

The Meaning of Life of a Digital Commercial Sex Worker Using the MiChat Application in Gresik Regency: A Logotherapy-Based Intrinsic Case Study

Ziadatur Rif'ah¹, Ima Fitri Sholichah²

¹Program Studi Psikologi, Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik, 61121, Gresik, Indonesia

masdonoo23@gmail.com

²Program Studi Psikologi, Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik, 61121, Gresik, Indonesia

ima_fitri@umg.ac.id

Keywords:

Digital Sex Worker
Meaning Of Life
Logotherapy
MiChat
Case Study

ABSTRACT

The rapid development of digital technology has transformed the landscape of commercial sex work, including through the MiChat application in Gresik Regency, a region known for its strong religious identity. This study aims to explore the meaning of life experienced by digital commercial sex workers who operate through MiChat in Gresik. The study employed a qualitative intrinsic case study approach using in-depth interviews and observation as data collection techniques. The participant was a 29-year-old woman (Subject L) who had been active as a digital commercial sex worker via MiChat. Data were analyzed thematically based on Viktor Frankl's logotherapy framework, particularly the dimensions of freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning of life. The findings reveal that Subject L's involvement in digital sex work emerged from multiple interconnected factors, including family instability, early sexual trauma, economic pressure, and the accessibility provided by digital technology. Despite these difficulties, the participant demonstrated self-reflection, selective self-regulation in client interactions, and aspirations for a more meaningful future life involving emotional stability and family life. Meaning in life was constructed through survival strategies, creative values reflected in nail art activities, interpersonal experiences, and spiritual reflection amid feelings of guilt and social stigma. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the existential experiences of marginalized individuals in digitally mediated environments. However, the findings are limited to a single intrinsic case study and are not intended for broad generalization.

This is an open-access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.



Corresponding Author:

Ziadatur Rif'ah

Program Studi Psikologi, Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Muhammadiyah Gresik, 61121, Gresik, Indonesia

Email: masdonoo23@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has fundamentally transformed how human beings interact, work, and build social relationships. This transformation has also reached the practice of commercial sex work, which is no longer confined to physical localization or specific venues but has migrated to online spaces. If previously prostitution transactions were synonymous with direct, face-to-face interaction, digital applications now allow this process to occur in a more hidden, rapid, and efficient manner (Anggoro, 2025).

In Indonesia, the use of digital applications for prostitution has frequently come to light. Instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp, as well as anonymous social applications like MiChat, are often used as transaction platforms. MiChat, with its “people nearby” feature, enables users to find others in their immediate vicinity and has been widely exploited as a medium for digital prostitution (Azahra & Aprison, 2022). Research has shown that digital sex work represents an adaptation of sex workers to technological development, providing broader consumer access while reducing the risks associated with direct interaction in public spaces (Jones, 2015).

In Gresik Regency, this phenomenon has surfaced through multiple cases handled by law enforcement. Between 2019 and 2025, several incidents involving prostitution facilitated through MiChat were reported and acted upon by the Gresik Police, demonstrating that digital prostitution has become a recurring social phenomenon rather than an isolated incident (Arfah & Belarminus, 2019; Suriyanto, 2023). This phenomenon is particularly significant because Gresik is widely recognized as a “Santri City,” a region with deep religious roots, a history of Islamic proselytization by the Wali Songo, and numerous Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). The paradox between religious identity and the reality of digital prostitution forms the unique contextual backdrop of this study (Saleh & Munir, 2024).

From a psychological and sociological perspective, prostitution is often understood not merely as moral deviance but also as a survival strategy in response to economic limitations, restricted employment opportunities, and social pressures (Farley, 2004). However, a critical gap exists in the literature: while several Indonesian studies have examined the meaning of life among female

sex workers (Budiasih, 2024; Widodoningsih, 2020), the experiences of digital sex workers who operate specifically through applications such as MiChat remain largely unexplored (Azahra & Aprison, 2022; Chaidir & Tuapattinaja, 2019).

Viktor Frankl's logotherapy provides a powerful lens through which to understand the existential experiences of individuals in marginalized conditions. Frankl (2006) argues that every human being possesses an irreducible capacity to find meaning even in the most difficult circumstances, driven by three core dimensions: freedom of will, will to meaning, and the meaning of life itself. Previous studies on sex workers in Indonesia have documented how meaning is sought through relationships, roles as mothers, and strategies of resilience (Budiasih, 2024; Widodoningsih, 2020), but none have examined the specific experience of digital sex workers who engage clients through mobile applications in a religiously conservative community.

This study, therefore, aims to explore how digital commercial sex workers who operate through the MiChat application in Gresik Regency construct and experience meaning in their lives. By giving voice to a group that is frequently silenced or reduced to objects of stigma, this research seeks to offer a more complete, nuanced, and humanistic understanding of their existential condition.

Therefore, this study specifically aims to explore how a digital commercial sex worker operating through the MiChat application constructs and experiences meaning in life through Viktor Frankl's dimensions of freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning of life.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach using an intrinsic case study design. The intrinsic case study method was selected because the research focused on understanding a specific and unique case in depth, namely the existential experiences and meaning-making process of a digital commercial sex worker operating through the MiChat application in Gresik Regency. According to Stake (1995), intrinsic case studies are conducted because the researcher has a genuine interest in understanding the uniqueness and complexity of a particular case rather than generating broad generalizations.

The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to explore subjective experiences, personal meanings, emotional dynamics, and existential reflections that could not be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Viktor Frankl's logotherapy framework was used as the primary theoretical lens, particularly the dimensions of freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning of life (Frankl, 2006).



Figure 1. Research Flowchart

The research flowchart illustrates the overall stages of the study, beginning from research problem identification, literature review, research gap identification, formulation of research objectives, selection of qualitative intrinsic case study design, participant determination, purposive sampling, data collection through interviews and observation, transcription, thematic

analysis, categorization based on Viktor Frankl's dimensions, credibility validation, interpretation of findings, and conclusion drawing.

2.2 Participant

The participant in this study was a 29-year-old woman identified using the pseudonym "L" to protect confidentiality. Participant selection was conducted purposively based on several criteria: (1) actively engaging in digital commercial sex work through the MiChat application, (2) operating within the Gresik Regency area, and (3) voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study through informed consent.

The participant was selected because she represented an information-rich case that could provide deep insight into the existential experiences of digital sex workers in a religiously conservative environment. Subject L was not originally from Gresik and had experienced several significant life stressors, including parental divorce, early sexual trauma, economic hardship, and unstable interpersonal relationships. These experiences shaped her involvement in digital sex work and her process of meaning-making.

2.3 Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through in-depth semi-structured interviews and naturalistic observation. Two interview sessions were conducted, each lasting approximately 90–120 minutes. Interviews took place in an informal café setting chosen collaboratively with the participant to create a more comfortable and less intimidating atmosphere.

The interviews were guided by a semi-structured interview protocol that allowed flexibility for participants to narrate their experiences openly. Topics explored included personal background, experiences entering digital sex work, daily interactions through MiChat, emotional and psychological experiences, social relationships, spiritual life, and future aspirations.

All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and transcribed verbatim for analysis. Observations were conducted during interviews and subsequent interactions to capture non-verbal expressions, emotional responses, communication patterns, and contextual environmental conditions relevant to the participant's lived experiences.

The interview guide used in this study is attached in the appendix section.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis procedure adapted from Empirical Phenomenological Psychology (EPP) combined with Viktor Frankl's logotherapy framework (Frankl, 2006; Stake, 1995). The integration of these approaches allowed the researcher to examine both the participants' lived experiences and the existential meanings embedded within those experiences.

The analysis process consisted of several stages:

1. Verbatim transcription of interview recordings.
2. Repeated reading of transcripts to obtain a holistic understanding.
3. Open coding to identify significant statements and recurring themes.
4. Categorization of themes according to Frankl's three dimensions:
 - freedom of will,
 - will to meaning,
 - meaning of life.
5. Interpretive synthesis connecting participant narratives with existential and logotherapeutic concepts.

The unit of analysis in this study was the participant's meaning-making process as reflected in her narratives, behaviors, emotional expressions, and future orientation.

2.5 Credibility Measures

To ensure data credibility and trustworthiness, several validation strategies were applied. First, source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and contextual documentation. Second, member checking was implemented by returning preliminary interpretations to the participant for confirmation and clarification.

Third, peer debriefing was conducted through discussions with academic supervisors and colleagues to minimize subjective researcher bias during interpretation. Fourth, an audit trail was maintained throughout the research process, including interview transcripts, field notes, coding procedures, analytic memos, and reflective documentation.

These procedures were implemented to enhance transparency, consistency, and interpretive rigor within the qualitative research process.

2.6 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study due to the participants' vulnerable social position and the sensitive nature of the research topic. Prior to participation, the participant voluntarily signed informed consent after receiving an explanation regarding the study objectives, procedures, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequences.

To maintain anonymity and psychological safety, all identifying information was removed and replaced using pseudonyms or initials. Interview recordings and transcripts were stored securely and used solely for academic purposes.

The researcher also conducted a reflexive evaluation throughout the research process to minimize subjective assumptions and potential bias, particularly considering the socio-religious context of Gresik Regency and the stigmatized nature of digital prostitution. Furthermore, the findings of this study are context-specific and are not intended for statistical generalization due to the intrinsic single-case study design.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Participant Background

Subject L is a 29-year-old woman originally from Tasikmalaya who later moved to Surabaya following her parents' divorce during adolescence. After several years living with her grandmother, she eventually relocated to Gresik in search of employment opportunities and economic stability. Before becoming involved in digital commercial sex work, Subject L worked in several informal occupations, including as a mobile phone counter sales assistant, cigarette sales promoter, and nail technician at a beauty salon.

The participant described her life trajectory as strongly influenced by family instability, economic hardship, and limited social support. These experiences shaped her emotional condition and contributed to her later involvement in digital sex work through the MiChat application.

3.2 Experiences of Entering Digital Sex Work

The participant explained that her involvement in commercial sex work emerged gradually rather than through direct intention. Several interconnected experiences contributed to this process,

including family disruption, traumatic experiences during adolescence, and economic vulnerability.

Subject L disclosed that she experienced sexual abuse by a close family member during junior high school. She described the experience as emotionally distressing and psychologically disturbing:

“...first time it was junior high, first year, with my father's younger brother... I was terrified to meet him.”

The participant stated that the traumatic experience affected her emotional well-being and interpersonal trust during adolescence and adulthood.

Economic difficulties became the primary factor influencing her entry into commercial sex work. Following the end of a romantic relationship with a partner who had previously provided financial support, Subject L experienced financial instability and difficulty meeting daily living needs.

She described her first transactional sexual encounter as occurring unexpectedly during her work as a cigarette sales promoter:

“...my boyfriend broke up with me... I lost my support... needed money to live... then this guy offered money, and I agreed.”

Initially, these encounters occurred offline through direct interaction with customers. Over time, however, Subject L transitioned to using the MiChat application because it was perceived as more practical, private, and controllable compared to offline interactions.

3.3 Self-Regulation Through MiChat

The participant described MiChat as providing greater flexibility and personal control in managing interactions with clients. According to Subject L, the application's communication features allowed her to screen potential clients before agreeing to meetings.

She explained:

“On MiChat I can choose clients... I can control which ones are serious and which ones are joking.”

The participant stated that she actively limited the number of clients she accepted and selectively avoided interactions that made her uncomfortable. She also reported temporarily deactivating her account during periods when she did not wish to engage in sex work activities.

In addition to facilitating transactions, the platform was perceived by the participant as reducing direct exposure to public stigma and minimizing risks associated with face-to-face solicitation in physical spaces.

3.4 Future Orientation and Meaning-Making

Despite her current circumstances, Subject L expressed hopes for a more stable and meaningful future. She frequently reflected on her present condition and questioned the sustainability of her lifestyle.

The participant stated:

“I sometimes think, until when will I be like this? But the reality is I need money to live.”

Beyond commercial sex work, Subject L also identified nail art as an important source of personal satisfaction and self-expression. She explained that she had enjoyed painting and nail art activities since high school and eventually developed these interests into professional salon work.

She stated:

“I’ve actually liked nail art since high school... I tried it myself at home and eventually worked at this salon.”

The participant also described aspirations for marriage, family life, and emotional stability in the future:

“I want to have a small family that is happy... a good husband, children, a house, and a peaceful life.”

These hopes appeared consistently throughout the interviews and represented an important motivational aspect in her daily life.

3.5 Spiritual Ambivalence

The participant described a complex relationship with spirituality and religious practice. Although she reported no longer performing formal religious rituals regularly since adolescence, she continued to express belief in God and occasionally engaged in informal prayer.

Subject L stated:

“I still believe in God... but I feel I’m not worthy to pray.”

She explained that feelings of guilt, shame, and self-perceived unworthiness contributed to her distance from formal religious activities. At the same time, however, spiritual beliefs remained psychologically meaningful during difficult periods in her life.

The participant’s narratives reflected an ongoing internal conflict between personal belief, moral self-evaluation, and lived

reality. These experiences emerged repeatedly during interviews and formed an important aspect of her existential reflections throughout the study.

Table 1. Summary of Meaning of Life Dimensions in Subject L

Dimension	Key Finding	Supporting Verbatim
Freedom of Will	Conscious decision-making and self-regulation of client selection on MiChat	“On MiChat I can choose clients... I can control which ones are serious.”
Will to Meaning	Self-reflection, creative passion (nail art), and future orientation toward family life	“Until when will I be like this?... I want a small family, a house, a peaceful life.”
Meaning of Life – Creative Value	Nail art as a professional identity and a source of personal meaning	“I’ve actually liked nail art since high school... I tried it myself at home.”
Meaning of Life – Attitudinal Value	Spiritual resilience amid estrangement from formal religious practice and ongoing informal prayer	“I still believe in God... I feel I’m not worthy to pray, but I still do.”

Table 2. Comparison of Findings Based on Categories and Psychological Variables

Category	Main Findings	Psychological Variable	Interpretation of Meaning	Supporting Evidence
Family Background	Parents’ divorce and limited emotional support	Emotional insecurity	Family instability contributed to vulnerability and emotional distress	Subject L moved between family members after parental separation

Category	Main Findings	Psychological Variable	Interpretation of Meaning	Supporting Evidence
Trauma Experience	Sexual abuse during adolescence	Psychological trauma	Trauma influenced self-perception, interpersonal trust, and emotional regulation	"...I was terrified to meet him."
Economic Pressure	Financial instability after losing partner support	Survival motivation	Economic necessity became the primary reason for entering commercial sex work	"...needed money to live..."
Digital Platform Usage	Use of MiChat for client interaction	Self-regulation and perceived control	MiChat enabled selective communication and reduced direct public exposure	"On MiChat I can choose clients..."
Social Interaction	Selective avoidance of uncomfortable clients	Boundary management	Participant attempted to maintain personal safety and autonomy through client filtering	Temporary deactivation of the MiChat account
Creative Activity	Nail art as a hobby	Self-expression	Creative activity	"I've actually liked nail art

Category	Main Findings	Psychological Variable	Interpretation of Meaning	Supporting Evidence
	and a professional activity	n and identity formation	functioned as a positive identity outside sex work	since high school..."
Future Orientation	Desire for marriage and a peaceful family life	Hope and existential meaning	Future aspirations became a source of psychological endurance and motivation	"I want to have a small family..."
Spiritual Ambivalence	Belief in God despite guilt and shame	Existential conflict	Spirituality remained psychologically meaningful despite feelings of unworthiness	"I still believe in God... but I feel I'm not worthy to pray."
Meaning of Life Construction	Search for dignity, stability, and emotional acceptance	Meaning-making process	Meaning emerged through survival, hope, creativity, relationships, and spirituality	Participant narratives across interviews

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Freedom of Will

The findings indicate that Subject L demonstrated forms of personal agency and self-regulation despite living under conditions of economic hardship, social stigma, and psychological vulnerability. Within Viktor Frankl's logotherapy framework, freedom of will refers to the human capacity to make choices and determine attitudes even when external circumstances are highly limiting (Frankl, 2006).

Subject L's decision to engage in digital sex work cannot be interpreted simply as unrestricted freedom or purely rational choice. Rather, it emerged within constrained social and economic conditions shaped by family instability, trauma, and financial precarity. Nevertheless, the participant still exercised forms of self-determination through selective client screening, limitation of interactions, and temporary withdrawal from the MiChat platform when desired.

The participant's use of MiChat features to control communication and select clients reflects how digital platforms may provide limited forms of perceived autonomy for individuals engaged in stigmatized labor. This finding is consistent with Jones (2015), who argues that digital platforms may alter power dynamics in sex work by enabling selective engagement and reducing direct public exposure.

However, these forms of agency should not be romanticized as complete freedom. The participant's choices remained constrained by structural inequalities, economic dependency, and gendered vulnerability. Therefore, freedom of will in this context appears partial and situational rather than absolute.

4.2 Will to Meaning

Frankl (2006) conceptualizes the will to meaning as the primary motivational force in human life. The findings suggest that Subject L continuously searched for meaning despite experiencing trauma, stigma, and emotional conflict.

One important manifestation of this search appeared through self-reflection regarding her present condition and future aspirations. The participant repeatedly questioned the sustainability of her current lifestyle while simultaneously expressing hope for emotional stability, marriage, and family life.

These findings support previous studies indicating that individuals in marginalized occupations may still construct future-oriented meaning systems despite adverse circumstances

(Budiasih, 2024; Widodoningsih, 2020). In Subject L's case, hope functioned as an existential anchor that sustained psychological endurance amid uncertainty.

Another important aspect of meaning-making emerged through creative activity. Nail art represented more than economic work; it served as a source of self-expression, competence, and positive identity outside her involvement in sex work. Frankl (2006) identifies creative values as one pathway through which individuals experience meaning by producing or creating something personally valuable.

The participant's attachment to creative activity demonstrates that meaningful identity can coexist alongside stigmatized social roles. This finding complicates simplistic assumptions that marginalized individuals derive identity solely from survival-oriented behaviors.

As illustrated in Figure 2, family instability, trauma, and economic pressure were interconnected factors contributing to the participant's involvement in digital sex work. The findings also demonstrate that meaning-making emerged through hope, spirituality, and creative activities such as nail art.

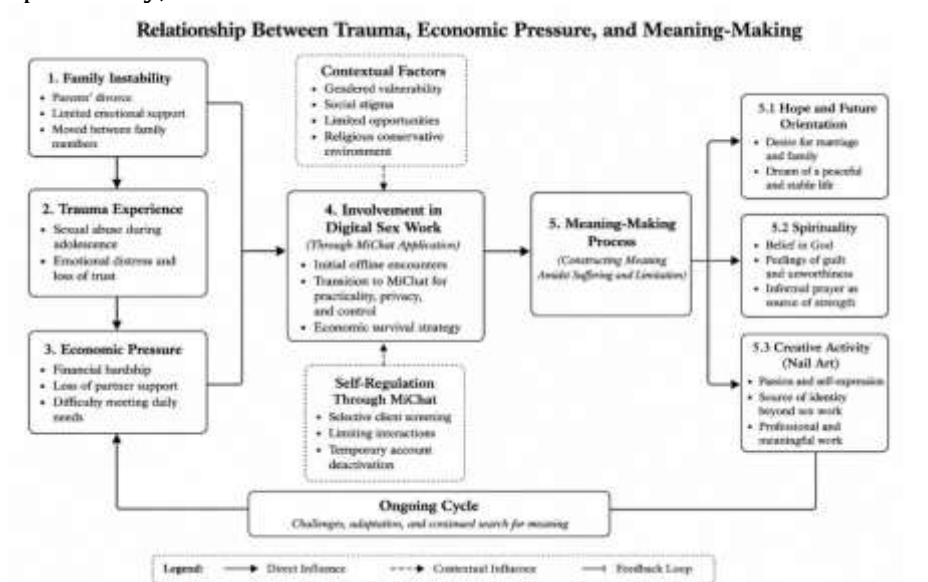


Figure 2. Relationship Between Trauma, Economic Pressure, and Meaning-Making

The diagram above illustrates the interconnected relationship between family instability, trauma, economic pressure, and involvement in digital sex work. The findings also demonstrate that meaning-making emerged through hope, spirituality, and creative activities such as nail art.

4.3 Meaning of Life

The participant's meaning-making process appeared multidimensional and dynamic. Meaning was not derived from a single source but emerged through survival, relationships, creativity, hope, and spirituality.

At the most immediate level, commercial sex work functioned as a survival strategy. Economic necessity played a dominant role in shaping the participants' decisions and daily activities. Similar findings have been reported in studies emphasizing the role of financial precarity in commercial sex work involvement (Chaidir & Tuapattinaja, 2019; Wahyuni, 2020).

However, the participant's life meaning extended beyond economic survival. Emotional attachment to future family aspirations represented another important source of existential orientation. Subject L consistently described desires for a peaceful domestic life, emotional security, and social belonging. Meaning also emerged through interpersonal relationships and social interaction. Despite social stigma, the participant described efforts to maintain positive relationships in her workplace and community environment. These relational experiences contributed to feelings of acceptance and personal worth.

This finding supports Frankl's argument that meaning may still emerge even under painful or morally conflicting circumstances (Frankl, 2006). The participant's experiences illustrate that existential meaning is not dependent on ideal life conditions but may develop through ongoing negotiation with suffering and limitation.

4.4 Digital Platform Affordances

One important contribution of this study involves understanding how digital technology shapes the experiences of commercial sex workers. The MiChat application functioned not only as a transactional medium but also as a technological environment influencing communication patterns, self-regulation, and perceived safety.

The participant perceived MiChat as providing greater control compared to offline prostitution practices. Features such as selective communication, account deactivation, and client filtering reduced direct exposure to public spaces and allowed greater management of interpersonal interactions.

This finding aligns with platform affordance theory, which suggests that digital technologies shape human behavior by enabling particular forms of interaction while constraining others. In this context, MiChat facilitated anonymity, selective engagement, and flexibility.

Nevertheless, digital platforms also carry risks that should not be ignored. Online prostitution may increase vulnerability to exploitation, privacy violations, emotional isolation, and digital surveillance. Therefore, the role of technology in digital sex work should be understood as both enabling and constraining simultaneously.

Unlike some previous studies that frame digital prostitution purely as a technological adaptation (Azahra & Aprison, 2022), the present findings suggest that digital platforms also influence psychological experiences related to autonomy, identity, and existential meaning.

4.5 Trauma, Spiritual Ambivalence, and Existential Meaning

The participant's narratives revealed ongoing psychological consequences associated with childhood sexual trauma and emotional insecurity. These experiences influenced interpersonal trust, self-perception, and spiritual identity throughout adulthood. An important finding in this study involves spiritual ambivalence. Although Subject L continued believing in God, she simultaneously perceived herself as morally unworthy of formal religious practice. This internal conflict created emotional tension between faith, guilt, shame, and self-judgment.

From a logotherapy perspective, suffering may become a source of meaning when individuals are able to construct personal attitudes toward unavoidable pain (Frankl, 2006). Subject L's continued spiritual belief despite emotional conflict may reflect attempts to preserve existential meaning under difficult circumstances.

However, this study also recognizes limitations within Frankl's framework when applied to trauma survivors. Critics argue that existential approaches may insufficiently address trauma-related

dissociation, structural oppression, and long-term psychological vulnerability. Trauma experiences are not always transformed into meaningful growth, and excessive emphasis on resilience may risk romanticizing suffering.

Therefore, while logotherapy offers valuable insight into meaning-making processes, it should be integrated critically with trauma-informed perspectives that acknowledge emotional fragmentation, vulnerability, and structural inequality.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that existential meaning among digital commercial sex workers is shaped through complex interaction between trauma, economic survival, technology, social stigma, spirituality, and future-oriented hope.

5. CONCLUSION

This study explored the existential experiences of a digital commercial sex worker operating through the MiChat application in Gresik Regency using Viktor Frankl's logotherapy framework. The findings demonstrate that meaning-making can emerge even under conditions of trauma, stigma, and economic vulnerability. Subject L's experiences reflected the dimensions of freedom of will, will to meaning, and meaning of life through self-regulation, creative expression, future-oriented hope, and spiritual negotiation.

The participant's involvement in digital sex work was shaped by a complex interaction of family instability, early sexual trauma, economic hardship, and the affordances of digital technology. At the same time, the participant demonstrated efforts to construct meaning through interpersonal relationships, creative activities, and aspirations for a more stable future life. The MiChat platform functioned not only as a transactional medium but also as a technological space influencing autonomy, emotional regulation, and perceived control.

This study also highlights the importance of understanding digital commercial sex work beyond moralistic perspectives. The findings suggest that existential meaning among marginalized individuals is dynamic, context-dependent, and closely connected to broader social, technological, and psychological conditions.

However, the findings should be interpreted within the limitations of an intrinsic single-case study design, which does not aim for broad statistical generalization. The study relied heavily on participant self-report narratives, and the interpretation may also

be influenced by researcher subjectivity despite efforts to maintain reflexivity and credibility throughout the research process.

Future research is recommended to employ multiple-case or longitudinal qualitative designs involving participants from diverse digital platforms and socio-cultural backgrounds. Further studies may also explore the role of digital platform algorithms, online anonymity, and trauma-informed psychological interventions in shaping the experiences of digital commercial sex workers.

Practically, the findings may contribute to the development of trauma-informed counseling approaches, existential therapeutic interventions, and ethical research frameworks for vulnerable populations in digital environments. The study also underscores the importance of more humane and psychologically sensitive perspectives toward marginalized individuals operating within digitally mediated social realities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to the participant for her willingness, openness, and trust in sharing her life experiences throughout this study. The authors also thank the Faculty of Psychology, University of Muhammadiyah Gresik, for academic support during the research process.

REFERENCES

- Anggoro, Y. D. (2025). Polres Gresik mengamankan empat wanita terduga pelaku prostitusi online melalui aplikasi MiChat di Duduksampeyan. Radar Gresik.
- Azahra, F., & Aprison, W. (2022). Aplikasi MiChat sebagai media prostitusi online dan dampaknya terhadap pendidikan. *ANTHOR: Education and Learning Journal*, 1(6), 294–298. <https://doi.org/10.31004/anthor.v1i6.49>
- Jones, A. (2015). Sex work in a digital era. *Sociology Compass*, 9(7), 558–570. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12282>
- Arfah, H., & Belarminus, R. (2019, November 19). Kronologi pengungkapan kasus prostitusi “online” di Gresik. *Kompas.com*. <https://regional.kompas.com>
- Suriyanto, E. (2023, November 7). Praktik prostitusi online digerebek Gresik. *TribunNews.com*. <https://www.tribunnews.com>

- Saleh, R., & Munir, A. (2024). Fenomena layanan seks komersial melalui aplikasi MiChat: Studi terhadap 3 mahasiswi Universitas X di Pekanbaru.
- Farley, M. (2004). "Bad for the body, bad for the heart": Prostitution harms women even if legalized or decriminalized. *Violence Against Women*, 10(10), 1087–1125. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801204268607>
- Widodoningsih, S. I. (2020). Makna hidup perempuan pekerja seks (studi fenomenologis perempuan pekerja seks komersial). *Jurnal Penelitian Psikologi*, 7(4), 168–176.
- Chaidir, W., & Tuapattinaja, J. M. R. (2019). Kebermaknaan hidup pada pekerja seks komersial (PSK). *Psikologia: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Penelitian Psikologi*, 13(3), 153–161. <https://doi.org/10.32734/psikologia.v13i3.2275>
- Budiasih, H. (2024). Makna hidup pada ibu pekerja seks di kawasan prostitusi Bong Suwung Yogyakarta. In *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Fakultas Psikologi Universitas Mercu Buana Yogyakarta* (pp. 201–209).
- Frankl, V. E. (2006). *Man's search for meaning*. Beacon Press.
- Poerwandari, E. K. (2001). Pendekatan kualitatif untuk penelitian perilaku manusia. LPSP3 UI.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. SAGE Publications.
- Bastaman, H. D. (2007). *Logoterapi: psikologi untuk menemukan makna hidup dan meraih hidup bermakna*. PT RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Fabry, J. B. (1980). *The pursuit of meaning: Viktor Frankl, logotherapy, and life*. Harper & Row.
- Wahyuni, H. (2020). PSK dan tekanan sosial pascapenutupan Gang Dolly Surabaya. *Personifikasi: Jurnal Ilmu Psikologi*, 5(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.21107/personifikasi.v5i1.6567>
- Munawaroh, S. (2015). Pekerja seks komersial (PSK) di wilayah Prambanan, Kabupaten Klaten, Jawa Tengah. *DIMENSIA: Jurnal Kajian Sosiologi*, 4(2), 69–82. <https://doi.org/10.21831/dimensia.v4i2.3433>
- Batubar, J. (2018). Kebermaknaan hidup dalam perspektif multiteknik sebagai landasan bimbingan pribadi. *JOMSIGN: Journal of Multicultural Studies in Guidance and Counseling*, 2(1), 72–81.

- Azahra, F., & Aprison, W. (2022). Makna hidup dan aktualisasi diri dalam perspektif logoterapi. *Jurnal Psikologi Islam*, 10(2), 112–125.
- Hurlock, E. B. (1980). *Psikologi perkembangan: suatu pendekatan sepanjang rentang kehidupan*. Gramedia.
- Jahja, Y. (2011). *Psikologi perkembangan*. PT Kharisma Putra Utama.
- Miller, P. H. (1983). *Theories of developmental psychology* (3rd ed.). W. H. Freeman.
- Koentjoro. (2004). *On the spot: Tutar dari sarang pelacur*. Tinta.
- Kartono, K. (2003). *Patologi sosial*. PT RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.