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Exploitation of Child Domestic Workers in Ngenger Culture of Javanese Society in Indonesia

By Tri Joko Sri Haryono,¹ Sri Endah Kinasih,² and Siti Mas'udah³

Abstract

This study explains a Javanese cultural practice called *ngenger*—when girls volunteer to be domestic servants in exchange for educational benefits—as a form of exploitation of labor. The purpose of this study is to understand this Javanese tradition from the perspective of Gender Anthropology. This research is a descriptive study using a qualitative method. The location of the study was in Surabaya and the city of Malang, East Java, and was conducted by collecting data in the form of observations and in-depth interviews. The informants for this study were girls who are domestic workers, parents of the child domestic workers, and the recipient parents of these child domestic workers. This study shows that *ngenger* girls employed as domestic workers are exploited since they lose almost all of their rights. The ways in which *ngenger* girls are exploited include having low wages, lacking bargaining power, being forced to be obedient, lacking the courage to claim their rights, not daring to complain to anyone, and continuing to serve the recipients. The condition where the *ngenger* girls do not have bargaining position over the recipients of their labor is precisely what makes this practice a form of exploitation. The relationship between girls and the recipient families is a patron-client relationship. The patron-client relation should be a reciprocal relationship that is mutually beneficial. A recipient patron of a *ngenger* girl has the responsibility to fulfill the needs of the girl as a client, and, in return, the client must give her loyalty to her patron. Patron-client relations are economic relations where profits must be achieved, which makes exploitation possible. In fact, *ngenger* girls do not get the fulfillment of basic needs, protection, and good education, but they still continue to be loyal to the recipient parents. This circumstance is what makes the relationship in *ngenger* culture an unfair and exploitative relationship.

Keywords: *Ngenger*, Girl child domestic workers (GCDWs), Patron-client relationship, Labor exploitation, Indonesia

Introduction

In Java, Indonesia, prospective girl child domestic workers (GCDWs) GCDWs are known as *ngenger* (Prawiroatmodjo, 1996; Sulisty, 2006), *nyuwita* (Murtono, 1985), *budak*, *abdi*, *rewang* or *emban*, *batur*, and *babu* (Dragojlovic & McGregor, 2022; Kusuma, 2013). The *ngenger*

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culture has long occurred in Javanese culture, even before the era of Dutch East Indies colonial government. The culture of *ngenger* has been a part of Javanese culture for centuries, and the lack of documented sources make it very difficult to ascertain when this culture initially developed. *Ngenger* in Javanese culture refers to the domestic services of a girl in another family's house which generally has a higher social status, and this culture is rooted in feudal habits (Wahyudi et al., 2024; Wiratama et al., 2023; Sayu et al., 2023). In return, as an expression of gratitude, the *ngenger* child will do household work (Dragojlovic & McGregor, 2022; David Jordhus-Lier, 2018). Some Javanese *ngenger* were motivated to attain a higher rank by learning and becoming someone's pupil (Tjitrawati et al., 2023; Amalia et al., 2023). The term learning is not in the narrow sense of school, but rather learning from the life experiences of others. According to Ghosh (2021), GCDW's life experience is learning from others; this practice also happens in Bangladesh, passed down from generation to generation in the same family. According to the ILO (2004), *ngenger* is a Javanese tradition in the form of entrusting underprivileged girls to more prosperous families, be it people who still have family relations or not. The girl who becomes *ngenger* gets financial help in life and education for a better future. In return, the *ngenger* girl must help with the household work in the recipient family (Tjitrawati & Romadhona, 2023).

One common pathway to girls becoming *ngenger* is that a mother who is a domestic worker may bring her daughter along to the workplace due to several reasons. First, they can monitor their daughter while working at the same time. Second, the girl's need for food can be fulfilled, and it also helps to ease the economic burden of indigent families. Third, the domestic worker hopes that the employer may pay for the girl's tuition fee. Fourth, they expect the employer to give a future work opportunity to their child. From this circumstance, the girl prematurely becomes a domestic worker through *ngenger*.

The types of girl child domestic workers (GCDWs) are divided into two types, namely domestic workers for local needs (Hiremath, 2022; Kyegombe et al., 2021; Miranda-Juárez, 2020; Musizvingoza et al., 2022; Shoa, 2022; Thi et al., 2021) and girl child domestic migrant workers (GCDMWs) who migrate to various countries such as India (Kurian et al., 2022), Hong Kong (Ho et al., 2022; Hoiting, 2022), Germany (Palenga-Möllenbeck, 2022), and Sweden (Eldén & Anving, 2022). There is also a difference between GCDWs based on their origins, namely domestic workers who still have family relations and girl child domestic workers who have no family relations (Tjitrawati & Romadhona, 2024).

This research is different from the previous studies which mainly examined the issues of protection (Gamlin et al., 2015; Husni & Suryani, 2018; Kyegombe et al., 2021; Pape, 2016), sexual exploitation, verbal and physical violence experienced by GCDWs (Alemayehu & Fekadu, 2019; Ghosh, 2021; Thi et al., 2021), and girl child trafficking (Islam et al., 2013; Kiss et al., 2015; Stanford et al., 2021; Sutinah & Kinuthia, 2019; Romadhona, 2022; Sunyowati et al., 2022). The local Javanese culture at the root of the *ngenger* practice is still rarely examined, which actually perpetuates the exploitation of GCDWs.

This study examined *ngenger* as a part of Javanese culture that enables GCDW exploitation. Why does the current *ngenger* culture arise for discussion? First, the culture of *ngenger* addresses the future of girls who are still in the process of growth and development, and these customs must require protection from all forms of exploitation and physical, psychological, and social violence. Second, the problems faced by GCDWs as marginal girls are violations of human rights that must be guaranteed, protected, and fulfilled by parents, families, communities, the government and the state, as mandated by Law No. 35 of 2014 and Amendments to Law No. 23 of 2002 concerning girl child protection (Razy, 2023; Sunyowati et al., 2023). Third, when

referring to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which contains articles on girls's rights, including the right to survival, the right to grow and develop, the right of protection from all forms of exploitation and participation rights, girls who are employed as GCDWs fall under the criteria of economic exploitation and other rights violations. GCDWs' type of work is included in exploitative criteria regarding girls's rights which consist of long working hours, unclear wage standards, lost opportunities for school and play, no chance of holidays, no opportunity to receive education, living separately from their family, and being under risk of violent treatment (physical, psychological, and social) by families who accept *ngenger* or by *ngenger* brokers.

This study is rooted in the perspective of Gender Anthropology, which uses feminist theories to study "socio-cultural settings" (Sehra, 2020, p. 232). This study emphasizes that *ngenger* is always female-faced and explains the socio-cultural background necessary to understand why girls become domestic workers. When parents decide that a daughter must follow *ngenger* culture, then the girl child will likely experience exploitation, so this study further focuses on the different forms of exploitation experienced by GCDW. The current study aims to explain the presence of *ngenger* in Javanese culture that in turn has an impact on the exploitation of girls and also to analyze the girl workers' relationship with their *ngenger* recipients.

Research Methodology

This study uses descriptive research with a qualitative approach (Anjara et al., 2017). There are four stages of this study. The first stage is determining and justifying the location of the research in the areas of Surabaya and Malang. An important consideration is that residents of Surabaya and Malang (the city of Malang, Malang, and Batu) are very dependent on domestic workers, and the two locations are experiencing rapid development in new housing. Furthermore, in these two locations, they have begun designing practices and organizations to protect GCDWs which can create the chance of decent jobs for GCDWs and serve as a place to foster the rights of GCDWs as human beings and workers. The second stage of the study was data collection. In collecting data, observations were made to find forms of exploitation of *ngenger* girls and *ngenger* relationships with recipient parents. The third stage was an in-depth interview with sixteen informants, including five *ngenger* informants in Surabaya and Malang, four informants who are parents of *ngenger*, and five informants who are recipient parents of *ngenger*. A life course approach was employed with five girl informants and four informants who are parents of the *ngenger* girls. In the life course approach, an individual's life history is scrutinized, specifically analyzing how early events have shaped subsequent actions and significant life events such as family, marriage, and divorce (Bribiescas, 2021; Helfrecht et al., 2020; Yin, 2009). The selected informants were chosen due to family relations between the girls and their recipient parents. The last stage was data analysis in which the collected data were classified and identified based on the theme and then analyzed.

This study adopted a qualitative method to obtain a detailed report of the life journey of *ngenger* girls, the problems they face, and the treatment they received from the recipient parents. This was acquired through an interactive process between researcher and informant. The treatment of the *ngenger* girl by the recipient parents can be seen as a process and not a single event. Thus, this study observed the entire process of becoming a *ngenger* girl (before and during the experience) to gain insight into the exploitation. By doing so, this study illustrates the complex experiences of the *ngenger* girl.

Results and Discussion: Exploitation of Girl Child Domestic Workers

The latest data from Suhaimi and associates (2013) reveal that there are 67 million domestic workers scattered across the world (Parreñas et al., 2019). According to these data, 83% of them are women. While in Indonesia, according to the National Labor Force Survey (Sakernas), in 2013, there were 2,555,000 domestic workers, including GCDWs. In 2015, the number increased to 4,034,290, and of these, 74% are women. In another survey by the ILO in Jakarta in 2016, there are 4.5 million local domestic workers working in the country (Rianti, 2023). This amount will increase along with the level of economic growth in Indonesia. ILO data are the results of a study of the estimated domestic workers' population based on Sakernas' data summarized in a report entitled, "Toward a Better Estimation of Total Population of Domestic Workers in Indonesia" (Suhaimi & Farid, 2017). The increasing number of domestic workers indicates high demand, including for GCDWs. For girls and young women, the *ngenger* culture becomes a separate employment field that employs significant numbers of laborers.

The condition of *ngenger* girls is a condition that still is not known to others; therefore, people rarely pay attention to the problem of GCDWs as a marginal group. Some people even consider *ngenger* culture as a form of protection for GCDWs even though it is not. In general, *ngenger* girls still have close family relations even though they work as domestic workers. In some cases, the girls continue to be treated as relatives and do not get paid. There is also a situation where the recipient family of the *ngenger* does not have family ties, but the family is still committed to helping *ngenger* girls. Thus, *ngenger* culture is expected as a way to cover the financial and educational needs of the girls for their future.

Informant W² (18 years old) said that recipient parents choose GCDWs because girls are more manageable than adult domestic workers and can be paid less. W did not understand the details of her wages. According to her, the tuition fees were also included in the wages given by the recipient parents. At the beginning of the agreement, it is often stated that the recipient parents of an *ngenger* allow her to study and the tuition fee is included in her wages. W said, "Tuition is included in the wages, while college-related needs such as books and others are also given to me through some kind of pocket money and I got Rp 300.000 per month" (personal communication). The informant did not know the actual wages that she earned, because her wages were deducted from the tuition fees and the amount received is Rp 300.000 per month as pocket money. There are no bonuses, except for two sets of clothes that W received for the Eid holiday.

For AIS (16 years old), the wage system applied by the recipient parents is not given every month but is saved and held for the GCDW by them. Thus, if she wants to buy something or use the money, the informant needs to ask the recipient parent. The wages earned by AIS are Rp 600.000 per month, but she does not take it all because she is not wasteful in spending her money. AIS explains, "But if I need the money, for instance, to buy clothes or send some money to my parents, then I will ask my mother [recipient parent]" (personal communication).

The lowest wage of Rp 300.000 was earned by R (12 years old). R received her own wage. As conveyed by R's recipient parent: "The money can be used for her own pocket money. If I give her, I can only give two thousand or three thousand. If I don't have any money, I can't give any" (personal communication). R worked to clean the yard, sweep, and tidy the garden. It was all done after she went home from school at 14:00 hours in the afternoon. She did not do the heavy and difficult work because she was still a young girl.

Another informant D has been a girl child domestic worker since she graduated from elementary school. D is eager to continue her studies at a higher education level but has financial

² To preserve anonymity, we are using initials rather than full names of the informants.

constraints. Thus, becoming a *ngenger* is the means for her to continue her studies. According to D, the time to rest given by the recipient parent is not enough. However, accompanying a toddler to sleep or play is considered as rest by the recipient parent. In other words, D is a full-time GCDW since she does not even get a holiday break. Although she wants to get some holidays and do her school homework at her friend's house, she does not have the courage to tell or ask her recipient parent. On the other hand, the recipient parents often invite D to go on vacation with the family. D's current wages are Rp 500.000 per month. The first time she worked as a *ngenger*, her wages were only Rp 200.000 per month, but her wages were raised two months ago. In addition, on Eid holiday, she only gets new clothes rather than wages and thus is not given the additional wages by the recipient parent. D was treated well by the recipient parents, but sometimes they insulted her by saying that D does not pay enough attention to the employer's daughter, or that her work was flawed. Sometimes, the recipient parents were completely indifferent to her. Because of this treatment, D did not feel at home but was reluctant to convey her discomfort to the recipient parents.

The recipient parents of a *ngenger* tend to choose girls rather than boys or adults as domestic workers because their wages are lower, around Rp 300.000 to Rp 600.000 per month. GCDWs wage value is lower than the wage of the adult domestic worker, which is around Rp 1.000.000 per month. The difference in wage determination is influenced by years of work experience. For example, an adult domestic worker who is experienced has a higher wage, so the upper bound of adult domestic workers' wages is also high. Therefore, child domestic workers through the culture of *ngenger* do not have bargaining power, so they are unable to set higher wages. Inexperienced domestic workers such as GCDWs also tend to be more obedient and not demanding because they must accept whatever wages the recipient parents have set. In addition, GCDWs are anxious or afraid of saving their own money; thus, they prefer the recipient parents to hold their money and only take it when needed. This condition is due to the lower bargaining power of GCDWs compared to adult domestic workers. In terms of workload, it appears that the work carried out by girls does not require advanced skills even though the level of variation is high, so *ngenger* girls do not have any bargaining leverage (Baker & Cornelson, 2018; Kabeer, 2021; Stoet & Geary, 2015).

In addition to the lower wages given to *ngenger* girls, other problems arise. GCDWs only work within homes which are private domains. Thus, domestic work is often not considered real work (Islam et al., 2014; Kabeer, 2021; Kyegombe et al., 2021). As a result, the rights of GCDWs are often ignored by the recipient parent. GCDWs do not have access to a legal system that regulates all other work and a social support system, so their rights as workers are being denied (Albin & Mantouvalou, 2012; Fudge, 2014; Irawaty, 2011).

According to Ferguson (2013) and Wolpe (2013), the sexual division of labor creates gender-based job segregation and a feminization and devaluation of domestic work (Ferguson, 2013; Wolpe, 2013). Despite being commodified, this work is still considered to be of low socioeconomic value and viewed as dirty work. Besides, GCDWs are also strictly supervised by the recipient parent. For instance, almost every night W's bedroom is checked by the recipient parents. The examination of the bedroom is a form of parental supervision from the recipient parents in order to prevent the possibility of *ngenger* girls doing anything outside the bounds of acceptable behavior. According to Ferguson (2013) and Wolpe (2013), the practice of checking the GCDW's room is commonly done among middle-class employers in Jakarta. Yet the strictness of supervision is not proportional but excessive, especially given that the GCDWs are not given fair wages or the right to paid leave.

Another aspect of AIS's work that is exploitative is the fact that she is expected to do other work beyond her primary tasks and to be ready at all times of the day to help the other domestic workers or family members. AIS became an *ngenger* girl due to her parent's inability to pay for her tuition fee. Because of the economic pressure, AIS wanted to *ngenger* to Mrs. F even though she already had two adult domestic workers. AIS's responsibilities are to take care of and teach Mrs. F's daughter and help the other domestic workers or Mrs. F's family members. Mrs. F has a 5-year-old daughter, so every day AIS bathes her, feeds her, takes her to pre-school class or playgroup, and picks her up at 10 am. Arriving at home, AIS prepares herself to go to school in the afternoon. At night, she teaches Mrs. F's daughter. As stated by AIS,

I was asked for help by other domestic workers to reheat food. Sometimes they also asked me to walk to the Wiyung market on foot, which is about 1 km from the house. If *Mbak* comes (the sister of the recipient parents), sometimes I am asked to help buy something at Indomart.

From the above description, GCDWs are often asked for help from domestic workers or the other family members of the recipient parent. It can be said that GCDWs are vulnerable to exploitation. According to feminist economist Folbre (1994, 2009), care work—helping people to meet their needs such as caring for or teaching children—has historically been seen as worthless because it was unpaid work done by women. Taking care of children and helping them study has important values for the economy; this type of job deserves more recognition because it is important for the sustainable development of humanity. In the context of domestic work, it is important for domestic workers (called PRTs in Indonesia) to be recognized as workers and viewed in the context of employee-employer relations rather than family relations. According to Kabeer (2021), the treatment of domestic workers is related to the issues of status and hierarchy, where a family with higher hierarchical status demeans the people who work as domestic workers (Kabeer, 2021). In this situation, employers often deem their domestic workers as an extension of themselves to do heavy jobs rather than seeing them as autonomous workers. The status hierarchy in the relationship between domestic workers and employers is often projected in the form of work orders and employer supervision. In this context, an unlimited workload is often assigned to domestic workers, which underscores the low status of domestic workers itself.

The inability of *ngenger* girls to have bargaining power is also a problem that needs to be addressed. The weak bargaining position of *ngenger* girls to determine working hours, the amount of wage, types of work, and environmental conditions of work is due to their lack of knowledge of their rights and obligations as workers. This condition is worsened by the fact that those who are willing to work as *ngenger* come from a background of low social status, economics, and education (elementary or junior high school graduates), which was the case for W, AIS, R, and D. For girls, working as GCDWs is an easier choice compared to other jobs such as factory work that requires a diploma for at least a junior or senior high school level. For indigent families, daughters are a solution to support the economic life of the family as a “feminization of survival” (Utaminingsih, 2021). For them, being a *ngenger* girl is compulsory because of the economic pressure and poverty, because that is the only available job that they can do, and because girls and women are socially constructed and obligated to do domestic work. According to Kabeer (2021), the highest education level of domestic workers is mostly elementary and junior high school. Some of them, however, have not even graduated from elementary and junior high school. Low education level and the lack of skills lead them to domestic work. Socially, domestic work is so devalued

that it is not even recognized as a job. The way that society sees a domestic worker is different compared to people who work outside the home, whose work is respected more because they make more money and have higher social status.

Theoretically, domestic workers are also part of the overall labor force because they provide paid services. A laborer is someone who participates directly or indirectly in production (Kabeer, 2021). They do not have the means of production, so to maintain their lives, they must sell their energy to be exchanged for wages. Although they are like other workers in exchanging their energy for livelihood, they are more at risk of exploitation and withholding of wages. Their class also fosters their exploitation, as indigent families send their girls to become *ngenger* so that they can ease the economic burden of the family. The indigent engage in *ngenger* with the sincere belief and hope that being associated with middle-class families will allow their daughters to get a decent living, knowledge, and politeness, which are considered important values for their future. It is this bargain that is used to justify the lack of wages. In the process of *ngenger*, a GCDW is expected to be grateful because she has been helped and educated by the recipient parent. However, this research study shows that what *ngenger* girls expect does not always fit the reality.

Why is there an element of exploitation within the Javanese *ngenger* culture? First, most of the *ngenger* are girls. Second, there is an injustice and denial of rights to GCDWs even though their work is the same as other adult domestic workers. The thing that distinguishes GCDWs and domestic workers is that GCDWs do not receive clear wages. Third, GCDWs do not have clear working hours, work contracts, or holidays. The injustice and inconvenience of this position cannot be avoided by GCDWs because of high economic pressure. Hence, they must accept being placed in any recipient family even if it is not in accordance with their wishes. On the contrary, the recipient parents welcome the existence of GCDWs through *ngenger* culture because the presence of GCDWs can help to ease their domestic work and daily needs of their families.

Why do the recipient parents of *ngenger* prefer to make girls as their GCDWs through the *ngenger* culture? According to them, GCDWs are easier to manage, easy to educate, not demanding, and can play the role of friend for their own daughters. The recipient parents always expect to get more than what they give to *ngenger* girls. The recipient parents feel that they have fulfilled their obligations, so in return, they deserve their rights. This expectation leads to the negative side of *ngenger*, which is the exploitation of *ngenger* girls' labor. The recipient parents expect a high return from the GCDW since they have already given money and education, while in contrast, *ngenger* girls do not receive typical workers' rights such as fixed working hours, employment contracts, acceptable wage standards, and holidays. Therefore, it can be said that exploitation goes alongside the practice of *ngenger*.

According to the Javanese people, the *ngenger* culture is to participate in learning and seek a decent living from the people who are followed, so they do not believe that they are working as domestic workers (Albin & Mantouvalou, 2012; Fudge, 2014; Irawaty, 2011). In other words, the *ngenger* girls' work is perceived as a form of devotion to the recipient family. Another fundamental difference between the actual *ngenger* and the domestic worker in Javanese culture is the existence of a relationship system between protectors and those protected. Scott's study (1986) of the patron-client relationship is useful to apply to the *ngenger* practice (Scott, 1986). Scott (1986) describes the patron-client relationship as an informal but binding exchange between an individual with a higher socioeconomic status (patron) using influence, resources, and power to provide protection to someone with lower status (client). The asymmetric relationship between the two creates a mutually beneficial reciprocal relationship. The patron has the responsibility to meet the needs of the client (in this case, the GCDW), and the client must be loyal to the patron. The patron-client

relationship also exists in the culture of South Sulawesi. Putra (1988) studied *Minawang* by using Scott's (1986) concept of patron-client relations and explained how the relationship between *karaeng* and *anakaraeng* in *Minawang* is one of mutual needs. The *karaeng* and *anakaraeng* are not in a rigid and lifelong relationship, but their relationship can be stopped when both feel they no longer benefit one another. While such an exchange can be beneficial and based on mutual needs, the difference in economic conditions and social status between the recipient parents and *ngenger* girls causes unequal relationships, placing the client in a lower (inferior) position and the patron in a higher (superior) position (Scott, 1986).

In summary, patron-client relationships involve a basic agreement between both parties, and the relationship is related to their respective social relations. Both patrons and clients have logical consequences that result from the rights and obligations of each party. *Ngenger* girls must obey the recipient parent, and in return, the recipient parents will provide a decent life, protection, and teaching social values that will be useful for the girls in the future. The hope for mutual economic and social benefits between the two is done through an agreement that is carried out informally, by being socialized in the community through social values (Scott, 1986).

Patron-client relations were social relations at first. But they started to change to be economic relations when capitalism developed in many aspects of human life. Since economic relations require profit and loss, the patron was tempted to exploit the client to gain profits. The shift of social relations into economic relations has caused patron-client relations to turn into unfair relationships and exploitation of girls. This exploitation happens when *ngenger* girls are not allowed the fulfillment of basic needs, protection, or a good education yet they still have to continue to be loyal to the recipient parents. Based on the data previously explained, each recipient parent of a *ngenger* pays a different amount of wages depending on the type of work and the family members of the recipient parent. However, the wage amount given to GCDWs should only be determined by their workload and wage standards. The recipient parent determines the working hours, the rewards obtained, and the type of work that must be done by *ngenger* girls. The act of obedience from a *ngenger* girl child creates a potential for an exploitative circumstance. *Ngenger* girls cannot refuse when the parents ask them to do extra work. They also consider the extra work as an obligation that must not be refused. On the contrary, their overtime pay is given as pocket money and is not clearly part of their wages as given by the recipient parent. The recipient parent only considers the pocket money as a token of gratitude, while *ngenger* girls consider pocket money as a "fortune." This circumstance shows that *ngenger* girls suffer from subordination and exploitation.

Many women from upper-middle-class families take advantage of the international division of labor through the *ngenger* culture and the feminization of domestic workers by employing them as cheap laborers. This system is a form of fake kinship, where exploitation is masked by calling *ngenger* girls part of the family (Albin & Mantouvalou, 2012; Fudge, 2014; Irawaty, 2011). In fact, *ngenger* culture hides the fact that their working conditions are exploitative, underpaid, and very strict to the point where they must be available 24 hours a day without clear boundaries between worker and employer.

Conclusion

This study concluded that *ngenger* girl child domestic workers are exploited and lose almost all of their rights as workers. *Ngenger* girls are underpaid or receive low wages, do not have bargaining power, are more obedient and less brave to claim their rights, do not dare to complain to anyone, and do not have limits on their work. The work done by these girls does not require

advanced skills even though the types of work are varied. Therefore, the *ngenger* girls do not have a bargaining position in relation to the recipient parents. Even the *ngenger* girls who seem to be protected by recipient parents are still, in fact, exploited. Furthermore, a GCDW's relationship with a recipient parent is a patron-client relation. The patron-client relation is a reciprocal relationship that should be mutually beneficial. The recipient parent of *ngenger* as a patron has the responsibility to fulfill the needs of the girl as a client, and, in return, the client must give her loyalty to the patron. Because patron-client relations involve economic relations, where profit is a motive, exploitation is possible or even likely. In fact, *ngenger* girls do not receive the fulfillment of basic needs, protection, and good education, but they still continue to be loyal to the recipient parents. This circumstance is what makes *ngenger* culture an unfair and exploitative relationship.

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