during holiday periods like long holidays or weekends. As the US explained:

"Iyaa libur juga rame, istilahnya mah gini Teh kalo semua perhotelan 90% pasti dipake ginian. Apalagi libur panjang, hari libur Sabtu Minggu. Ga mungkin lah pokoknya semua hotel ada aja. Seperti hotel family ini kan euuu khusus buat keluarga tapi kenapa banyak cewe gituan juga. Sebetulnya kan setahu saya kalo family itu khusus keluarga, ini mah kata saya juga untuk hotel mah 90% pasti dipake nakal lah gitu istilahnya. Ga mungkin nggak" ("Yes, holidays are also packed; it's like this; if all the hotels are 90% booked, it's definitely for this kind of thing." This is particularly true during the extended weekend breaks and long holidays. It's impossible; there are definitely hotels everywhere. It appears as though this family hotel is intended for families; however, why are there so many girls who match this description? Actually, as far as I'm aware, the term "family" specifically refers to family, but I believe that in the context of hotels, it's highly likely to be used in a playful manner. "Is it possible or not?")

In addition, the US also expressed the opinion that the increase in the number of tourists affects the level of demand for prostitution services. The US stated:

"Iyaa menurut Bapak ngaruh atuh Teh soalnya kan sekarang macet liburan terus pada hari raya, otomatis saya mah berhenti dulu aja. Pokoknya yang minta cewe di hari raya jarang saya bales soalnya kan saya euu apaa di jalan juga banyak yang lebih cari villa nya aja." ("Yes, according to you, it does have an effect, especially since it's currently congested with holiday traffic during the festive season. So, I think I'll just stop for now." "Basically, I rarely respond to requests for a girl on holidays because, you know, there are many others on the road who are just looking for their villa.")

The statement from the US indicates an increase in the demand for prostitution during long holidays and weekends. Overtourism, a phenomenon that arises when the number of tourists surpasses a destination's capacity, drives up the demand for entertainment services, including prostitution. BN supports the US statement, noting fluctuations in the demand for prostitution services during holidays. BN said:

"Ga nentu sih, kadang kalo lagi libur panjang rame yaa rame, tapi kalo biasa aja yaa biasa aja. Soalnya suka ada razia". ("It's really crowded, you know? Sometimes during long holidays it's super busy, but on regular days it's just normal. That's because there are often inspections.")

Despite the increase in demand during the holiday period, interviews with BN indicate that the demand for prostitution services is fluctuating and not always stable. Unexpected tourist surges can create unstable market conditions. External factors such as crackdowns or increased long-term surveillance can also affect the demand for entertainment services, illustrating how overtourism impacts the volume and stability of the entertainment service market, including prostitution. Similarly, MR shares the same opinion that Eid and New Year's Day are quite busy days in terms of service demand. MR explains:

"ngaruh, kalau misalnya lebaran rame, tahun baru rame." ("It affects, for example, if Eid is crowded, New Year is crowded.")

During holiday periods, the demand for prostitution services increases, particularly during the night of takbir. According to the informant, earnings can reach 3 million rupiah or more in one night. Despite the relatively small number of customers, typically two or three, generating that revenue, the amount holds significant value as it could potentially contribute to holiday allowance money (Tunjangan Hari Raya OR THR). The informant stated:

"Kalau misalkan iya hari libur itu orang-orang, terus yang paling okey gitu ya pas takbiran. Itu bisa dapet 3 juta lebih. Cuman ga beberapa banyak orang segitu juga, cuman dua atau tiga tapi kenapa sebanyak itu mungkin THR lah ieu gitu. Makannya pas hari H nya aku ngasih lah ke keluarga ke sodara-sodara

gitu aku mah. Nah dari situ kebanyakan mah, karena meren THR." ("People are out on holidays, and the best time is takbir." It can reach more than 3 million. It's just that there are only a few people, two or three, but why is it so many? Maybe it's the holiday bonus. That's it. So on the day itself, I gave some to my family and relatives, you know."Well, that's mostly it, because I'm thinking about the holiday bonus.")

RK has had a similar experience with the increase in demand for prostitution services on weekends. On those days, RK frequently receives calls for services at the villa. RK explains:

"Weekend paling, banyak panggilan di villa. Dapet telpon, ini ada tamu di villa, karaokean sambil berendam lah. Kadang kan kalau pulang lah, ga akan lupa." ("Last weekend, there were a lot of calls at the villa. I got a phone call saying there are guests at the villa singing karaoke while soaking in the tub." "Sometimes when I go home, I won't forget.")

RK's observation that activities like soaking in a villa and karaoke serve as customer attractions suggests that the demand for prostitution services often coexists with other forms of entertainment. This illustrates how the increasing number of tourists drives services at tourist destinations to meet various tourist desires. These additional entertainment activities not only extend visits, but also engage tourists more with the destination, even in negative contexts like prostitution.

This finding indicates that the weekend is a busy time for prostitution services at the villa, with activities such as karaoke and soaking being attractive to customers. It is evident that there is a close relationship between the phenomenon of overtourism and the increased demand for prostitution services in tourist destinations, especially during long holidays, weekends, and major holidays such as Eid and New Year. Based on interviews with various informants, including villa agents, pimps, and sex workers, it is clear that these times experience a significant surge in activity. Overtourism not only affects tourist destinations' physical capacity, but it also has complex social and economic implications, including an increase in prostitution activities in tourist areas.

In situations where tourist destinations experience overtourism, the increase in the number of tourists not only leads to a greater demand for services such as prostitution but also affects how local communities and tourists perceive and understand these services. In environments where tourist activities dominate, we can see covert prostitution as part of a broader "tourism service". Villa agents, pimps, and commercial sex workers (CSWs) are changing the way they interact with tourists, transforming it into more than just a money-making business but also a form of service that includes elements of hospitality. For instance, villa agents and pimps like AS and BN, as well as CSWs like FF, MR, and RK, are striving to create a comfortable atmosphere and provide services that meet the standards of the tourism industry. Customers view covert prostitution as enjoyable and tailored to their needs, transforming it from a mere sexual transaction to a part of a broader tourism experience.

During the holidays, the demand for prostitution services increases, indicating that both service providers and tourists are actively negotiating the meaning of the services they seek and offer. Tourists may view prostitution as part of a broader holiday

experience, while service providers see it as an economic opportunity to cope with local economic pressures caused by the increasing number of tourists. When both parties interact with each other, they create and discuss their actions' meanings. This influences the integration of covert prostitution into the tourism economy.

4 Conclusion

Overtourism in Lembang has caused covert prostitution practices to shift from physical locations to online platforms. This indicates adaptation to economic changes and technological advancements in the informal sector. The increasing number of tourists has led to a rise in demand for various types of services, including prostitution, which typically occurs in places like villas, lodges, and boarding houses. Digital technology, like the MiChat application, enables sex workers to be more flexible and reach a wider market without limiting them to a single location, thereby enabling this change. In addition, local businesses such as brokers, pimps, motorcycle taxi drivers, and chauffeurs are taking advantage of the overtourism situation to create economic opportunities in the informal sector, highlighting the socio-economic networks that are developing beneath the surface. Although informal in nature, these actors play a crucial role in connecting customers with sex workers and ensuring smooth operations and safety for the sex workers. In this practice, the organized network of various actors indicates a fairly structured working arrangement. Social interactions and the hospitality tactics used by actors to build relationships with customers influence the sustainability of covert prostitution in Lembang. As a result of overtourism, covert prostitution in Lembang illustrates how the economic and social pressures generated by an excessive number of tourists can affect local dynamics, drive the shadow economy, and transform informal business practices through technology.

References

1. A. M. Rana, R. A. Kinseng, M. Siwi, and Murdianto, "Perubahan Sosial Budaya Masyarakat Desa Wisata," *J. Sains Komun. dan Pengemb. Masy. [JSKPM]*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 186–198, 2023, [Online]. Available: <http://ejournal.skpm.ipb.ac.id/index.php/jskpm/article/view/1126>
2. A. K. Maulana and L. Qadariah, "Respon Masyarakat Terhadap Pengembangan Wisata Halal di Desa Kamal Kecamatan Kamal Kabupaten Bangkalan (Studi Kasus Masyarakat Kelurahan Kamal Kecamatan Kamal Kabupaten Bangkalan)," *Dinar J. Ekon. dan Keuang. Islam*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 96–109, 2019, [Online]. Available: <http://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/avatara/article/view/14919>
3. W. Pradana, "3,8 Juta Wisatawan Sambangi Lembang Sepanjang 2023," *travel.detik.com*. [Online]. Available: <https://travel.detik.com/travel-news/d-7131332/3-8-juta-wisatawan-sambangi-lembang-sepanjang-2023>.
4. A. Fadhil, E. Ervina, and E. Baharta, "Efektivitas Alur Kunjungan Wisatawan Pada Destinasi Wisata Di Kawasan Lembang Dalam Mendukung Pariwisata Berkelanjutan 2019 (Studi Kasus: Grafika Cikole, Floating Market, Dan Orchid Forest)," *eProceedings Appl. Sci.*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 1441–1449, 2019.
5. L. Krisnadi and S. Maharani, "How Overtourism in Bali Destroy Balinese Women's Livelihood," 2021, doi: 10.4108/eai.17-7-2021.2312027.
6. A. T. Alysia, V., Kurniawati, E.E., Aini, A.F., & Yudha, "Eksplorasi Sumber Daya Alam dan Ketahaan Ekonomi Lokal (Studi Literatur pada Destinasi Wisata Labuan Bajo).," *J.*

Econ. Dev. Issues, 2022.

7. R. Yustie, R. A. Ariska, and F. Purwitasari, "Tourism Development Towards International Competitive Tourism in Promoting The Economy of East Java," *J. Dev. Econ.*, vol. 7, no. 2, pp. 365–376, 2022, doi: 10.20473/jde.v7i2.31429.
8. T. Hidayat, "Peran Aktor dalam Pembentukan Image Destinasi Wisata (Fenomena Wisata Seks di Puncak Cianjur Jawa Barat)," *Univ. Gadjahmada Yogyakarta*, pp. 120–128, 2018.
9. O. Sukmana and R. Sari, "Jaringan Sosial Praktek Prostitusi Terselubung Di Kawasan Wisata Kota Batu," *Sosio Konsepsia*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2017.
10. M. Eriana, "Penegakan Hukum Terhadap Praktek Prostitusi Terselubung Di Kabupaten Sleman," 2020.
11. O. Indria, R. Mutiar, and D. Pengampu, "Taxi dan Prostitusi Terselubung Di Kota Tanjungpinang," vol. 4, no. Kpm 531, pp. 1–16, 2016.
12. A. Suharsimi, *Prosedur Penelitian, Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: Rhineka Cipta, 2002.
13. T. N. Derung, "Interaksionisme Simbolik Dalam Kehidupan Bermasyarakat," *J. Karakteristik dan Pastor.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 118–131, 2017, [Online]. Available: <https://e-journal.stp-ipi.ac.id/index.php/sapa/article/view/33>
14. H. A. Zanki, "Teori Psikologi Dan Sosial Pendidikan (Teori Interaksi Simbolik)," *Scolae J. Pedagog.*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2020, doi: 10.56488/scolae.v3i2.82.
15. P. Sariguna Johnson Kennedy and R. Lumbantoruan, "Pelatihan tentang Hospitality kepada Kelompok Sadar Wisata Danau Toba di Kabupaten Samosir Sumatera Utara," *Ikra-Ith Abdimas*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 83–90, 2024, doi: 10.37817/ikra-ithabdimas.v8i2.3149.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

