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Social Realities and Efforts to Prevent Human Trafficking in Indonesia

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Abstract: Human trafficking is a transnational crime and a severe violation of human rights that continues to evolve with globalization and advances in digital technology. In Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia and Myanmar, a novel pattern of trafficking has emerged involving forced criminality within online scam operations, entrapping thousands of Indonesian citizens. This study employs a comprehensive literature review methodology, analyzing legal frameworks, international reports, government policies, and Islamic scholarly sources to investigate the factors driving human trafficking in the region and to explore its prevention from an Islamic perspective. The findings identify key drivers, including economic vulnerability, limited educational opportunities, inadequate state oversight, social and moral crises, and the exploitation of digital technologies. From the Islamic ethical framework, human trafficking violates core principles such as *karāmah insāniyyah* (human dignity), *ʿadl* (justice), *raḥmah* (compassion), and *ḥurriyyah* (freedom), constituting a significant social sin that undermines societal moral fabric and humanitarian values. Consequently, effective prevention requires a multifaceted approach integrating robust legal enforcement, international collaboration, public awareness initiatives, and the reinforcement of religious and moral education. The study underscores the necessity of harmonizing legal, social, and Islamic strategies to protect human dignity and support the rehabilitation of trafficking survivors.

Kata Kunci:
Kepala Lingkungan; Strategi Komunikasi; Mitigasi Konflik Sosial; Remaja; Tawuran.

Abstrak: Perdagangan manusia merupakan kejahatan kemanusiaan transnasional yang terus berkembang seiring dengan dinamika globalisasi dan kemajuan teknologi digital. Di kawasan Asia Tenggara, khususnya Kamboja dan Myanmar, muncul pola baru perdagangan manusia berupa kerja paksa dalam aktivitas kriminal daring yang juga menjerat ribuan Warga Negara Indonesia (WNI). Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis faktor-faktor penyebab terjadinya human trafficking di kawasan tersebut serta mengkaji pandangan Islam terhadap praktik perdagangan manusia dan upaya pencegahannya. Metode yang digunakan adalah kajian kepustakaan dengan menelaah sumber-sumber hukum, laporan internasional, kebijakan pemerintah, serta literatur keislaman. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa faktor ekonomi, rendahnya pendidikan, lemahnya pengawasan negara, krisis nilai sosial, serta pemanfaatan teknologi digital menjadi penyebab utama terjadinya human trafficking. Dalam perspektif Islam, perdagangan manusia merupakan pelanggaran serius terhadap prinsip karāmah insāniyyah, adl, rahmah, dan hurriyah, serta dipandang sebagai dosa sosial yang merusak tatanan kemanusiaan. Oleh karena itu, pencegahan dan penanggulangan human trafficking harus dilakukan secara komprehensif melalui penguatan hukum, kerja sama internasional, edukasi masyarakat, serta penguatan nilai-nilai keagamaan dan moral. Sinergi antara pendekatan hukum, sosial, dan keislaman menjadi kunci dalam menjaga martabat manusia dan melindungi korban perdagangan manusia.

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INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking is a transnational crime that continues to evolve in response to economic opportunities and technological advancements. In the Indonesian context, the strengthening of the legal framework among others through Law No. 12 of 2022 on the Crime of Sexual Violence (TPKS) and policy evaluations aimed at combating human trafficking demonstrates the urgency of victim protection, particularly for women and children; however, its implementation in practice continues to face significant challenges (Danti, 2025).

In addition to legal and policy frameworks, it is crucial to consider the socio-economic conditions in Indonesia that contribute to vulnerability to human trafficking. In many cases, individuals are driven by economic pressure and the aspiration for better livelihoods abroad, making them easy targets for fraudulent job offers circulated through social media and informal labor networks (Moore, 2024) (Alkhonsa, 2025). These structural conditions highlight that human trafficking is not merely a criminal issue but also deeply rooted in socio-economic inequalities (Simbolon & Nababan, 2026).

The past five years have witnessed the emergence of a pattern of trafficking for forced criminality, centered on online scam complexes (Franceschini et al., 2023) ("scam centres") in Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia and Myanmar. Reports by UNODC and IOM emphasize that tens of thousands of individuals have been forced to operate internet-based scams, including romance scams, fraudulent investment schemes, and illegal online gambling; victims are recruited through fake job advertisements, detained, trafficked across borders, and subjected to physical and psychological violence (Franceschini et al., 2024) (Valerisella et al., 2025). The impact on Indonesia has been tangible. IOM updates record that thousands of Indonesian nationals were rescued from online scam centres in the region particularly in Cambodia in 2023, many of whom were identified as victims of trafficking in persons. Recruitment mechanisms typically involve promises of high salaries, covered travel expenses, and the confiscation of passports upon arrival (BBC News, 2024); findings by OHCHR and independent policy studies document practices of torture, forced labor, and coerced mobility toward conflict-affected areas such as the Thailand–Myanmar border (Rahman, 2023).

At the domestic level, Indonesian data and policy documents indicate increasingly intensive institutional responses covering prevention, case handling, and victim recovery ranging from the strengthening of the Task Force for the Prevention and Handling of Trafficking in Persons (PP-TPPO) to the issuance of recent technical regulations by the Ministry of Women's Empowe rment and Child Protection. Nevertheless, performance reports and implementing regulations underscore the need for stronger inter-agency coordination, improved service-referral mechanisms, and more effective international cooperation for cross-border cases involving Cambodia and Myanmar (Sukmana et al., 2025). From a sociological perspective, particularly within Muslim societies, human trafficking undermines family structures, generates economic and moral vulnerabilities,

and violates human dignity. The ongoing Cambodia–Myanmar cases reveal the vast scale of a scam-complex-based industry supported by organized criminal networks; therefore, academic studies that link regional dynamics with national policies and humanitarian values are urgently needed to strengthen prevention, protection, and victim recovery (Ali, 2024).

Human trafficking in Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia and Myanmar, is shaped by economic inequality, high unemployment, and limited employment opportunities that drive unsafe migration. Weak border controls, corruption among officials, and the presence of conflict-affected areas create fertile ground for transnational organized criminal networks. The rapid expansion of digital technologies has further facilitated human trafficking through online recruitment disguised as job opportunities, ultimately resulting in forced labor exploitation in online scam centres. From an Islamic perspective, such practices constitute forms of injustice (*ẓulm*) that fundamentally contradict the principle of respect for human dignity (*karāmat al-insān*). Human trafficking violates the core objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*), particularly the protection of life, intellect, and human honor. Consequently, Islam categorically prohibits all forms of exploitation and oppression and emphasizes moral and social obligations to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and restore human dignity.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach by combining library research with limited primary data collection (Takona, 2024). The qualitative approach is selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of human trafficking in Southeast Asia, particularly in Cambodia and Myanmar, as well as to examine Islamic perspectives on the practice from both normative and contextual standpoints. The library research involves a critical review of relevant written sources, including reports from international organizations such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); national and international legal instruments related to trafficking in persons; and academic literature in the form of scholarly books and peer-reviewed journal articles.

To strengthen the validity and depth of analysis, this study also incorporates primary data through semi-structured interviews with selected informants, including practitioners, law enforcement officers, and representatives of relevant organizations concerned with human trafficking issues. These interviews aim to provide contextual insights and empirical perspectives that complement the secondary data.

Data collection is conducted through documentation analysis and interviews. The documentation process involves identifying, examining, and categorizing legal documents, policy reports, and academic works related to human trafficking and Islamic humanitarian ethics. Meanwhile, interviews are conducted to capture firsthand

experiences and professional perspectives regarding the dynamics and handling of trafficking cases. Data analysis employs a descriptive–analytical method, which involves outlining the causal factors and dynamics of human trafficking in the selected region and subsequently linking them to Islamic principles, particularly the concepts of *karāmat al-insān* (human dignity) and *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* (the higher objectives of Islamic law). A normative–theological approach is used to analyze Qur'anic verses, hadith, and classical and contemporary scholarly interpretations, while a sociological approach is applied to understand the social and policy contexts underlying human trafficking practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking, or trafficking in persons, is a crime that encompasses the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by means such as the threat or use of force, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person; such acts may occur domestically or across national borders and are carried out for the purpose of exploiting the person concerned (Ismaidar & Surbakti, 2024).

According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 21 of 2007 on the Eradication of the Crime of Trafficking in Persons, "trafficking in persons" refers to any act of recruitment, transportation, harboring, sending, transfer, or receipt of a person by means of threats or use of force, abduction, confinement, falsification, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, debt bondage, or the giving of payments or benefits so as to obtain the consent of a person having control over another person, whether conducted domestically or across national borders, for the purpose of exploitation (*Al-Quran Online Terjemah Dan Tafsir Bahasa Indonesia | Quran NU Online*, n.d.).

According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol) (2000), which supplements the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, human trafficking is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by means of the threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation, including the exploitation of the prostitution of others, forced labor, slavery, or the removal of organs.

From a sociological perspective, human trafficking reflects a social problem closely linked to poverty, high unemployment, social vulnerability, and structural inequalities within society. These conditions create opportunities for criminal networks to recruit individuals seeking employment or a better life, who subsequently become trapped in

situations of exploitation and human trafficking (Sukma et al., 2025). The main characteristics of human trafficking include false promises or deceptive offers of employment with high wages; recruitment without formal employment contracts; the use of violence or threats; and the illegal transfer of victims for the purpose of exploitation. Forms of exploitation include modern slavery, forced labor, sexual exploitation, illegal organ removal, extortion, and torture (Gomes & Sani, 2023) (Hutabarat, 2024).

Factors Contributing to Human Trafficking

The factors contributing to human trafficking in Indonesia are highly complex and interconnected with various dimensions, with economic factors emerging as the most dominant cause. Poverty and unemployment compel many individuals including women and children to seek employment opportunities despite the high risk of becoming victims of human trafficking (Piper, 2022) (Bahran et al., n.d.). Beyond economic conditions, low levels of education and limited legal awareness among the public further weaken individuals' capacity to recognize and avoid the dangers of human trafficking. Case studies indicate that limited educational attainment and restricted employment opportunities increase vulnerability to promises of high-paying jobs, even in the absence of guarantees or legal procedures. From a social and moral perspective, factors such as weakened religious values, insufficient social control, and the erosion of cultural norms make individuals more susceptible to situations of vulnerability. Communities with minimal social supervision or where religious values have become marginalized tend to produce individuals who are less protected from recruitment strategies that exploit such vulnerabilities (Mareta et al., 2024).

The advancement of globalization and digital technology has had a significant impact on the emergence of new modes of human trafficking, particularly online and cross-border recruitment through social media and digital platforms. These practices have become increasingly complex and difficult to combat, as they exploit open borders and sophisticated communication technologies to facilitate perpetrator networks (Swastiwi, 2024). Therefore, interventions to eradicate human trafficking must be multidimensional in nature. Strengthening the legal framework alone is insufficient; it is also necessary to address poverty and unemployment, enhance public education and legal awareness, reinforce social and moral values, and intensify oversight of the misuse of technology by human trafficking syndicates.

Contemporary Cases of Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia

Cases of human trafficking involving Indonesian nationals in Southeast Asia particularly in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, and Myawaddy, Myanmar came to public attention during the 2024–2025 period. Prospective victims were recruited through fake job advertisements on social media platforms such as Facebook, Telegram, and

WhatsApp, with promises of high-paying employment abroad. Upon arrival at the destinations, victims lost their freedom, had their passports confiscated, and were forced to work in online scam centres operated by criminal syndicates (CNN, 2025)(Gunawan & Barito, 2021). In Myanmar, particularly in the border area of Myawaddy, victims are taken to closed compounds operated by foreign syndicates and are subsequently forced to work as online scam operators, including through dating applications used to deceive new victims. They are subjected to physical violence, torture, threats of organ removal if performance targets are not met, and detention without any right to communication with the outside world.

Recent data further demonstrate the scale and severity of this phenomenon. In 2025, Indonesian authorities reported that at least 699 Indonesian citizens had been identified as victims of human trafficking and forced to work in online scam operations in Cambodia (Tempo, 2025) (Valerisella et al., 2025). In addition, government records indicate that more than 6,800 Indonesians were suspected of being trafficked abroad, many of whom were linked to similar cyber-enabled criminal activities in Southeast Asia. While precise figures for Indonesian victims in Myanmar remain limited, the region particularly Myawaddy has been widely recognized as a major hub for forced labor in online scam industries involving victims from multiple countries (Associated Press, 2025) (News, 2025). These statistics highlight that the exploitation of Indonesian nationals is not an isolated issue but part of a broader, organized, and transnational system of human trafficking that continues to expand across the region.

In Cambodia, reports by Amnesty International indicate that more than 50 “scam compounds” have been identified as involving forced labor, torture, and human trafficking under conditions resembling modern slavery (Al Jazeera, 2025; UN News, 2026). Thousands of workers, including Indonesian nationals, who were initially attracted by promises of decent employment have instead become victims of exploitation within an oppressive system. This criminal modus operandi exploits digital technology and global mobility: victims are recruited from Indonesia through online advertisements, transported to locations in Cambodia or Myanmar, and subsequently forced to engage in cross-border criminal activities. Studies by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicate that recruitment is frequently conducted online and that victims are confined in “online scam centres” across Southeast Asia (Tenri & Atman, 2025).

The primary challenges in addressing these cases include the transnational nature of criminal networks, operational locations that are often situated in conflict zones or poorly monitored border areas, and the frequent misclassification of victims as perpetrators due to their coercion into conducting fraudulent activities. Consequently, effective responses require strengthened international cooperation, the repatriation of victims, robust human rights protection, and stricter regulation of online recruitment technologies (Malay Mail, 2025).

During the 2024–2025 period, the Indonesian government recorded that at least 1,235 Indonesian nationals became victims of trafficking in persons in Southeast Asia, with the majority of cases occurring in Myanmar and Cambodia. Of this total, victims repatriated from Cambodia numbered 391 in 2024 and 82 in 2025, bringing the total to 473 individuals successfully returned from Cambodia (Pattikale et al., 2025). Government records indicate that the most frequently used modus operandi includes recruitment through overseas job promotions, placement in forced labor compounds, and detention conditions that severely restrict victims' freedom.

On the Myanmar side, the surge in cases involving Indonesian nationals became increasingly evident in 2025, when a total of 698 Indonesian citizens were repatriated from Myanmar significantly higher than the previous year, which recorded only 26 repatriations (Kompas.com, 2025; Teresia & Sulaiman, 2025). Independent reports reveal that these Indonesian nationals were recruited through overseas employment offers, subsequently transported to conflict-affected or border areas such as Myawaddy, and forced to work in online scam centres under extremely harsh working and living conditions, including confinement, strict surveillance, and threats of physical and psychological violence.

Specific examples illustrate that in Cambodia, several Indonesian nationals recruited to work as "customer service officers" or "investment marketing staff" in areas such as Sihanoukville or Kampot were instead forced to engage in online fraud. They received salaries far below what had been promised, worked more than 12 hours per day, and were not free to leave their workplaces. One Indonesian victim reported that although they had initially been promised a monthly salary of USD 611, in reality they received only USD 100 and were required to meet extremely demanding daily targets (VOA News, 2025) while being held in tightly guarded locations with their passports confiscated.

This phenomenon demonstrates how recruitment strategies through digital platforms and social media have become the primary entry points for human trafficking syndicates targeting Indonesian nationals. The rapid evolution of digital technology has enabled traffickers to adopt increasingly sophisticated methods, including the use of encrypted messaging applications, algorithm-driven targeting, and deceptive online job advertisements that are difficult to detect. These developments indicate that human trafficking is no longer solely a conventional transnational crime but has transformed into a cyber-enabled and highly adaptive form of exploitation (Lazarus et al., 2025) (Europe, n.d.).

In response to these challenges, it is essential for this study to remain responsive to the latest technological developments by incorporating recent data and emerging patterns of online recruitment (Zahedi Nejad et al., 2024). Preventive strategies should therefore focus on strengthening digital literacy among vulnerable populations, enhancing cross-border cooperation in cybercrime investigations, and improving

regulatory oversight of online platforms (Whittaker et al., 2024). Additionally, collaboration between governments, law enforcement agencies, and technology companies is crucial to detect, monitor, and dismantle trafficking networks operating in digital spaces. By aligning the analysis with current technological trends, the study can offer more relevant and practical recommendations for addressing the evolving nature of online human trafficking.

The phenomenon of human trafficking affecting Indonesian nationals in Cambodia and Myanmar arises from multiple interrelated social factors, one of which is weak state and institutional oversight. Regulatory gaps and limited law enforcement capacity provide opportunities for criminal syndicates to operate across borders with minimal obstruction (Dewanto & Estriani, 2026) (Ramadhani, 2024). Deteriorating economic conditions such as high levels of poverty, unemployment, and the lack of decent employment opportunities drive many individuals, including women and children, to seek work despite the risk of victimization. Promises of high-paying jobs promoted through social media further exacerbate these vulnerabilities. From the sociological perspective of Muslim societies, this phenomenon reflects social dysfunction and a crisis of humanitarian values (Qudratullah et al., 2025).

The exploitation of victims of human trafficking not only destroys individuals physically and psychologically but also undermines the social and moral order of society when religious values and social control intended to serve as foundational supports are weakened. Digital technology and globalization play a crucial role in facilitating new transnational human trafficking networks. Social media platforms and online systems have simplified the recruitment of victims from Indonesia to online scam centres in Cambodia and Myanmar; therefore, counter-trafficking approaches must also be multidimensional, encompassing legal measures, community empowerment, and the restoration of moral and religious values.

From an Islamic perspective, all forms of human exploitation, including human trafficking, constitute violations of the rights and dignity of human beings, which are highly upheld in Islamic teachings. The principle of karāmah insāniyah affirms that human beings are created by God with inherent dignity and freedom, as emphasized in Qur'an Surah Al-Isrā' [17]:70, which states that God has honored the children of Adam and granted them a noble status on earth. The principles of human equality and brotherhood are further reflected in Qur'an Surah Al-Hujurāt [49]:13, which affirms that all human beings originate from a single source and are created to know one another, not to oppress one another.

Prophetic traditions (*ḥadīth*) of the Prophet Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) explicitly prohibit oppression and enslavement of fellow human beings. The Prophet stated that God has forbidden acts of injustice against His servants and strongly condemned those who sell free persons for worldly gain (Fitri, 2018).

Islamic scholars unanimously agree that the practice of trading free human beings is unlawful (*ḥarām*) and fundamentally contrary to Islamic values. Islam regards such practices as forms of moral decay and the degradation of human dignity. Therefore, Islam not only prohibits human trafficking but also actively encourages efforts toward liberation, recovery, and the protection of victims.

The principles of *ʿadl* (justice), *raḥmah* (compassion), and *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) serve as moral foundations for Muslims to reject all forms of exploitation and to support the recovery of trafficking victims (Assaad et al., 2023). Thus, in the context of cases involving Indonesian nationals in Cambodia and Myanmar, Islam calls for the realization of social justice, humane treatment, and moral responsibility on the part of both society and the state to uphold authentic human values (P. et al., 2024).

However, these values must be translated into concrete preventive and responsive measures. In the educational sphere, Islamic teachings can be integrated into awareness programs and curricula that promote digital literacy, ethical responsibility, and critical understanding of the risks of online recruitment, particularly among vulnerable groups. This is in line with the teachings of the Qur'an, particularly Surah Al-'Alaq (96:1), which emphasizes the importance of reading and acquiring knowledge as the foundation of human awareness (*Al-Quran Online Terjemah Dan Tafsir Bahasa Indonesia | Quran NU Online*, n.d.). Religious institutions such as mosques and Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) can also play a strategic role in disseminating information about the dangers of human trafficking and providing guidance based on Islamic ethical values.

At the policy level, the principles of justice and human dignity can serve as the foundation for developing regulations that strengthen the protection of migrant workers (Palmer & Missbach, 2019), enhance oversight of digital recruitment platforms, and ensure strict law enforcement against trafficking networks. The principle of justice is strongly emphasized in the Qur'an, particularly in Surah An-Nisa (4:58), which commands the fulfillment of trusts and the establishment of justice, as well as in Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:32), which highlights the sanctity of human life (*Qur'an Kemenag*, n.d.). Furthermore, collaboration between religious leaders, government institutions, and civil society organizations is essential in formulating faith-based approaches to victim protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration. This is also supported by a Prophetic hadits: "There should be neither harm nor reciprocating harm" (Narrated by Ibn Majah), which serves as a fundamental ethical principle in rejecting all forms of exploitation and violence.

The Islamic Perspective on Human Trafficking

Islam theologically rejects all forms of human exploitation as they contradict the principle of *karāmah insāniyyah*, namely the inherent dignity of human beings that must be preserved and protected. In Qur'an Surah An-Nūr [24]:33, God explicitly prohibits the act of forcing women into prostitution for worldly gain: "Do not compel your slave

women into prostitution, if they desire chastity…". This verse serves as a normative foundation in Islam for rejecting all forms of sexual exploitation and human trafficking. The story of Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) in Qur'an Surah Yūsuf [12]:19–20 also illustrates that human exploitation has existed since ancient times. Prophet Yūsuf was sold by his brothers at a low price, reflecting practices of slavery and the commodification of human beings. Through this narrative, the Qur'an emphasizes that the buying and selling of human beings constitutes an act that strips away human dignity and undermines social justice.

In Islamic scholarship, there is a broad consensus across the major schools of thought that all forms of human trafficking and exploitation are strictly prohibited, as they violate fundamental principles of human dignity and justice. However, differences can be observed in the emphasis and analytical approaches adopted by various schools and theological perspectives. Classical fiqh schools such as Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali primarily address exploitation through legal frameworks, focusing on the prohibition of coercion (*ikrāh*), unlawful appropriation of human freedom, and the obligation to protect individual rights (*An Examination of Selected Fiqh Issues within the Framework of the Ḥanafiyyah Concept of Istiḥsān in the Contemporary Yorùbá Society*, n.d.). These schools tend to emphasize juridical rulings and legal accountability in addressing such violations.

In contrast, contemporary approaches particularly those grounded in *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* place stronger emphasis on the protection of essential human interests, including life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), dignity (*ḥifẓ al-ʿird*), and freedom (*ḥifẓ al-ḥurriyyah*) (Prawira et al., 2025). This perspective allows for a more flexible and context-sensitive response to modern forms of exploitation such as cyber-enabled human trafficking. Additionally, Islamic theological and ethical frameworks highlight values such as justice (*ʿadl*), compassion (*raḥmah*), and public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) as guiding principles in formulating preventive and rehabilitative strategies (Lestari et al., 2025; Wani & Azhar, 2025).

In principle, Islam upholds three fundamental *valuesʿadl* (justice), *raḥmah* (compassion), and *ḥurriyyah* (freedom)which serve as the moral foundation for rejecting all forms of human exploitation (Assaad et al., 2024). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) declared that Allah has forbidden oppression against His servants, and that anyone who sells a free person will be regarded as an enemy of Allah on the Day of Judgment. Therefore, human trafficking constitutes a crime that not only violates positive law but also represents a social sin and a theological transgression against the noble principles of humanity in Islam. This perspective demonstrates that the phenomenon of human trafficking in Cambodia and Myanmar reflects a profound moral and social crisis that fundamentally contradicts Islamic teachings. Islam affirms that every human being, regardless of social status or nationality, possesses inherent rights to freedom, justice, and protection from all forms of exploitation.

Countermeasures Against Human Trafficking

Efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking in Indonesia are carried out through collaboration among the government, civil society, and religious institutions. The government has strengthened the Task Force for the Prevention and Handling of Trafficking in Persons (PP-TPPO) and enhanced cross-border cooperation with Cambodia and Myanmar to reinforce diplomatic efforts for victim repatriation and to prevent illegal recruitment practices. These bilateral agreements include information sharing, technical assistance, immigration oversight, and legal awareness campaigns targeting prospective migrant workers (Utami, 2024).

Educational programs and anti–human trafficking campaigns have also been intensified in vulnerable regions as preventive measures to reduce the number of new victims (Zimmerman et al., 2021).

Beyond the role of the government, local communities and Islamic institutions contribute significantly through legal education, social da'wah, and economic empowerment grounded in Islamic values. Islamic preaching institutions and mass organizations play an active role in disseminating moral awareness regarding the prohibition of human exploitation, instilling principles of social justice, and promoting economic self-reliance so that communities are not easily deceived by fraudulent overseas job offers. This approach emphasizes that preventing human trafficking requires not only law enforcement but also sustained moral and social development within Muslim communities.

In addition, the increasing utilization of digital technology has significantly transformed the modus operandi of human trafficking networks. Traffickers exploit various online platforms such as social media, encrypted messaging applications, and job recruitment websites to identify, approach, and manipulate potential victims. Sophisticated techniques, including the use of fake identities, algorithm-based targeting, and automated messaging systems, enable perpetrators to reach a wider audience while minimizing the risk of detection. In many cases, victims are recruited through seemingly legitimate job advertisements offering high salaries, only to be coerced into participating in online scam operations upon arrival.

Efforts to eradicate these practices face substantial challenges. The transnational nature of cyber-enabled trafficking complicates law enforcement due to jurisdictional limitations and varying legal frameworks across countries (Michael & Mahalingam, 2026). The use of encryption and anonymous digital identities further hinders tracking and evidence collection (Khan et al., 2025). Moreover, limited digital literacy among vulnerable communities increases susceptibility to deception, while fear, stigma, and lack of trust in authorities often discourage victims from reporting their experiences (Friedman, 2024). These obstacles highlight the need for a comprehensive strategy that combines technological regulation, international cooperation, and community-based

digital awareness to effectively combat the evolving dynamics of online human trafficking.

Muslims bear a moral responsibility to uphold the principles of *'adl* (justice), *raḥmah* (compassion), and *ḥurriyyah* (freedom) as fundamental foundations in combating modern forms of slavery (Santaria, 2020). The active role of Muslim communities in fostering social awareness is crucial to preventing human trafficking at an early stage and ensuring that victims receive adequate protection and rehabilitation. Accordingly, strategies for the prevention and eradication of human trafficking must be comprehensive, integrating legal, social, educational, and religious dimensions in order to safeguard human dignity and uphold justice for victims.

CONCLUSION

Human trafficking constitutes a modern crime against humanity that violates human dignity and fundamental rights. This phenomenon is driven by a combination of economic, educational, and social factors, as well as technological advancement exploited by transnational criminal syndicates to recruit victims, including Indonesian citizens in Cambodia and Myanmar. These cases reveal weak state oversight, economic inequality, and a moral crisis that renders communities vulnerable to exploitation. From an Islamic perspective, human trafficking fundamentally contradicts the principles of *karāmah insāniyyah* (human dignity), *'adl* (justice), *raḥmah* (compassion), and *ḥurriyyah* (freedom). Islam categorically rejects all forms of slavery and human exploitation and emphasizes the protection of victims and the establishment of social justice. Efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking therefore require collaboration among the state, society, and Islamic institutions through the strengthening of legal frameworks, the enhancement of social awareness, and the internalization of religious values. The synergy of legal, social, and spiritual approaches is essential to eradicating human trafficking comprehensively and safeguarding human dignity in accordance with Islamic teachings.

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