

Strategic Framework for Eradicating Prostitution: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach for Social Transformation

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Abstract

This investigation investigates the Pentahelix model, which involves government, business, academia, mass media, and civil society, in order to confront prostitution as a critical global social issue. The objective is to investigate the extent to which the socio-economic challenges associated with prostitution in the Baben area of Magetan Regency can be alleviated through cross-stakeholder collaboration. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews with 24 informants (including government representatives, business actors, academics, media, civil society, and former sex workers) and document analysis, all in accordance with a qualitative descriptive design. The results suggest that the Pentahelix model promotes sustainable solutions by promoting effective collaboration through education, economic empowerment, and social reintegration programs. The well-being of former sex workers is enhanced by this model through the transformation of social stigma, the preservation of rights, alternative economic opportunities, and social rehabilitation. The study examines the dialectical processes of internalization, objectification, and externalization in the development of collaborative strategies, drawing on Peter L. Berger's social construction theory. This study substantiates the Pentahelix model's efficacy in developing comprehensive interventions for prostitution and provides a practicable framework for policymakers and researchers to develop cross-sectoral strategies that foster sustainable social change, including the resolution of other social issues.

Keywords: Collaborative Approach, Multi-Stakeholder, Penta Helix Model, Prostitution, Social Transformation.

Introduction

Prostitution persists as a multifaceted social issue shaped by economic adversity, legal structures, and societal prejudice (1). Consequently, numerous individuals, especially women and marginalised communities, are compelled to engage in sex work due to economic desperation and the absence of viable alternatives (2). Research indicates that nations with inadequate social support systems exhibit elevated prostitution rates, implying a connection between poverty and sex employment (3). Indonesia has a substantial population of commercial sex workers, estimated at 40,000 individuals operating in 168 specific locales throughout 27 provinces and 76 districts/cities (4). Research conducted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) indicates that 98% of individuals trafficked for coerced sex works are women and girls, emphasising their specific demographic susceptibility (5). A published study indicates that nations with legalised prostitution frequently encounter

heightened levels of human trafficking, implying an unexpected outcome of regulatory measures (6). Conversely, New Zealand's decriminalisation model has demonstrated enhancements in the safety of sex workers and their access to health care, indicating that legislative approaches significantly influence outcomes (7). The findings underscore that the efficacy of regulatory frameworks and policy execution is significantly shaped by the ideological and pragmatic strategies employed in tackling prostitution. The global discussion on prostitution includes diverse regulatory frameworks such as criminalization, legalization, decriminalization, and the Nordic Model, each with distinct implications for human rights and social dynamics. The criminalization of sex work drives the activity underground, increasing the vulnerability of sex workers by restricting their access to health and legal protections (8). The Nordic Model (criminalizing purchasers and Decriminalizing sellers) seeks to

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(Received 18th July 2025; Accepted 25th September 2025; Published 31st October 2025)

diminish demand while safeguarding workers, while its efficacy in reducing exploitation remains contentious (9). Simultaneously, legalization in the Netherlands and New Zealand enhances worker safety and rights via labor protections, while also poses a risk of exacerbating systemic exploitation and human trafficking (10). In Indonesia, policies are predominantly reactive, resulting in the closure of localizations without reintegration, hence intensifying the economic uncertainties faced by former workers. Conversely, rights-based models like those in New Zealand provide empowerment, however issues of scalability and systemic inequalities persist (8).

Every type of prostitution regulation entails trade-offs. Legalization and decriminalization may enhance working conditions; nevertheless, they also pose the risk of perpetuating stigma or institutionalizing exploitation in the absence of stringent control (11). Legalistic techniques frequently neglect to tackle fundamental issues such as poverty, gender inequities, and insufficient economic alternatives (12). Notwithstanding the increasing endorsement of rights-based and harm-reduction strategies, the involvement of sex workers in policy formulation remains limited (13). Public health strategies are constrained by inadequate stakeholder engagement methods and insufficient long-term support (14, 15). These international experiences illustrate the inadequacy of sector-specific initiatives and advocate for a comprehensive paradigm. This study aims to assess the efficacy of the Pentahelix model as a collaborative and contextual strategy for tackling prostitution.

Prostitution, as the exchange of sexual services for remuneration, reflects the complexities of socio-economic conditions and is influenced by globalization, urbanization, and technology. Its evolution has shifted towards the online domain, catering to millennial consumers and reflecting the digitalization of economic transactions (9, 16). Although online platforms offer greater anonymity and autonomy for sex workers (17), legal and historical stigmatization continues to exacerbate their vulnerability to violence and exploitation, particularly among women (17, 18). Factors such as poverty, family instability, and social pressures (for example, in Ghana) drive individual participation, especially among adolescent girls

(11, 16), thereby reinforcing that prostitution is shaped by specific socio-economic contexts.

The regulation of prostitution remains a complex challenge, with on-going debates between criminalization, decriminalization, and legalization (8). The emergence of hidden prostitution in spas or online platforms highlights the mismatch between regulation and evolving realities. While decriminalization has been reported to improve the health and rights protection of sex workers in some jurisdictions (19), its effectiveness depends on local socio-economic and cultural contexts (10). Sex worker activism, such as the movement in New South Wales, Australia, has driven policy reform (20), yet there is no global consensus due to the tension between public health, human rights, and law enforcement (11). These activities call for a collaborative multi-stakeholder approach. Therefore, the Pentahelix model (integration of government, business, academia, media, and civil society) is proposed as an innovative framework to address the complexities of prostitution, which is also relevant to the objectives of this study.

The Pentahelix concept presents a novel collaborative framework that incorporates government, business, academia, media, and civil society to tackle prostitution. This concept establishes integrated governance through cross-sector synergies, in contrast to conventional fragmented techniques (9). Each stakeholder contributes based on their expertise, leading to policies that are more coherent and responsive to socio-cultural and economic dynamics. Research indicates that this strategy augments comprehension of local settings, increases services, and empowers marginalized populations, including sex workers, by facilitating their involvement in policy-making (12). Pentahelix grounded in Collaborative Governance Theory and Stakeholder Theory, advocates for inclusive decision-making with collective accountability, particularly beneficial for intricate issues like prostitution that encompass health, human rights, and socio-economic development dimensions (20). At the same time, the framework resonates with broader perspectives such as multi-level governance, feminist critiques that centre the agency of sex workers, and social transformation theory, all of which emphasise that sustainable change requires balancing state authority with

grassroots participation and rights-based approaches. Despite its theoretical promise, the application of the Pentahelix model in the governance of prostitution encounters numerous problems. Current research frequently overlooks inter-stakeholder dynamics and inadequately incorporates the viewpoints of sex workers (8, 20), hence constraining policy efficacy. Critics of the legalistic approach emphasize the necessity for the incorporation of social values, cultural sensitivity, and a rights-based framework that transcends the punitive paradigm (21, 22). Researchers have advocated for empirical studies on collaborative governance to tackle the underlying causes of prostitution while advancing social justice (9, 11). This underscores calls in the global literature for culturally sensitive, justice-oriented governance models that move beyond punitive paradigms while ensuring human rights and community legitimacy. This study seeks to address this gap by assessing the implementation of Pentahelix in developing innovative, equitable, and sustainable solutions that respond to the intricate reality of impacted groups.

The literature on prostitution often emphasises the efficacy of multi-stakeholder methods in tackling its structural roots (23, 24). Numerous studies underscore the significance of cohesive measures, encompassing legal reform, social interventions, and economic empowerment, to diminish dependence on sex work (25). The criminalisation of sex work frequently heightens hazards for sex workers by rendering the sector illicit and amplifying their vulnerability to violence (26). Countries that used the Nordic Model, which criminalises purchasers but not suppliers, did not observe a decrease in street prostitution, although the overall effects on the sex business were varied (27, 28). The research findings collectively emphasise the significant influence of policy design and governance structures on outcomes. Prior studies on local prostitution resolution have predominantly concentrated on legal and social remedies (29, 30), although frequently lack a thorough multi-stakeholder approach. Consequently, current regulations may poorly safeguard the rights of sex workers or insufficiently address the socio-economic issues that underpin prostitution (31). The criminalisation of activities amplifies clandestine operations, complicating regulation and

heightening the risks faced by sex workers (32). Simultaneously, the Nordic Model indicates a decrease in street prostitution; however it also reveals unexpected repercussions, like diminished access to health care and social assistance (33). Moreover, research on decriminalisation, exemplified by the New Zealand Prostitution Reform, indicates enhancements in worker safety yet does not adequately incorporate economic rehabilitation initiatives (34). This study defines “eradication” as a transforming process that reduces dependency on sex work, provides alternative revenue sources, and facilitates social reintegration. This shows that eradication requires sustainable societal change, not coercion. Similarly, “social transformation” refers to measurable changes at the institutional (inclusive policies and multi-stakeholder governance), cultural (reduction of stigma and increased public awareness), and social levels. These definitions help analyze the Pentahelix Model, which brings together government, the private sector, academia, civil society, and the media to create lasting, locally grounded solutions to localised prostitution. This article seeks to address existing gaps by introducing the Penta Helix Model, a comprehensive strategy that incorporates government, the private sector, academia, civil society, and the media to develop enduring, sustainable solutions to localised prostitution.

Unlike previous studies that predominantly emphasized legal frameworks or social interventions in isolation (29, 30), this research highlights the novelty of applying a multi-stakeholder governance framework to prostitution in Indonesia. Specifically, the contribution of this study lies in three dimensions: first, the empirical demonstration of how a multi-stakeholder strategy is more efficacious in tackling the localisation of prostitution than isolated legislative or social initiatives (35, 36), second, the emphasis on social transformation as the intended outcome of collaboration, rather than mere short-term interventions and third, the contextualisation of the Pentahelix model within the unique socio-cultural and regional setting of Baben, Magetan, which has been underrepresented in the global literature. By articulating these dimensions, this study seeks to investigate how the Pentahelix Model, through the integration of legal, economic, and social methods, can serve as a more successful

and sustainable alternative to single-sector interventions.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research methodology appropriate for investigating intricate social phenomena by documenting the experiences, perceptions, and interactions of participants within their natural context (37). This study applies the Pentahelix model to prostitution in Baben, Maospati District, Magetan Regency. This collaborative structure includes government, business, academia, media, and civil society. The research venue was chosen due to high prostitution rates and local laws against business closures. Officials from relevant government agencies (Social Service, Satpol PP as the primary law enforcement authority at the local level, Transportation Service, and local sub-district and village chiefs), community leaders (including religious figures and senior individuals), representatives of NGOs working on social advocacy and rehabilitation, health care providers involved in psychosocial support, and This diversified representation guaranteed that institutional players and directly affected populations were represented in the analysis, boosting the legitimacy and depth of the findings. The snowball sampling method was employed to identify and gather key informants directly engaged in managing prostitution cases in the region (38). The study comprised 24 informants, evenly distributed with four individuals per element, representing the five Pentahelix actors, in addition to four former sex workers from Baben. The selection of informants commenced with government representatives directly engaged in managing prostitution, subsequently expanding through snowball sampling methods. The inclusion criteria mandated first-hand experience in prostitution interventions, excluding individuals who declined to provide informed consent.

Data were gathered via comprehensive interviews and field observations, supplemented by document analysis to assure data triangulation. Before data collection, all participants granted informed consent following an explanation of the research aims and a guarantee of confidentiality. In qualitative data analysis, data were classified and structured into thematic patterns, thereafter evaluated comprehensively to yield significant

findings. The data analysis employed an inductive methodology comprising three stages: restatement, description, and interpretation (37, 39). Firstly, restatement facilitated the compilation and classification of data from observations and interviews, adhering to three criteria: model construction, model differentiation, and the dialectic of the penta helix model as articulated by Berger's theory. Secondly, description narrates a collaborative model aimed at addressing prostitution, grounded in the data criteria. Lastly, interpretation aligns with the theoretical framework of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann regarding the social construction of reality, which encompasses three principal stages: externalization, objectification, and internalization (40). This analytical approach identifies recurring patterns and themes that elucidate the synergy among stakeholders and their efficacy in the anti-prostitution campaign.

Results and Discussion

Collaborative Penta Helix Model for Eradicating Prostitution

Collective responsibility in dealing with prostitution localization, it is necessary to examine the role of each actor in the Pentahelix model involving the government, business world, academics, media, and society. This model emphasizes cross-sector collaboration to address the socio-economic impacts of prostitution through education, empowerment, and social reintegration. Furthermore, the role of each actor is seen in the Figure 1.

Nevertheless, collaborative governance in the Pentahelix model is not free from tensions. Conflicts of interest may emerge between law enforcement agencies prioritising regulatory control and rights-based organisations advocating for the protection of sex workers, or between religious institutions emphasising moral values and public health advocates promoting harm reduction (14, 15). Rather than undermining collaboration, these tensions highlight the necessity of inclusive dialogue, negotiation, and transparent governance mechanisms to balance competing perspectives. Recognising and addressing these conflicts strengthens the model's practicality and adaptability in complex social settings.

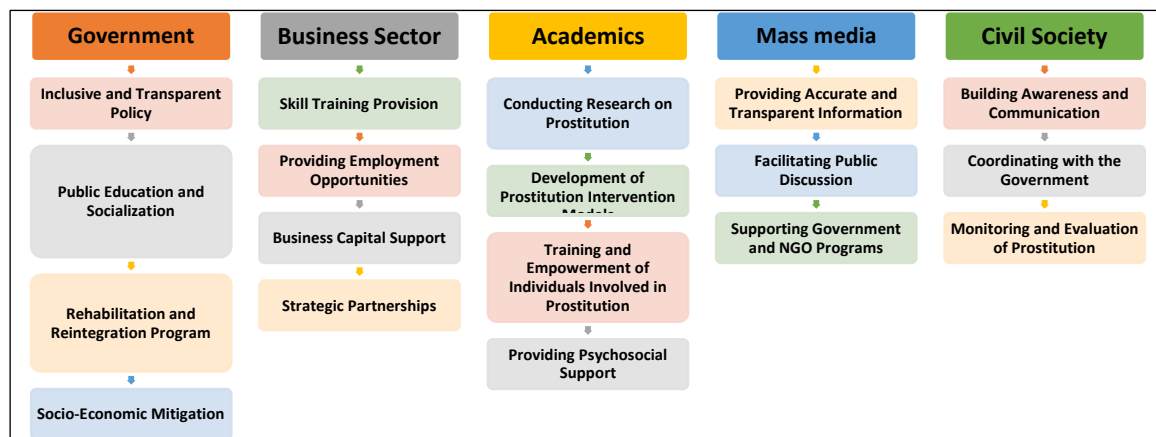


Figure 1: Pentahelix Collaborative Model

Collaborative approaches to the localization of prostitution require the synergistic involvement of all five sectors of the Penta Helix: government, business, academia, media, and civil society. The government spearheads the initiative by developing alternative programs, collaborating with NGOs, and promoting economic rehabilitation and reintegration. Meanwhile, the other sectors contribute through training, funding, research, media initiatives, and public oversight. The subsequent section outlines the specific roles of each sector.

The Role of Government in Eradicating Prostitution

The role of government in eradicating prostitution was found to encompass inclusive and transparent policy formulation, public education and socialization, rehabilitation and reintegration programs, and socio-economic impact management. In addition, the government collaborates with law enforcement and health care providers to ensure that policies are enforceable, protective, and responsive to the needs of affected individuals. An explanation of each of these roles is presented below.

Data were gathered via comprehensive interviews and field observations, supplemented by document analyses to assure data triangulation. Before data collection, all participants gave informed consent after being briefed on the research aims and assured of anonymity. In qualitative data analysis, data were classified and structured into thematic patterns, thereafter evaluated comprehensively to yield significant findings (41). The data analysis employed an inductive methodology comprising three phases: restatement, description, and interpretation.

“The first priority is to develop inclusive and transparent policies. We invite all stakeholders such as the government, community leaders, NGOs, and academics to collaboratively design a framework that respects human dignity while addressing the root causes of prostitution.” IR (43)

In eradicating prostitution, Megias *et al.* emphasized the importance of inclusive and transparent policies as the main priority. The policy must involve all stakeholders, including the community, NGOs, and academics, so that efforts to overcome it are more effective (10). This also requires the involvement of law enforcement agencies, particularly Satpol PP and local police, to guarantee that policy implementation is consistent with legal provisions while safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups. This collaborative approach allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the root causes of prostitution from a social, economic, and cultural perspective.

The eradication of prostitution cannot rely solely on coercive policies. A more comprehensive approach through public education and continuous socialization is required so that the community understands the negative social, economic, and moral impacts of prostitution. This is based on the following interview.

“Community outreach is very important. We conduct educational campaigns in local communities to inform residents about the legal consequences, public health risks, and the social impact of prostitution. This socialization effort is ongoing and supported by multimedia communication.” (IKLAN, 40)

Public education and socialization by the government are crucial to ending prostitution by

raising awareness of its detrimental effects. This is consistent with the findings (41, 43), that the main challenge for the government in designing policies is the excessive focus on moral aspects, while community outreach through educational campaigns has proven to be crucial, especially targeting men, which can reduce the rate of prostitution (42). Multimedia communication supports this method by spreading information more widely and efficiently.

Reintegrating sex workers into society requires comprehensive and durable rehabilitation and social reintegration programs (14, 20). The government regulates, provides rehabilitation, skills training, and psychosocial support. Local clinics, psychologists, and social health workers must provide medical, counselling, and psychosocial care for former sex workers to ensure economic, physical, and mental reintegration. The following interview result emphasizes the importance of a humanistic, data-driven approach and Pentahelix-wide engagement in these projects.

"We implement integrated rehabilitation programs through psychological counseling, skills training, and transitional housing. Reintegrating individuals into society with dignity and economic security is not an option; it is the core of our intervention strategy." (BA, 30)

The interview result reflects a comprehensive approach, encompassing social, economic, psychological, and other aspects. However, the challenge is that the individuals face negative stigma (44). Therefore, it is important to provide psychological support to help them build a positive stigma within the community (45).

The further role of the government in addressing prostitution is to conduct economic mitigation. Therefore, policies that support this are necessary (46). This is based on the following interview.

"We address the broader socio-economic impacts by supporting local businesses and community-based income alternatives. The economic shocks resulting from the closure of red-light districts need to be managed. That is why we work closely with both the formal and informal sectors." (SJ, 35)

Based on the interview, the government's role in socio-economic mitigation is collaborative. The government creates long-term solutions for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Therefore, an economic protection scheme for individuals involved in prostitution is needed (47). This is done to anticipate economic disparities (9). In this context, it is crucial to mitigate the economic impacts resulting from job transitions for those affected individuals.

The Role of the Business Sector in Eradicating Prostitution

In addressing the problem of prostitution localization, the business sector plays a critical role in supporting socio-economic reintegration and long-term empowerment for affected individuals. Through collaborative efforts with government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), businesses contribute to the rehabilitation process by offering practical skills training, employment opportunities, and financial support for entrepreneurship (48). An explanation of each of these findings is presented below.

One of the roles of the business sector in addressing prostitution is to provide skill training for those involved. Such skill training is crucial for encouraging individuals to explore new economic opportunities (49). This aligns with the findings from the following interview.

"We participate by opening up industry-based training access. For instance, we have collaborated with vocational institutions to provide practical internships for participants, particularly in the culinary and garment production sectors." (S, 45)

Based on this statement, the role of the business sector in eradicating prostitution through the provision of skill training represents a promising approach to addressing this social issue. Offering practical internship programs in the culinary and garment production sectors reflects concrete efforts to create better job alternatives. The involvement of the business sector in addressing prostitution is highly significant through the provision of training (50). This demonstrates that the business sector is not solely focused on profit-making but also actively contributes to community empowerment.

Another role of the business sector can be achieved by offering employment opportunities. By providing decent job opportunities, the business sector can be a tangible solution in diverting individuals from prostitution towards a more dignified life. This is based on the following interview result.

“We are committed to offering jobs to graduates of the program, provided they meet the basic competency standards. Our company has recruited several individuals from this program as part of our inclusive recruitment policy.” (NN, 34)

Based on this interview, the business sector can play a role in providing job opportunities for individuals involved in prostitution. This opens up a critical discussion on how far the business sector is able and willing to adjust its recruitment system to support marginalized groups without compromising productivity standards. On one hand, this approach reflects an inclusive recruitment paradigm that leads to social justice.

Another role the business sector can play is to provide business capital support for individuals involved in prostitution. Prostitution often stems from issues of poverty and limited access to decent employment. Therefore, the involvement of the business community in offering alternative economic opportunities through micro-financing, entrepreneurship training, and job creation can be a transformative solution. This aligns with the findings from the following interview.

“Some participants are more interested in starting small businesses. We assist them through grants and guidance, especially for businesses in the food processing, tailoring, or online trading sectors.” (SR, 42)

Within the Pentahelix framework, the business sector plays a strategic role in eradicating prostitution, particularly through the economic empowerment of former sex workers. The interview result reveals that many program participants are more inclined to start small businesses, so the business sector provides support in the form of grants and mentoring in areas such as food processing, tailoring, and online trading. This support not only serves as an alternative economic solution but also functions as a social reintegration instrument that restores dignity and self-reliance for individuals. The business sector holds significant potential for creating economic alternatives for former sex workers through job provision, skill training, and entrepreneurial support. Strategic partnerships between the business sector and other elements of the Pentahelix are crucial in realizing solutions that are not only repressive but also rehabilitative and sustainable in addressing the issue of

prostitution. This is based on the following interview result.

“We do not work in isolation. Our role complements what NGOs and local governments are doing. We usually participate in coordination meetings to align our support with their rehabilitation efforts.” (SA, 47)

The Pentahelix framework indicates that the involvement of the business community in eradicating prostitution is not merely symbolic participation but a form of strategic partnership that complements the roles of other actors such as the government, NGOs, academics, and media. This statement reflects the business sector's awareness of their position within a broader collaborative ecosystem. Their involvement in coordination meetings demonstrates a commitment to not act in isolation but to align their interventions, particularly in the aspect of rehabilitating victims of prostitution. In this context, the business sector can make a significant contribution through the provision of job training, entrepreneurial opportunities, and access to sustainable economic resources.

The Role of Academics in Preventing Prostitution

The academic sector plays a crucial role in addressing localized prostitution by providing research-driven insights, developing intervention models, and offering psychosocial training and support. Through rigorous scientific studies, academics investigate the socio-economic factors contributing to the issue, thereby helping to inform evidence-based policies and rehabilitation strategies (51). Each of these findings is elaborated upon below.

The role of academics in eradicating prostitution can be fulfilled through research related to prostitution, encompassing sociological, economic, psychological, and public policy aspects. The findings of such research can serve as the foundation for better-informed policies (18). This aligns with the following interview result.

“Our role as academics is to conduct in-depth research on this issue, particularly focusing on the socio-economic factors that lead individuals into prostitution. Our findings help inform evidence-based policies and interventions for rehabilitation

and reintegration.” (SR 55, Profesor-Universitas Negeri Surabaya)

According to this interview, academics' contributions to in-depth, evidence-based scientific study are important to ending prostitution in the Pentahelix framework. Strategically, this research can give empirical evidence to inform more targeted public policies and initiatives (11). In this context, academics act as the bridge between the theoretical and practical worlds, connecting scientific knowledge with the needs of society and the state.

Academics also create data-driven intervention models for sustainable policymaking. Therefore, higher education institutions must actively design comprehensive and contextual intervention strategies, whether educational, preventive, or rehabilitative, to address prostitution's core causes (52). This matches the interview outcome.

“Based on our research, we develop intervention models that can be implemented by various stakeholders, including the government and NGOs. These models focus on prevention and rehabilitation, and ensure that the models are adapted to the local context.” (MM 52, Profesor-Universitas Negeri Surabaya)

Based on this interview, the role of academics is to develop contextual and sustainable intervention models. The developed models focus on prevention and rehabilitation to restore the dignity of individuals trapped in prostitution (30). Furthermore, the adaptation of the models to the local context demonstrates sensitivity to social-cultural diversity and the complexity of the root causes of prostitution in various regions.

Another role of academics is to provide training and empowerment to individuals involved in prostitution. Holistic approach-based training can help enhance skills and open up new opportunities for those affected. Training and empowerment are essential to improve the dignity of individuals involved in prostitution (53). This aligns with the following interview result.

“We offer training programs for government officials and NGOs, equipping them with the latest theoretical frameworks and practical strategies to address localized prostitution. The program aims to empower stakeholders with the knowledge and skills to effectively tackle this issue.” (NM 52,

Director of the Community Development Center, PGRI University of Madiun)

Based on the interview result, the role of academics as active agents of social change through training and empowerment is highlighted. This is done to enhance the dignity of individuals involved in prostitution (54). The training programs they offer serve as a transformative space for stakeholders to access up-to-date theories as well as practical strategies relevant to the local context. This is where the key role of academics lies: as a bridge between knowledge and practice, between policy and social reality.

Another role of academics is to provide psychological support to individuals involved in prostitution. This support is crucial, considering that many victims of prostitution experience deep psychological trauma. Therefore, they require mental support from various parties (55). This aligns with the following interview result.

“Collaborating with local NGOs, we provide psychosocial support for the victims. Our work includes counselling, workshops, and group discussions aimed at restoring emotional well-being and aiding the reintegration process.” (MJ 41, Psychologist -Universitas Negeri Surabaya)

Based on the interview, the role of academics is concretely implemented through cross-sectoral collaboration. One of these is the important psychological support because victims usually experience psychological problems (56). Forms of support, such as counselling, workshops, and group discussions, demonstrate a comprehensive approach that prioritizes emotional recovery and social reintegration as the main focus.

The Role of Mass Media in Forcing Prostitution

The mass media sector plays a crucial role in addressing the issue of localized prostitution by shaping public perception, raising awareness, and facilitating open dialogue. Through accurate and transparent reporting, the media provides reliable information to the public about the legal, social, and economic aspects of prostitution. Additionally, the media can serve as a strategy for public education (57). Each of these findings is elaborated upon below.

Mass media plays a significant role in delivering accurate and transparent information in the fight against prostitution. By clearly communicating

information from social, economic, and health perspectives, it can be highly effective (58). This aligns with the findings from the following interview.

“We utilize various platforms to educate the public about the broader social and economic issues surrounding localized prostitution. Our campaigns aim to foster empathy, reduce stigma, and enhance understanding of the challenges faced by those affected.” (FD 37, Director of Communication, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology)

Based on this interview, the role of mass media in providing accurate and transparent information is highlighted. Within the Pentahelix framework, mass media collaborates with various stakeholders to address the root causes of prostitution, such as poverty, gender inequality, and limited access to education (59, 60). In this way, the role of mass media becomes more optimal in combating prostitution.

Another role of the mass media is to facilitate public discussions related to efforts in combating prostitution. Through educational public discussions about the eradication of prostitution, the process becomes more effective and efficient. This aligns with the findings from the following interview.

“We organize forums, talk shows, and community discussions to engage the public in conversations about the complexities of prostitution and its impact on society. These discussions help create a space for diverse voices and ideas.” (FR 39, Editor, Local News Office)

Based on this interview, the role of the mass media as a facilitator of critical and inclusive public discussion is highlighted. By involving various parties in the discussion, the media creates a deliberative space where diverse perspectives can meet (9, 14). In this way, the mass media acts as an agent of social change, promoting collective awareness and active participation in formulating fairer and more sustainable policies.

Another role of the mass media is to support government and NGO initiatives in the fight against prostitution. This can be achieved through objective and educational reporting. This aligns with the findings from the following interview.

“Our network actively supports government and NGO initiatives by raising awareness about their programs. We collaborate with these institutions to ensure that their messages reach a broader audience and are understood by the public.” (Ia 42, Senior Journalist, Local NGO Media Partner)

Based on this interview, the role of the mass media is to disseminate information and act as an agent of social change. The media does not merely report the news but actively contributes to building public awareness through strategic collaboration with the government and NGOs. In this context, the media serves as a catalyst that connects the actors within the Pentahelix—namely, the government, academia, business, communities, and the media itself—into a synergistic communication ecosystem.

The Role of Civil Society in Combating Prostitution

Civil society plays a crucial role in addressing localized prostitution through various activities aimed at raising awareness, facilitating coordination, and supporting sustainable rehabilitation efforts. Through outreach programs, advocacy campaigns, and media initiatives, civil society organizations work to build public understanding and reduce stigma surrounding those affected. Within this sector, religious leaders and local community groups also play strategic roles as moral authorities and agents of social cohesion, ensuring that anti-prostitution efforts resonate with community values and local wisdom. Each of these findings is elaborated upon below.

The role of civil society is to build public awareness and communication. Through education, social campaigns, and advocacy, civil society can provide a broader understanding of the negative impacts of prostitution (61). This aligns with the findings from the following interview.

“We play a crucial role in building public awareness about various issues surrounding localized prostitution. Through community outreach, advocacy campaigns, and social media, we strive to educate and inform the public about the importance of rehabilitation and reintegration.” (SA 34, Director of NGO, Social Advocacy Institution)

Based on this interview, the role of civil society is to build public awareness about the issue of

localized prostitution. Civil society can raise awareness about the health impacts of prostitution (62). Therefore, policies related to prostitution must pay attention to the health aspect (63). Strategies such as the use of social media become an effective channel for disseminating information and shaping public opinion that is more concerned with this social issue (43). Religious leaders contribute by embedding moral and ethical perspectives into public awareness campaigns, while community-based groups ensure that interventions are culturally appropriate and acceptable at the grassroots level.

Another role of civil society is to coordinate with the government. This coordination focuses not only on law enforcement but also on education. This aligns with the following interview result.

"We maintain strong communication with government agencies to align our efforts with their policies. By collaborating on the ground, we ensure that community needs are met and that our programs complement government initiatives." AA (42)
Community Organizer, Local NGO)

Based on this interview, the role of civil society in combating prostitution involves coordinating with various stakeholders. This collaboration is crucial as it is key to successfully addressing prostitution (64). Such cooperation allows the programs run by NGOs to complement and strengthen existing government policies. Community leaders, particularly religious figures, often mediate between government authorities and residents, facilitating trust-building and encouraging local participation in rehabilitation initiatives.

Civil society occupies a strategic position in conducting monitoring and evaluation. This role involves the collection of relevant data, provision of recommendations, and promotion of accountability at the policy and implementation levels (64). This aligns with the following interview result.

"As a religious leader, we actively participate in monitoring and evaluating the impact of these programs on the moral and social values within the community. We ensure that interventions align with ethical and spiritual principles, and we regularly provide feedback to government institutions to strengthen efforts in restoring dignity and guiding individuals

towards a better life path." (RM (57)
Spiritual Leader)

The interview says civic society monitors and evaluates. Morality and prostitution are linked. Civil society feedback to government enhances prostitution resolution. Community involvement in policy evaluation ensures that it meets society's expectations and is culturally sensitive, legitimizing interventions. Finally, specific initiatives are suggested to implement the Pentahelix collaboration. The government can prioritize inclusive policy reform, public education, and complete rehabilitation. Business may improve vocational training, entrepreneurship, and inclusive job possibilities. Academics can aid with evidence-based methodologies, skill development, and psychosocial support. Equitable media reporting can boost community awareness, public discourse, and stigma reduction. Civil society NGOs and religious groups can lead grassroots activism, assist reintegration, and monitor responsibility. The collaborative approach becomes a practical guide for sustainable social reform by linking these actionable stages to stakeholder responsibilities.

This study has significant drawbacks. Contextual limitations limit its generalizability to the Baben area in Magetan. The focus on commercial sex workers and selected stakeholder groups limits health practitioners, law enforcement, and community actors' perspectives. The study's qualitative descriptive design adds richness but doesn't measure impact. Therefore, future research could include comparative studies across regions, mixed-method approaches to triangulate qualitative insights with quantitative evidence, and longitudinal assessments to evaluate rehabilitation and reintegration programs' sustainability.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes the significance of a collaborative strategy utilizing the Pentahelix model in addressing prostitution in Baben. The results show that the synergy of government, business, academia, media, and civil society provides more sustainable solutions than partial or sectoral approaches. This establishes a theoretical-empirical framework that not only guides policymakers in designing contextual interventions but also demonstrates the broader

viability of integrated governance. While rooted in the socio-cultural and regulatory context of Baben, Magetan, the collaborative principles of the Pentahelix model may be adapted to other national or regional settings, provided local legal systems, cultural values, and institutional dynamics are carefully considered. The study has limitations, particularly its focus on commercial sex workers and exclusion of detailed health or law enforcement aspects. Moreover, collaborative governance is not without tensions, such as between law enforcement and rights-based organisations or between religious institutions and public health advocates. Recognising these conflicts underlines the need for inclusive dialogue and transparent mechanisms to balance competing interests. Despite these constraints, the study contributes a practical and adaptable paradigm for addressing prostitution and offers insights transferable to other complex social issues.

Abbreviations

None.

Acknowledgement

The author expresses gratitude to the Rector of the Universitas Negeri Surabaya for providing support on this research.

Author Contributions

All authors contributed equally to the conception and design of the study. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

Some generative AI tools were used by the authors to help with language refinement, improve clarity of speech, and check for coherence in academic writing while working on this manuscript. The authors confirm that the study team came up with all of the main ideas, including the research design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and conclusions. AI tools were not used to come up with new ideas, gather or analyze data, or come to a decision. The writers are fully responsible for making sure that the manuscript is correct, honest, and original.

Ethics Approval

Informed consent was obtained from all 24 participants in Baben, Magetan Regency, ensuring voluntary participation and the right to withdraw. Confidentiality was maintained through pseudonyms and secure data storage. No financial incentives were offered, and minimal-risk methods (interviews, observations) were used, with psychosocial support available for former sex workers. The study adhered to national and international ethical standards, respecting participants' dignity and rights. Ethical clearance for this study was granted by the Universitas Negeri Surabaya under approval letter No. 309/UN38/HK/PP/2024.

Funding

This research was funded by the Research and Community Service Institute (LPPM) of the State University of Surabaya through the Domestic Collaboration Assignment scheme in 2024, under grant number 309/UN38/HK/PP/2024.

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How to Cite: Sarmini, Faidah M, Winata MD, El Rizaq ADB, Kusmanto H, Sujatno. Strategic Framework for Eradicating Prostitution: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach for Social Transformation. *Int Res J Multidiscip Scope.* 2025; 6(4):1509-1521. doi: 10.47857/irjms.2025.v06i04.07030