

Integration of Population and Environmental Education in Strengthening Social Advocacy among Urban Communities (A Study of Migrant Women within the Landscape of Urban Prostitution)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the relationship between urbanization, urban ecological pressure, and the marginalization of migrant women within the landscape of covert prostitution in the SPA industry in DKI Jakarta, while also examining the role of Population and Environmental Education (PKLH) (*Pendidikan Kependudukan dan Lingkungan Hidup*) as a pedagogy of social advocacy for strengthening the rights and empowerment of urban migrant women. The study employed a qualitative, critical case-study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with migrant women working in SPA establishments, activists from non-governmental organizations, academics, and local government officials, supported by observation and documentary study. The data were analyzed interactively through data reduction, thematic categorization, critical interpretation, and source triangulation. The findings indicate that urbanization in DKI Jakarta not only generates economic growth but also reproduces social inequality and ecological vulnerability, thereby intensifying the marginalization of migrant women. Ecological pressures in the form of flooding, pollution, poor sanitation, and limited access to healthy living spaces intersect with low educational attainment, weak social protection, and restricted access to formal employment, pushing migrant women into exploitative informal work sectors. This study concludes that PKLH needs to be reconstructed as a critical, participatory, and emancipatory pedagogy of social advocacy to strengthen rights awareness, economic empowerment, and socio-ecological justice for urban migrant women.

Keywords:

urbanization;
migrant women;
socio-ecological
vulnerability;
covert prostitution;
social advocacy
pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

The development of urbanization in Indonesia over recent decades has produced highly complex social transformations within urban communities (Harahap, 2013; Soetomo, 2013). The city is no longer understood merely as a center of economic growth and modernization, but also as a space in which social inequality, ecological vulnerability, and the marginalization of vulnerable groups are reproduced (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Borja, 2023; Harvey, 2009; Mitchell, 2003). The continuing increase in rural-to-urban migration has become an important factor shaping urban social dynamics. Initially, urbanization was viewed as a mechanism of social mobility through which individuals could obtain employment, education, and a better quality of life. In practice, however, urbanization often produces a development paradox: cities grow economically, yet at the same time generate social segregation and layered exclusion for particular groups, especially poor migrant women (Alzamil, 2017; Borja, 2023).

In developing countries such as Indonesia, urbanization proceeds at a pace that far exceeds the capacity of cities to provide just and inclusive living spaces. The growth of industrial zones, the expansion of the service sector, infrastructure development, and the commercialization of urban space have generated rapid changes in the social

structure (Andrea, 2015; Harahap, 2013; Kuddus et al., 2020). However, these changes have not been accompanied by an equitable distribution of opportunities. The city becomes a harsh arena of economic competition in which groups with limited education, skills, and social access tend to be excluded from the mainstream of development. This condition gives rise to various forms of informal employment and vulnerable sectors that serve as survival spaces for the urban poor, including migrant women (Alzamil, 2017; Borja, 2023; Das & Paul, 2021).

Migrant women constitute one of the most vulnerable groups within the urban social structure. They come to the city with the hope of obtaining employment and improving their families' standard of living, yet they frequently confront limited education, low occupational skills, gender discrimination, and weak social protection (Arista et al., 2020; Gnanadev, 2023; Sigiro, 2020). Under such conditions, some migrant women are pushed into exploitative informal sectors, including nightlife, spa, and urban prostitution industries. This phenomenon demonstrates that urban prostitution cannot be understood merely as an individual moral problem, but rather as part of a social construction produced by urban inequality, structural poverty, and the city's failure to guarantee a decent life for all its residents.

The landscape of urban prostitution is a manifestation of unequal power relations within urban space. Prostitution develops not only because of the existence of demand in the sexual market, but also because of economic and social structures that compel certain groups to survive under vulnerable conditions (Benoit et al., 2019; R. M. Bhat, 2022; Monzini, 2005). From the perspective of urban sociology, prostitution spaces may be understood as 'marginal spaces' that emerge from processes of social exclusion and spatial injustice (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; R. M. Bhat, 2022; Edlund & Korn, 2002; Syaifudin et al., 2023). The city builds magnificent centers of modern economic activity while simultaneously producing pockets of social vulnerability hidden behind the glitter of urbanization. Migrant women working within the prostitution landscape experience layered marginality: as women, as migrants, as members of poor communities, and as workers in a socially stigmatized sector.

The vulnerability of migrant women in urban prostitution is further intensified by urban environmental pressures. Uncontrolled urban growth produces dense settlements, poor sanitation, environmental pollution, limited open space, and declining environmental health quality. The urban poor commonly live in areas with high ecological risk, such as riverbanks, slum settlements, or neighborhoods with poor air quality. This condition indicates that social and environmental problems in urban areas are closely interrelated. Inequitable access to a healthy environment ultimately intensifies the social vulnerability of the urban poor, including migrant women.

Amid this complexity, education holds a strategic position as an instrument of social transformation. Education functions not only as a process of knowledge transfer but also as a means of building critical awareness of the structures of injustice encountered by communities (Arbeiter & Bučar, 2020; Fuadi et al., 2025). In this context, Population and Environmental Education (PKLH) is highly relevant for development as an approach to social advocacy among urban communities. Essentially, PKLH aims to foster individual and collective awareness of the relationship between population dynamics, environmental quality, and social sustainability (B. A. Bhat, 2021; Darwis & Tantu, 2016; Yusuf, 1988). Yet the implementation of PKLH in Indonesia has tended to focus on normative and ecological aspects alone and has not

optimally addressed urban social inequality and the vulnerability of marginalized groups.

In fact, population dynamics such as urbanization, migration, population density, and urban poverty are central issues in environmental problems and sustainable development. Population education that is not linked to the realities of social injustice will lose its critical dimension. Similarly, environmental education that emphasizes nature conservation without examining power relations in the production of urban space tends to become technocratic. Therefore, the integration of population education and environmental education needs to be directed toward strengthening social advocacy among urban communities, especially for vulnerable groups such as migrant women.

Education-based social advocacy is important because the problems faced by migrant women within the landscape of urban prostitution cannot be adequately addressed through repressive or moralistic approaches. The security-oriented approach that has long been dominant often reinforces social stigma and deepens the marginalization of migrant women. They are positioned as objects of control rather than as subjects who possess social rights and the right to the city. In the study of the right to the city, every resident, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, has the right to access safe living spaces, decent work, a healthy environment, education, and social protection (Harvey, 2009; Lefebvre, 1996; Mitchell, 2003). Therefore, an educational approach is required to build critical public awareness of the structural roots of social vulnerability in urban areas.

PKLH has the potential to become a pedagogical medium for building such awareness. The integration of PKLH into social advocacy can be pursued through the development of urban literacy, critical education on migration and inequality, environmental health education, and the strengthening of migrant women's socio-economic capacity. Education is no longer understood merely as a formal process in schools, but as a social praxis that liberates communities from structures of oppression. For this reason, critical pedagogy is relevant because it positions education as a tool of social emancipation. Education must help communities understand the power relations that produce urban injustice and encourage active participation in social change.

The phenomenon of migrant women within the landscape of urban prostitution also reveals a failure of development to integrate social and ecological dimensions justly. Urban development is often oriented toward economic growth and investment without considering its impacts on vulnerable groups. Urban space is governed by the logic of urban capitalism, which places economic value above human value (Borja, 2023; Harvey, 2009; Mitchell, 2003). As a result, the urban poor are increasingly excluded from access to formal employment, decent housing, and public services. In this situation, migrant women become one of the groups most affected by the injustices of urban development.

In addition, low levels of population and environmental literacy among urban communities further intensify social vulnerability. Many people do not yet understand the relationship between urbanization, population density, poverty, environmental degradation, and social inequality. As a result, the problem of urban prostitution is often perceived narrowly as individual moral deviance rather than as part of a broader

structural urban problem. Critical and transformative education is needed so that society can understand social problems more comprehensively and contextually.

Academically, studies on PKLH have thus far focused largely on environmental education in schools, environmentally friendly behavior, or population-growth control. Meanwhile, studies that link PKLH with social advocacy in urban communities, particularly in relation to migrant women and urban prostitution, remain relatively limited. Yet this issue is highly important for examining the relevance of education to contemporary social realities. This study seeks to fill that gap by positioning PKLH as an instrument for strengthening social advocacy in response to urbanization and social vulnerability.

Conceptually, this study is grounded in the understanding that education, population, the environment, and social advocacy are interrelated entities. Urbanization does not merely produce demographic change; it also affects environmental quality and the structure of social relations in urban communities. When cities fail to manage population growth in a just and sustainable manner, various forms of social exclusion and ecological vulnerability emerge. Under such conditions, education must serve as an instrument of social transformation capable of strengthening community capacity to understand, critique, and transform existing structures of injustice.

Migrant women within the landscape of urban prostitution constitute an important group for analysis because they represent the intersection of urbanization, gender, poverty, migration, and environmental injustice. Their vulnerability is not singular, but multidimensional. They face economic pressure, symbolic violence, social stigma, limited access to health services, and ecological risks resulting from living and working in unhealthy urban environments. Therefore, social advocacy for this group requires a holistic and interdisciplinary approach.

The integration of PKLH into the strengthening of social advocacy may offer a more humanistic and sustainable alternative approach. Education can be used to build social solidarity, increase community critical literacy, and strengthen migrant women's capacity to claim their rights as urban citizens. Through this approach, migrant women are not positioned as objects of pity, but as social subjects who possess experience, knowledge, and the potential to contribute to social change.

Furthermore, this study is relevant to the agenda of sustainable development or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the goals related to quality education, gender equality, sustainable cities, reduced inequalities, and environmental protection. The integration of PKLH into social advocacy among urban communities can make a strategic contribution to building cities that are more inclusive, just, and sustainable. Education is directed not only toward producing human resources who are economically competitive, but also toward cultivating citizens with social and ecological awareness.

Accordingly, research on 'The Integration of Population and Environmental Education in Strengthening Social Advocacy among Urban Communities (A Study of Migrant Women within the Landscape of Urban Prostitution)' is important to undertake. This study has academic relevance for the development of PKLH scholarship and practical relevance for formulating educational models that are more contextual to the problems of urban communities. Through this study, a more comprehensive understanding is expected to emerge regarding how PKLH can be integrated as a

social advocacy approach capable of strengthening critical awareness, social protection, and the empowerment of migrant women in confronting the complexities of urban life.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive-critical method to understand the integration of PKLH into the strengthening of social advocacy among urban communities, particularly migrant women within the landscape of urban prostitution in DKI Jakarta, Indonesia. The research was conducted throughout 2025 in several areas of DKI Jakarta characterized by high levels of urbanization, the growth of the informal sector, and the development of nightlife areas and covert prostitution.

A qualitative approach was chosen because it enables the exploration of subjective experiences, social dynamics, and forms of marginalization experienced by migrant women in urban space. This study used a constructivist-critical paradigm that views urban prostitution as part of the effects of urbanization, structural poverty, and weak social protection (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The research subjects consisted of migrant women who were working or had worked within the landscape of urban prostitution, as well as supporting informants such as social activists, academics, and community facilitators. Informants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling based on data needs and the principle of information saturation.

Data were collected through in-depth observation, semi-structured interviews, documentation, and literature review. Observation was conducted to understand the social and environmental conditions of migrant women, while interviews were used to explore experiences of migration, social vulnerability, and perspectives on education and social advocacy. Data analysis was carried out interactively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was maintained through source and method triangulation. The study also observed research ethics by safeguarding the confidentiality of informants' identities and applying a humanistic approach throughout the research process (Bowen, 2009; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

1. Population Education and the Production of Critical Awareness of Urbanization and the Marginalization of Migrant Women

Urbanization in contemporary society can no longer be understood simply as the movement of population from villages to cities, but rather as a complex and multidimensional social process that affects spatial restructuring, the distribution of access, and the reproduction of social inequality (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Borja, 2023; Das & Paul, 2021). The city is produced as a center of economic growth, modernization, and social mobility, yet at the same time it becomes an arena for reproducing the marginalization of vulnerable groups that lack adequate economic, educational, and social capital (Mitchell, 2003). Therefore, population education should not stop at administrative and demographic functions alone, but should be directed as a pedagogical instrument capable of building critical public awareness of urbanization dynamics and their structural consequences. The findings of this study show that migrant women working within the SPA-based prostitution landscape in DKI

Jakarta generally arrive in the city without critical knowledge of the structure of urban inequality, limited access to formal employment, or the risks of social exclusion embedded in modern urban space.

This condition indicates that population education in Indonesia still tends to be normative and technocratic in orientation. Population education places greater emphasis on quantitative issues such as birth control, population growth, and population density, while it has not yet addressed the critical dimensions of power relations, class segregation, and social injustice in the urbanization process. As a result, migrant women enter urban space with a false developmental imagination: the city is perceived as a space of opportunity that is universally open, even though urban reality shows systematic mechanisms of exclusion operating against poor and less educated groups (Arista et al., 2020; Nachemson-Ekwall, 2023; Sigiro, 2020).

The experience of informant IT demonstrates how migration to Jakarta was undertaken without adequate knowledge of the risks of urbanization and the social structure of the city. Migration was understood solely as a family economic strategy to obtain work and support household needs in the village. However, after entering urban space, the informant began to realize that access to work and a decent life is strongly determined by educational capital and class position. Low educational attainment meant that she could only be absorbed into an informal sector vulnerable to exploitation. This finding shows that urbanization operates through mechanisms of social differentiation that strengthen unequal access to urban resources. The city does not operate as a neutral space, but as an arena of competition that structurally advantages groups with stronger economic and educational capital (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Harvey, 2009; Mitchell, 2003).

This finding is consistent with the experience of informant RN, who stated that formal education had never equipped her with an understanding of the competitive and unequal realities of urban life. Schools failed to provide education contextualized to the challenges of urbanization, so migration occurred without social preparedness or critical knowledge of the city's structures of inequality. Upon entering Jakarta, the informant encountered a very clear class divide between groups with access to higher education and poor migrant groups who could only occupy low-paid informal jobs (Alzamil, 2017; Bonnet et al., 2018; Cuevas et al., 2009). This condition indicates a disconnection between the formal education system and the social realities of urban communities. Education tends to operate in an abstract and normative space, whereas urban life requires reflective capacity to read the structures of inequality that operate within it.

Therefore, population education should be reoriented as critical social education that not only discusses demographic issues but also develops public awareness of the relationship between urbanization, poverty, inequality, and social marginalization. The experience of informant DS shows that the absence of training or outreach regarding the realities of urban work caused her to become trapped in vulnerable sectors such as SPA-based prostitution. This statement indicates that population education has a preventive function in minimizing the vulnerability of migrant women. Population education grounded in critical awareness can help rural communities understand the risks of urbanization, the limitations of formal employment opportunities, and the potential for exploitation in urban informal sectors (B. A. Bhat, 2021; Whitaker, 2019; Yusuf, 1988, 2000).

The findings also show that migrant women experience alienation from their rights as urban citizens. Informant WD emphasized that the discourse of urbanization has so far been understood only within the framework of urban growth and economic mobility, without being linked to the dimension of the right to the city. Yet being an urban citizen should not be interpreted merely as physical presence in urban territory, but should also include the right to decent work, social protection, safe housing, and equal access to public services. In reality, migrant women are more often positioned as informal labor that supports the urban economy, while receiving neither social recognition nor equal access to urban resources (Arista et al., 2020; Gnanadev, 2023; Sigiro, 2020). This finding confirms that urbanization has a political dimension closely related to the distribution of power and access to urban space.

The experience of informant DA further illustrates how limited critical awareness of urbanization makes young rural women vulnerable to becoming trapped in exploitative work sectors. Awareness of urban inequality emerged only after she had entered a cycle of vulnerable employment. This condition shows that urbanization is often romantically perceived as a route to social mobility, while at the same time it produces new poverty traps for poor migrant groups (Borja, 2023; Kuddus et al., 2020). The city presents a development paradox: on the one hand, it offers economic hope, while on the other hand, it generates social segregation that deepens the marginalization of vulnerable groups (Mitchell, 2003).

In terms of social advocacy, this study found that population education is viewed by civil-society activists as a strategic instrument for building the critical awareness of vulnerable groups regarding structures of urban injustice (Arbeiter & Bučar, 2020). Informant SI emphasized that many SPA prostitution workers enter the sector not because of an entirely free individual choice, but because of limited knowledge of the exclusive realities of urbanization. This statement challenges the moralistic approach that has tended to blame women for their involvement in prostitution. Instead, this study shows that migrant women's employment choices are strongly shaped by social structures that restrict their access to formal employment and social protection.

This view is reinforced by informant RO, who emphasized that migrant women generally do not understand their rights as urban citizens because population education has failed to explain that urbanization is laden with class bias, gender inequality, and social exclusion. Thus, population education should become an instrument of critical literacy that helps communities understand power relations in urban space. Migration to the city is not simply geographic movement, but a movement into a highly competitive and unequal social structure (Andrea, 2015; Borja, 2023; Soetomo, 2013). Without such awareness, migrant women will remain in subordinate positions that are vulnerable to economic exploitation and symbolic violence.

The findings also indicate that education-based social advocacy can become an alternative approach to strengthening the position of migrant women in urban areas. Informant TA emphasized that population education must serve as a bridge connecting informal workers with the right to the city. Education should not stop at the statistical aspects of population, but must develop awareness that every citizen has the right to social protection, decent work, and fair access to urban resources (Arbeiter & Bučar, 2020; B. A. Bhat, 2021; Fuadi et al., 2025). This perspective shows that population education has the potential to function as an instrument of social emancipation for vulnerable groups.

From an academic perspective, informant ID criticized the tendency of population education in Indonesia to be overly normative and technical. Education discusses fertility, population density, and the demographic dividend more often than it connects these issues to the concrete experiences of marginalized groups in cities. As a result, education loses its critical function as a means of social transformation. This finding underscores the need to transform the paradigm of population education from merely demographic education into critical social education that addresses urbanization, migration, inequality, and marginalization.

This view is reinforced by informant AH, who positioned urbanization as a political process related to the right to decent work, social protection, and access to the city. Population education that fails to discuss the political dimensions of urbanization will only produce citizens who are passive and who accept injustice as normal. Conversely, critical education can help communities understand their position within the social structure and encourage the emergence of collective awareness to claim social rights in urban space.

From the perspective of local government, this study shows recognition of the weak social preparedness of migrant women in facing urban life. Informant HD acknowledged that many migrant women come to Jakarta without basic knowledge of the risks of urbanization, making them easily trapped in informal sectors prone to exploitation. Meanwhile, informant NM emphasized that population education should not be understood solely as the responsibility of formal educational institutions, but should also become an integral part of public policy. This indicates the importance of integrating population education into social protection and urban community empowerment programs.

Overall, the findings show that population education occupies a strategic position in building public critical awareness of urbanization and social marginalization. Population education can no longer be understood narrowly as an instrument of population control; it must be reoriented as transformative education capable of explaining the relationship between urbanization, inequality, gender, and social vulnerability. In the context of migrant women, critical-awareness-based population education can become an important instrument for minimizing the risk of exploitation, strengthening rights awareness, and building social capacity to face increasingly complex urban life (Gnanadev, 2023).

In addition, this study affirms that the marginalization of migrant women within the landscape of urban prostitution is a form of layered exclusion produced by the intersection of poverty, low education, gender inequality, and exclusive urbanization (Benoit et al., 2019; Edlund & Korn, 2002; Monzini, 2005). Migrant women face not only economic limitations, but also social stigma and structural injustice that restrict their social mobility (Arista et al., 2020; Nachemson-Ekwall, 2023; Sigiuro, 2020). Therefore, population education based on critical awareness is urgently needed to build the reflective capacity of communities to read and critique the structures of injustice they experience.

Thus, population education needs to be reconstructed as contextual, reflective, and emancipatory education. Such education must be able to explain that urbanization is not only a matter of population mobility, but also a socio-political process related to the distribution of access, the right to the city, and the reproduction of inequality. Without such transformation, migrant women will continue to be among the most

vulnerable groups within the modern urban structure. Conversely, if population education is developed as an instrument of critical awareness and social advocacy, urbanization can be directed toward a more inclusive, just, and dignified development process for all urban citizens, including migrant women who have long been positioned at the margins of urban development.

2. Urban Ecological Pressure and the Formation of Spaces of Social Vulnerability among Migrant Women

Massive urbanization in major Indonesian cities, particularly DKI Jakarta, produces not only increasing population density and urban economic expansion, but also increasingly complex ecological pressures (Alzamil, 2017; Andrea, 2015; Harahap, 2013). The growth of commercial areas, uneven infrastructure development, land-use conversion, and rising energy consumption have accelerated urban environmental degradation in various forms, including air pollution, flooding due to reduced water-catchment areas, sanitation crises, and limited public green space (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Zeybekoglu Sadri, 2020). Therefore, the urban environment can no longer be understood merely as a technical-ecological issue, but must be read as a social space that structurally reproduces inequality and vulnerability. The findings of this study indicate that urban ecological pressure is closely connected to the formation of spaces of social vulnerability, especially for migrant women working in vulnerable informal sectors such as SPA-based prostitution in DKI Jakarta.

The findings show that migrant women occupy the most vulnerable position within the city's ecological structure because limited economic and social capital enables them to access only living spaces of low environmental quality. The ecological pressures they experience are not limited to physical problems such as flooding, pollution, poor sanitation, and overcrowded housing, but also directly affect health, safety, work stability, and everyday quality of life. Thus, urban environmental degradation operates unevenly and tends to intensify pre-existing social inequalities (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Rustiadi et al., 2021).

The experience of informant IT illustrates how ecological pressure appears concretely in the lives of poor migrant women in the city. She lived in a polluted riverbank area prone to flooding, so environmental conditions directly disrupted work activities and daily life. Flooding disturbed transportation access, while the unhealthy environment increased the risk of illness. However, economic limitations forced her to remain in that ecologically vulnerable space. This finding shows that the urban poor do not have the freedom to choose healthier and safer living spaces. The city distributes environmental quality according to economic capacity, so vulnerable groups tend to be located in areas with the highest ecological risk (Andrea, 2015; Borja, 2023; Xu & Takahashi, 2021).

This condition shows that ecological vulnerability cannot be separated from the structure of social inequality in urban space. Migrant women not only experience limited access to formal employment, but are also compelled to live in environments that worsen their social and health conditions (Nachemson-Ekwall, 2023; Parreñas, 2001). From the perspective of ecological justice, this situation reveals an unequal distribution of environmental risk between upper-class groups and the urban poor. Groups with high economic capital can access safe, clean, and healthy residential areas, whereas poor migrant groups must survive in slum, dense, and disaster-prone areas (Whitaker, 2019).

The findings also show how ecological pressure works directly upon the bodies of migrant women. Informant RN described her residence as located in a narrow alley with high levels of pollution due to its proximity to a major road. A hot, crowded, and polluted living space caused continuous physical exhaustion. This experience demonstrates that urban ecological pressure affects not only environmental quality, but also the biological and psychological condition of vulnerable groups. The bodies of migrant women become the first arena to receive the impact of unequal and exploitative urban governance (Arista et al., 2020; Prastiwi, 2023; Sigiro, 2020).

A similar situation was expressed by informant DA, who experienced health problems due to poor water quality in her residence. Water that was unfit for use caused skin disease, yet economic limitations prevented her from accessing housing with better sanitation facilities. This situation shows that the right to a healthy environment is, in practice, still strongly determined by one's class position. For migrant women working in the informal sector, ecological pressure becomes part of everyday life experience that reinforces cycles of social and economic vulnerability.

The experience of informant WD further clarifies that the harshness of urban life is not derived only from socio-economic pressure, but also from the increasingly deteriorating ecological condition of the city. Air pollution, noise, congestion, and crowded living spaces produce prolonged psychological pressure. For migrant women working in the informal sector, these conditions restrict the space for physical and mental recovery. This finding indicates that an unhealthy urban environment contributes to the emotional stress and social exhaustion experienced by vulnerable groups. The modern city, promoted as a symbol of progress, in reality produces inhumane living spaces for some urban communities (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Harvey, 2009).

Meanwhile, the experience of informant DS shows that flooding in urban areas is not merely a matter of inconvenience, but concerns the safety of life for the urban poor. When heavy rain causes inundation along the route to the workplace, migrant women face the risk of losing income as well as threats to physical safety. This statement shows that vulnerable groups bear the direct ecological impacts of the city without adequate social protection. In this respect, ecological pressure cannot be understood simply as a natural disaster, but as a consequence of unjust urban development governance (Angelovski, 2023; Bronfenbrenner, 2009).

The findings demonstrate a very close relationship between urban environmental degradation and social marginalization. Environmental damage does not have universal effects; rather, it operates through social structures that position the urban poor as the most affected group. In other words, urban ecological pressure reinforces the reproduction of social inequality (Adger, 2000; Hayward, 2006). Migrant women working in SPA establishments not only face social stigma because of their work, but also live in ecological spaces that intensify health, economic, and psychological vulnerability.

From the perspective of civil society, this study found that social activists view urban ecological pressure as a form of structural injustice first experienced by vulnerable groups. Informant SI emphasized that migrant women generally live in dense areas with poor sanitation and high flood risk. This condition shows that urban development tends to concentrate poor groups in areas with the worst environmental quality. In this context, the urban environment becomes an instrument of social

exclusion that reinforces the boundary between groups with access to the city and those marginalized from decent living spaces (Anguelovski, 2023; Borja, 2023).

This view is reinforced by informant RO, who positioned the right to a healthy environment as an integral part of the right to the city. According to him, women informal workers are often located in ecological spaces that are polluted and disaster-prone, so environmental conditions function as mechanisms of social exclusion. This statement shows that the distribution of ecological space in the city is strongly shaped by power relations and economic interests. The urban poor are not only displaced from the city's economic centers, but are also forced to live in areas of low environmental quality (Kuddus et al., 2020; Wacquant, 2009).

The findings also show that urban development oriented toward urban capitalism contributes to increasing ecological pressure on vulnerable groups (Angelo & Greenberg, 2023; Borja, 2023). Informant TA emphasized that urban development is more oriented toward economic growth, investment, and the commercialization of space than toward fulfilling communities' ecological rights. As a result, green spaces shrink, slum areas expand, and informal workers become the most affected group. This perspective shows that urban ecological pressure is not a natural phenomenon, but the outcome of development policies that favor capital interests over social and ecological justice.

From the perspective of academics, informant ID emphasized that migrant women working in the informal sector experience a double burden of social and ecological vulnerability. They occupy an economically vulnerable position while living in environments of low ecological quality (Achmad, 2023; Baah et al., 2019). This finding shows that environmental degradation and social inequality are intertwined and form what can be called layered marginality. Migrant women not only confront limited economic access, but also bear the direct impacts of the urban ecological crisis.

This view is reinforced by informant AH, who argued that an unhealthy urban environment represents both a failure of urban governance and a violation of human rights. When vulnerable groups are placed in ecological spaces that are dangerous and unfit for habitation, environmental issues are no longer merely technical issues, but become matters of social justice and citizens' rights (Bassam, 2023; Borja, 2023; Harvey, 2009; Zeybekoglu Sadri, 2020). This perspective affirms that the right to the city must include the right to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment.

From the perspective of local government, this study shows recognition that urban ecological pressure intensifies the marginalization of migrant women. Informant HD acknowledged that many migrant women live in dense and flood-prone areas with very limited facilities. This condition makes them increasingly vulnerable to both social and health problems. Meanwhile, informant NM emphasized that ecological pressure must be understood as a structural problem requiring a cross-sectoral approach. The urban environment cannot be separated from issues of social protection, urban poverty, and development inequality (Alzamil, 2017; Harahap, 2013; Kuddus et al., 2020; Whitaker, 2019).

Overall, the findings show that the urban environment is an arena of ecological injustice closely connected to the reproduction of social vulnerability (Anguelovski, 2023; Hayward, 2006; Zeybekoglu Sadri, 2020). Ecological pressure is not experienced equally by all urban residents, but is disproportionately borne by the urban poor and informal workers, including migrant women working in SPA-based

prostitution. They face not only economic exclusion and social stigma, but are also forced to live in ecological spaces that are unhealthy and dangerous.

The findings of this study indicate that the right to the city cannot be separated from the right to a healthy environment. A city that is physically modern does not necessarily provide ecological justice for all its residents. Conversely, capitalist-oriented urban development often produces spatial segregation that reinforces the marginalization of vulnerable groups. Among migrant women informal workers, ecological pressure becomes a factor that deepens cycles of poverty, health vulnerability, and social insecurity (Bonnet et al., 2018; Lefebvre, 2004, 2008; Nachemson-Ekwall, 2023; Zeybekoglu Sadri, 2020).

Thus, this study underscores the importance of an urban-development approach that integrates social and ecological dimensions in a just manner. Urban environmental policy cannot focus solely on physical infrastructure development or urban aesthetics, but must be directed toward the protection of vulnerable groups living in the most fragile ecological spaces. Without policy transformation grounded in socio-ecological justice, urbanization will produce cities that are visually modern but socially exclusive. In such a situation, migrant women will continue to be among the groups most affected by the combination of social injustice and urban ecological degradation.

3. PKLH as a Pedagogy of Social Advocacy in Strengthening the Rights and Empowerment of Urban Migrant Women

The findings show that covert prostitution operating behind the SPA industry in urban areas cannot be understood merely as a consequence of individual economic pressure, but rather as the result of the interconnection between structural inequality, limited access to education, and weak social protection systems for urban migrant women (Hugo, 2017; Monzini, 2005; Syaifudin et al., 2023; Wiryawan & Bunga, 2018). In the context of PKLH, it gains strategic relevance not only as an instrument for knowledge transfer, but also as a pedagogy of social advocacy capable of building critical awareness, strengthening rights recognition, and promoting the empowerment of vulnerable groups in confronting an exclusive urban structure. The findings show that most migrant women working within the SPA prostitution landscape entered the sector with minimal alternative skills, low socio-legal literacy, and inadequate knowledge of urbanization risks and their rights as urban citizens.

This condition indicates that the problem of covert prostitution cannot be separated from the absence of contextual, critical, and transformative education (Benoit et al., 2019; Olofinbiyi & Singh, 2020). The formal education received by migrant women generally does not equip them with the ability to read urban social dynamics, understand power relations within the urban economic structure, or develop life skills that can open access to safer and more decent employment. Consequently, upon entering the city, migrant women face limited economic choices and tend to be pushed into vulnerable informal sectors that offer rapid access to work despite being highly exploitative. In this situation, PKLH is no longer sufficient if understood only as education about population and the environment; it must be reconstructed as a pedagogical approach oriented toward social advocacy and urban community empowerment.

The experience of informant TI shows that her involvement in the SPA sector cannot be separated from the limited access to education and skills training in her

village of origin. She emphasized that if education or training that provided alternative economic skills had been available from the outset, she would likely not have entered that vulnerable work sector. This statement shows that limited education is not merely an individual problem, but also reflects the failure of the social system to provide empowerment spaces for young rural women before they enter urban space. Therefore, education has a preventive function in minimizing migration-related vulnerability and reducing the likelihood that women will be drawn into exploitative work sectors.

This finding is reinforced by the experience of RN, who stated that schools had never provided an understanding of the risks of work in the city or of the structural injustices embedded in urban life. Formal education failed to build critical awareness of the relationship between urbanization, social class, and vulnerability in informal work. As a result, migrant women enter the city with hopes of achieving social mobility, but without preparedness to confront the realities of inequality. This experience shows that education that is not contextualized to urban social problems tends to produce individuals who are vulnerable to exploitation because they lack the reflective capacity to read the structures of injustice they face (Arbeiter & Bučar, 2020; Fuadi et al., 2025).

From the perspective of critical pedagogy, education should not stop at the transfer of normative knowledge, but should function as a space for forming social and political awareness of the realities of inequality. The findings show that migrant women need education that equips them with the ability to understand their basic rights as urban citizens, recognize forms of labor exploitation, and access social and legal protection mechanisms. DA's experience shows that education is understood as the most important advocacy tool because through education a person can learn how to refuse exploitation, seek assistance, and survive without depending on vulnerable work. This statement affirms that, in the context of migrant women, education functions not only to improve economic capacity but also to strengthen social bargaining power and self-protection capacity (Bassam, 2023; Prastiwi, 2023).

The findings also show that migrant women view education as a social process that must be present in community spaces, not only within formal schools. Informant WD emphasized that education should be realized through outreach, community classes, and social mentoring within local communities. This perspective indicates that the social advocacy pedagogy within PKLH must be developed in a participatory and community-based manner so that it can reach vulnerable groups that have long been excluded from formal educational access. Community-based education has the potential to build social solidarity, strengthen collective awareness, and create safe spaces for migrant women to understand their experiences of marginalization.

In addition, the experience of informant DS shows that limited practical skills are one of the main factors pushing migrant women into the covert SPA sector. She emphasized that if accessible skills education were available, she would have the opportunity to work in the formal sector, such as in licensed salons or small businesses. This finding shows that the economic empowerment of migrant women cannot be separated from the provision of vocational education and work training relevant to the needs of the urban labor market. In this context, PKLH must be integrated with skills education and economic capacity building so that it can become a concrete instrument of social empowerment.

From the perspective of non-governmental organizations, this study found that critical education is viewed as a long-term strategy for breaking the chain of poverty and exploitation among migrant women. Informant SI emphasized that many SPA workers enter the sector because they are unaware of work risks and their social rights as urban citizens. Therefore, education is viewed as an instrument of social advocacy capable of opening public awareness of the structures of injustice they face (Campbell et al., 2024). Education is no longer positioned merely as a means of individual capacity building, but also as a tool of social transformation to claim the right to the city and social protection for vulnerable groups.

This view is reinforced by informant RO, who emphasized that many migrant women do not understand their legal and social rights. Therefore, critical education must equip migrant women with an understanding of labor law, social protection mechanisms, and access to assistance services when they experience violence or exploitation. This perspective shows that the pedagogy of social advocacy in PKLH must integrate legal education and civic awareness (Hoefler, 2018; Rasyid et al., 2025; Zompetti, 2006). Migrant women need to be positioned not as objects of morality or criminalization, but as citizen-subjects who have the right to protection, security, and a dignified life.

The findings also show that advocacy education must include the capacity to build collective solidarity among informal workers. Informant TA emphasized that education must not stop at formal literacy, but must teach how to resist social stigma, organize collectively, and build solidarity among migrant women. This perspective demonstrates that education has an important emancipatory dimension in building the social power of vulnerable groups. Social solidarity enables migrant women to have collective spaces for sharing experiences, strengthening social support, and claiming their rights within an exclusive urban structure (Nachemson-Ekwall, 2023).

From an academic perspective, this study found that PKLH needs to be reconstructed as a social advocacy strategy that builds critical awareness of urbanization, inequality, and the right to the city. Informant ID emphasized that population education has been overly oriented toward administrative-demographic issues such as birth rates and population density, without addressing the dimensions of social inequality produced by urbanization. In the context of migrant women, population education should be able to explain how the city operates exclusively and produces the marginalization of the urban poor (B. A. Bhat, 2021; Whitaker, 2019).

This view is reinforced by informant AN, who emphasized that education must become a meeting space between social and legal dimensions. Women informal-sector workers should not be regarded as objects of criminalization, but as citizens who have the right to social protection and economic empowerment. This perspective shows that the social advocacy pedagogy within PKLH must be grounded in human rights and social justice approaches. Education needs to be directed toward recognizing the dignity of migrant women while strengthening their capacity to claim their basic rights in urban space (Hoefler, 2018; Zompetti, 2006).

From the perspective of local government, this study shows recognition that education has a strategic role in the social protection of migrant women. Informant HD emphasized that education can serve as an entry point for economic empowerment and social protection programs through the integration of skills training and social outreach. Meanwhile, informant NM considered that repressive approaches in the form

of control operations are not sufficiently effective in addressing covert prostitution. Education that equips communities with alternative skills and critical awareness is viewed as more effective in preventing migrant women from returning to vulnerable work sectors.

The findings indicate that the social advocacy pedagogy approach within PKLH has significant potential to build a more inclusive and transformative model of empowerment for urban migrant women (B. A. Bhat, 2021; Curthoys & Kendall, 2006; Hofer, 2018; Zeybekoglu Sadri, 2020). Education is understood not only as a means of individual capacity building, but also as a collective strategy to build rights awareness, strengthen social solidarity, and create access to more decent economic opportunities. In PKLH studies, this approach can function as an instrument of social transformation that bridges issues of population, the environment, social justice, and the protection of vulnerable groups.

In addition, this study shows that covert prostitution behind the SPA industry is a manifestation of the layered marginality experienced by urban migrant women. They face not only economic limitations and low educational attainment, but also social stigma, weak legal protection, and limited access to formal employment (Anguelovski, 2023; Borja, 2023; Harvey, 2009; Mitchell, 2003). Therefore, a humanistic and rights-based educational approach is crucial for breaking the cycle of exploitation experienced by vulnerable groups.

Overall, the findings affirm that PKLH needs to be reoriented from a normative approach toward a critical, participatory, and emancipatory pedagogy of social advocacy. Education must be able to build migrant women's awareness of the right to the city, the right to decent work, the right to social protection, and the right to a dignified life. Education must also provide access to alternative skills that enable migrant women to achieve economic independence without depending on exploitative informal sectors.

Thus, PKLH as a pedagogy of social advocacy occupies a strategic position in strengthening the rights and empowerment of urban migrant women. Education is no longer understood merely as a formal academic process, but as a space of social transformation capable of reducing vulnerability, breaking cycles of exploitation, strengthening the socio-economic bargaining power of migrant women, and encouraging the creation of urban spaces that are more inclusive, just, and humane. In the context of increasingly complex urbanization, the development of advocacy-based PKLH is an urgent need so that urban development is oriented not only toward economic growth, but also toward the protection of the dignity and rights of the most vulnerable groups in urban space.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study affirms that urbanization in DKI Jakarta produces not only spatial transformation and economic growth, but also reproduces social inequality, ecological vulnerability, and the marginalization of urban migrant women. Migrant women working within the SPA prostitution landscape occupy the most vulnerable position because they must confront limited education, weak access to formal employment, urban ecological pressure, social stigma, and inadequate legal and social protection. In this context, urbanization operates not as an equal space of social

mobility, but as an arena of exclusion that more strongly benefits groups with substantial economic, educational, and social capital.

This study shows that PKLH has a strategic position to be reconstructed as a critical, reflective, and emancipatory pedagogy of social advocacy. PKLH is no longer sufficient if understood merely as an instrument of demographic and environmental education in a technocratic sense; rather, it must be directed toward building critical awareness of the relationship between urbanization, social inequality, ecological vulnerability, gender, and the right to the city. Through this approach, education can function as an instrument of social transformation that strengthens migrant women's capacity to understand their rights, recognize forms of exploitation, build social solidarity, and access safer and more dignified economic opportunities.

Furthermore, this study affirms that the protection of urban migrant women cannot be pursued through repressive approaches alone, but requires the cross-sectoral integration of education, environmental, social protection, and economic empowerment policies. Therefore, just urban development must ensure that vulnerable groups obtain the right to a healthy environment, decent work, critical education, and equal access to urban resources. Without such transformation, urbanization will merely prolong cycles of social marginalization behind a narrative of urban modernity that appears physically advanced but remains socially and ecologically exclusive.

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