

Historical Learning of Psychological Warfare in the Jugun Ianfu System: A Case Study Based on Daugherty's Theory and Students' Historical Empathy

Yessy Harun^{1*}, Juliansyah², Hargo³, Tia Martia⁴, Aisyah Ananda Noviani⁵
^{1,2,4,5}Japanese Language and Culture Study Program, Darma Persada University, East Jakarta
³English Language and Culture Study Program, Darma Persada University, East Jakarta



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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study analyzes the psychological warfare strategies employed by the Japanese military in the forced recruitment of Jugun Ianfu during World War II in Java, Indonesia. Using William E. Daugherty's framework, it examines propaganda, coercion, and ideological manipulation in Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Kragan, and explores their implications for fostering students' historical empathy. **Method:** A qualitative historical case study approach was adopted. Data were collected from historical archives, survivor testimonies, military records, and secondary sources, and analyzed thematically using Daugherty's psychological warfare model. **Results:** The findings reveal four systematic stages of psychological warfare: deceptive recruitment promises, ideological normalization through imperial doctrines, collaboration with local intermediaries, and sustained trauma reinforced by sexual violence and social stigma. These mechanisms demonstrate that the Jugun Ianfu system functioned as a structured strategy of domination with long-term psychological consequences for survivors. **Novelty:** This study integrates psychological warfare theory with survivor-centered historiography and history education. It highlights how analyzing wartime sexual violence through a structured theoretical framework can support the development of students' historical empathy and ethical historical consciousness.

INTRODUCTION

The history of Jugun Ianfu, a term translated from Japanese as "military comfort women," represents one of the most traumatic and morally devastating chapters of World War II in Asia. The term refers to a systematic system of sexual slavery institutionalized by the Imperial Japanese Army, in which women from occupied territories including Korea, China, the Philippines, and Indonesia were forcibly recruited, deceived, or coerced into providing sexual services for Japanese soldiers (Mitchell, 1997; Ogawa & Tanaka, 2013; Soh, 2008). This system was not incidental but strategically designed as part of Japan's broader military apparatus to maintain troop morale, control occupied populations, and suppress resistance through fear and humiliation (Dower, 1999; Yoshimi, 2000).

Historically, the Jugun Ianfu system began during the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937) and expanded aggressively throughout Asia during World War II (1939-1945), coinciding with Japan's imperial expansion (Ogawa & Tanaka, 2013; Soh, 2008). Women were often recruited under false pretenses such as promises of employment, education, or medical care and later subjected to physical violence, psychological manipulation, and social isolation (Hicks, 1995; Yoshimi, 2000). This systematic exploitation reflects not merely wartime brutality but a deliberate strategy of domination embedded within military policy and ideological propaganda such as *Hakkō Ichiu*, which framed Japanese imperialism as a civilizing mission (Blackburn, 2024; Dower, 1999). Despite extensive historical documentation, the psychological warfare dimensions of this system remain

under-theorized, particularly within the context of Indonesian historiography and history education.

Understanding these practices as mechanisms of psychological warfare—rather than as isolated historical events—is crucial for interpreting how power, coercion, and ideology operated at the level of individual experience. Such an analytical focus allows historical narratives to move beyond factual reconstruction toward an engagement with the emotional and moral dimensions of the past. In this sense, examining the psychological processes underlying the *Jugun Ianfu* system provides an essential foundation for the development of historical empathy, as conceptualized by (Seixas, 2017) and further elaborated through the notion of affective engagement proposed by (Endacott & Brooks, 2013).

In Indonesia, particularly on the island of Java, the *Jugun Ianfu* system was implemented in a highly organized manner during the Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945. Java, as the administrative and political center of the former Dutch East Indies, became a strategic hub for military logistics and population control (Mrázek, 2002). Following the defeat of Dutch colonial forces in 1942, the Japanese military rapidly established *ianjo* (comfort stations), often disguised as clinics or entertainment facilities, particularly in coastal regions such as Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Kragan (Hartono & Juliantoro, 1997; YLBHI, 1993). These areas were selected due to their strategic ports, economic vulnerability, and weakened colonial governance structures (Soh, 2008; Womack, 2016).

The recruitment of *Jugun Ianfu* in Java frequently relied on local intermediaries through systems such as *Tonari Gumi*, involving village heads or community leaders who were pressured to supply women under threats of punishment or promises of protection (Blackburn, 2024; Hartono & Juliantoro, 1997). This practice not only intensified victims' trauma but also entrenched postwar stigma, as survivors were often blamed or silenced within their own communities due to strong religious and cultural norms surrounding female sexuality (Lindsey, 2025; Soh, 2008). As a result, Indonesian *Jugun Ianfu* testimonies remain underrepresented in both national historiography and international discourse (Abreha et al., 2025; Moshenska, 2024).

In Indonesian scholarship, studies on *Jugun Ianfu* have predominantly emphasized the historical documentation of sexual slavery and the moral suffering of women during the Japanese occupation. Yuliyanti (2022) frames *Jugun Ianfu* as a form of systemic sexual enslavement rooted in gender injustice, while Shaffira et al (2024) and Rahmawati, (2025) highlight survivors' silence, emotional trauma, and long-standing social stigma. Although these studies are crucial in restoring women's voices and collective memory, they tend to approach *Jugun Ianfu* primarily as a humanitarian and gender issue, without situating it within a broader framework of psychological warfare or military propaganda.

Other Indonesian studies adopt a macro-historical or educational perspective but remain fragmented. Kiswanto et al (2024) for instance, discuss social transformations during the Japanese occupation but treat sexual violence as a secondary phenomenon rather than a strategic tool of domination. Meanwhile, Abdilla et al (2025) emphasize the importance of gender discourse in Indonesian history education but do not specifically examine how traumatic historical cases such as *Jugun Ianfu* can be pedagogically utilized to cultivate students' historical empathy. Consequently, there is a clear research gap in Indonesian literature: the absence of an integrative analysis that links *Jugun Ianfu* as a



structured psychological warfare strategy with its implications for historical learning and empathy development among students.

Importantly, the Jugun Ianfu system exemplifies how wartime sexual violence functions as a form of psychological warfare. According to Daugherty & Janowitz (1958 pp. 48-50), psychological warfare involves the systematic manipulation of emotions, beliefs, and social structures to erode resistance and morale. Sexual violence, when institutionalized, serves not only to harm individual victims but also to terrorize communities, disrupt social cohesion, and assert absolute military dominance (Gao, 2025; González & Traunmüller, 2023). In the Javanese context, the exploitation of women operated as a tool of demoralization that weakened communal resistance and reinforced Japanese control (Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, 1942; YLBHI, 1993).

From an educational perspective, the marginalization of Jugun Ianfu narratives has significant implications for history learning and students' historical empathy. Scholars such as Seixas (2017) and Endacott & Brooks (2013) argue that historical empathy involves not only cognitive understanding of past events but also affective engagement with the emotions, suffering, and moral dilemmas experienced by historical actors. Teaching sensitive histories such as Jugun Ianfu through psychological warfare frameworks enables students to understand how violence operates structurally and emotionally, fostering deeper moral reflection and critical historical consciousness (Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Seixas, 2017).

Therefore, this study addresses a critical gap by integrating Indonesian Jugun Ianfu historiography, Daugherty's psychological warfare theory, and historical empathy in education. By focusing on coastal communities in Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Krangan, and by connecting military archives, survivor testimonies, and students' interpretive responses, this research contributes a multidisciplinary perspective that has been largely absent from both Indonesian historical studies and history education research. Specifically, this study aims to analyze how the Jugun Ianfu system in Java functioned as a structured form of psychological warfare based on William E. Daugherty's theoretical framework, and to examine how understanding these mechanisms can contribute to the development of students' historical empathy in history education. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) How did psychological warfare strategies operate in the recruitment and implementation of the Jugun Ianfu system in Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Krangan? and (2) How can the analysis of these strategies be pedagogically utilized to foster students' historical empathy?.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive case study approach to analyze the Jugun Ianfu system as a form of psychological warfare during the Japanese occupation in Java and its implications for students' historical empathy. A qualitative approach was chosen because it enables in-depth interpretation of historical narratives, survivor testimonies, and students' reflective responses to sensitive historical events (Sugiyono, 2017). In this study, the student interview served as the primary research instrument. A semi-structured interview guide was developed based on three core dimensions of historical empathy: emotional response, contextual perspective-taking, and moral reflection. The interview questions included prompts such as students' understanding of

the Jugun Ianfu system, their emotional reactions to survivor narratives, and their interpretation of victims' choices within historical constraints.

The interviews were conducted individually and lasted approximately 30–45 minutes. With participants' consent, all sessions were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then coded thematically using NVivo software, following the indicators of psychological warfare mechanisms and dimensions of historical empathy. This procedure ensured systematic analysis and consistency in identifying patterns across student responses.

Data Sources

The data in this study consisted of qualitative textual data obtained from three main sources:

1. Historical documents, including Japanese military archives accessed through the *Japan Center for Asian Historical Records* (JACAR) and survivor testimonies documented by *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia* (YLBHI, 1993).
2. Secondary literature, comprising books and peer-reviewed journal articles related to Jugun Ianfu, psychological warfare, wartime sexual violence, and the Japanese occupation of Indonesia.
3. Student interviews, conducted with 10 senior high school in Java. The institutional identity is anonymized to ensure ethical compliance and participant protection. students who had studied the topic of Japanese occupation history. These interviews aimed to explore students' historical empathy, emotional responses, and moral interpretations of the Jugun Ianfu system.

Research Site and Participants

The historical case study focused on three coastal regions in Java—Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Kragan which were selected not only for their strategic significance during the Japanese occupation but also for their documented roles as recruitment and transit zones within the *Jugun Ianfu* system. These regions functioned as interfaces between military operations, local administrative structures, and civilian populations, making them critical sites for examining the operation of psychological warfare at the local level. The study involved high school students as participants, selected through purposive sampling based on their prior exposure to the topic in history classes and their willingness to engage with sensitive historical narratives. High school students were chosen as the focal demographic because this educational stage represents a formative period for developing historical empathy, ethical reasoning, and critical reflection, enabling students to engage cognitively and affectively with complex and morally challenging past events.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through document analysis, literature review, and semi-structured interviews. The student interviews were guided by questions designed to capture cognitive, affective, and moral dimensions of historical empathy, such as students' understanding of Jugun Ianfu, emotional reactions to survivor narratives, and reflections on moral values and human rights.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, assisted by NVivo software. The analysis involved:

1. Identifying themes related to the stages of psychological warfare based on William E. Daugherty's framework.
2. Categorizing patterns of deception, manipulation, and demoralization found in historical sources.
3. Interpreting students' responses to identify indicators of historical empathy, including emotional engagement, moral reflection, and contextual understanding.

Validity and Trustworthiness

To ensure data validity, source and theory triangulation were applied by comparing historical archives, survivor testimonies, student interviews, and theoretical perspectives on psychological warfare and historical empathy (Creswell, 2014). Peer discussions with history education scholars were also conducted to strengthen the credibility of the findings. In this qualitative study, the researchers served as the primary research instruments, being directly involved in data collection, interpretation, and thematic analysis. The researchers critically reflected on their analytical process to minimize subjective bias and to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 1. The Stages of Daugherty's Model Psychological War in the Three Regions of Java

Daugherty Stage	Banten Bay	Indramayu	Kragan
Brainwashing	Narratives of Greater Asian devotion and "war honour" are spread through local figures	Work/education promises are a way to normalize women's roles	Indoctrination through military-formed women's organizations
Deception	Fake job ads displayed in villages	Recruitment through Tonari Gumi as a 'volunteer group'	Use of local intermediaries that promise well-being
Aestheticization	The depiction of the Japanese military as a protector and uplifter of dignity	Narrative of devotion to family and community	Positive labels for women recruited
Manipulation	Promise of family protection, socialization of the values of "Greater East Asia"	Social threats and economic stress	Direct intimidation when refusing
Demoralization	Post-war stigmatization of victims	Silencing the victim's experience	Complex trauma & social exclusion

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the practice of Jugun Ianfu in Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Kragan shows the application of relatively similar stages of psychological warfare, but with a variety of strategies adapted to the local social context. The brainwashing stage is carried out through the internalization of ideological narratives such as the devotion of Greater Asia and the promise of social mobility, which serves to normalize the role of women in the structure of occupation. Furthermore, deception becomes a crucial phase with the use of fake job advertisements, community-based recruitment such as *Tonari Gumi*, and local intermediaries promising well-being, which systematically cover up the reality of sexual exploitation. The aestheticization stage shows an effort to frame the practice as an act of dignity and contribution to the

family and community, thereby reducing the moral resistance of the victim. At the manipulation stage, psychological pressure is further strengthened through promises of protection, socio-economic threats, and outright intimidation, which puts women in a position without rational choices.

These stages were reinforced by administrative and linguistic restructuring under Japanese rule, as illustrated in Table 3. The replacement of the term “village” with “son” was not merely symbolic but functioned to integrate local communities into a hierarchical Japanese administrative system that emphasized collective responsibility and obedience. By redefining village authority within this new framework, Japanese military and civilian administrators were able to mobilize local leaders and neighborhood units more effectively to identify, persuade, and pressure women into compliance. This linguistic shift facilitated coercion by reframing recruitment as a communal obligation rather than an individual choice, thereby reducing the visibility of violence and diffusing responsibility across administrative actors. Consequently, the administrative reorganization strengthened Japan’s structural dominance by embedding psychological warfare mechanisms directly into everyday governance and recruitment practices.

The accumulation of all these stages leads to demoralization, which is characterized by post-war stigma, silencing of the victim's experience, and prolonged psychosocial trauma. This pattern suggests that sexual violence in the Jugun Ianfu system is not incidental, but rather part of a structured psychological warfare strategy as conceptualized by William E. Daugherty, in which the manipulation of emotions, beliefs, and social structures is used to weaken the resistance of the occupying society.

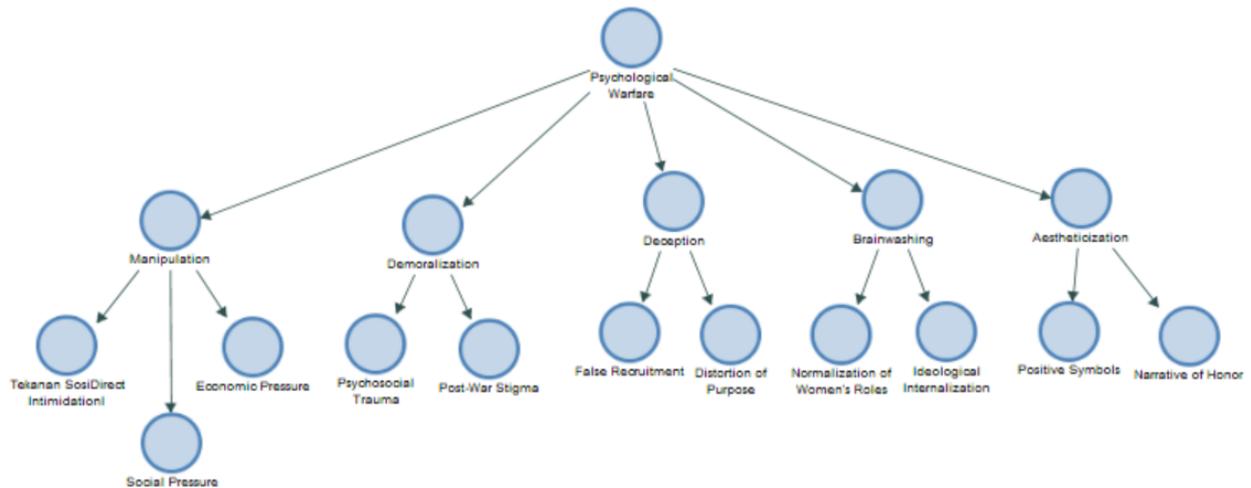


Figure 1. Nvivo Data Processing Results

Based on the modeling results *node tree* NVivo, it can be interpreted that the practice of Jugun Ianfu in the Bay of Banten, Indramayu, and Kragan is a form of psychological warfare that is structured and layered, with *Psychological warfare* As *parent node* which overshadows five main mechanisms: deception, manipulation, aestheticization, demoralization, and brainwashing, as formulated in the framework of William E. Daugherty. Node *Scams* It is shown through data indicators such as false recruitment (e.g. job promises as a nurse or maid) and distortion of purpose (transfer of work functions to sexual exploitation). *Manipulation* reflected in social pressure (encouragement by village officials or Tonari Gumi), economic pressure (poverty and hunger), to direct intimidation in the form of threats of violence if they refused. On nodes *Aestheticization*, data indicators

appear in the form of honorary narratives and positive symbols, such as the embedding of the label "Greater Asian devotion" or women "meritorious to the country". Meanwhile, *Demoralization* It is characterized by the psychosocial trauma of the victim as well as the post-war stigma, in which survivors are silenced and ostracized. Lastly, *Brainwashing* seen through the normalization of women's role as objects of war and the internalization of Japan's military ideology that forces victims to accept exploitation as a moral obligation. This hierarchical pattern of nodes shows that Jugun Ianfu is not an incidental practice, but rather the result of an interconnected and systematic psychological warfare strategy, with a long-term impact on the social and psychological structure of Javanese society.

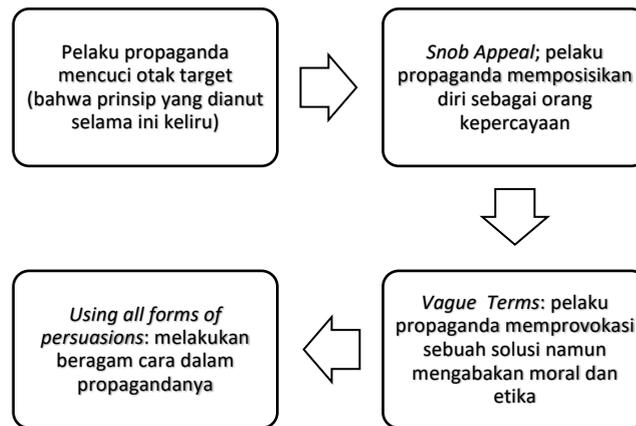


Figure 2. The scheme of psychological warfare stages carried out by the Japanese in the practice of *Jugun Ianfu* in Banten Bay, Indramayu, Kragan.

Figure 2 shows that the practice of *Jugun Ianfu* in the three coastal areas of Java does not take place sporadically, but follows the stages of structured psychological warfare. This scheme shows how Japan started its process from the formation of an ideological narrative and moral legitimacy, then continued to deceit, manipulation, and culminated in the demoralization of the victim. Each stage is interrelated and strengthens the effectiveness of the next stage, so that the community and the victim experience a gradual process of psychological subjugation. These findings confirm that sexual exploitation is not only physical, but is part of a systematic psychological strategy designed to weaken the resistance of individuals and communities in Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Kragan.

Table 2. Jugun Ianfu Case Analysis with Willam's Theory

William E. Daugherty Theory Levels	Analysis of the Case of Jugun Ianfu in Java
Vague Terms A provocative movement that is proposed as a solution to a problem without regard to criticism of the inconsistency of moral standards Bandwagon Doctrine targets to assume that the principles that have been adopted are wrong and convince that the opposite principle is the truth	The Japanese established the practice of <i>Jugun Ianfu</i> by claiming that the system was a solution to maintain the social and moral order of the army. This narrative is conveyed as if it benefits both parties, even though in practice it only benefits Japan and violates the moral and humanitarian norms of the Javanese people. Japan built the fraternal slogan "Hakkou Ichiu" which means the <i>Eight Corners of the World under One Roof</i> , as well as changing the term in the structure of society (village heads, sub-district heads, and regents use Japanese terms). This strategy aims to instill new ideologies and encourage society to follow the dominant trend without questioning its truth.
Using All Forms of Persuasion Manipulation through unproven	Japan offers jobs, education, and talent development (e.g. art studios) for women and girls. However, the promise was never

William E. Daugherty Theory Levels	Analysis of the Case of Jugun Ianfu in Java
offers, lures, and promises	realized and was instead used as a means of fraud to recruit them to become Jugun Ianfu.
Snob Appeal Using or positioning oneself as a trusted figure to maintain the perception that the practice benefits all parties	Japan involved influential figures in society in the formation of Tonari Gumi, which formally appeared to be a social organization, but in reality, functioned as a tool of control and recruitment of Jugun Ianfu candidates by tapping into public trust in the local elite.

Table 2 shows the results of an analysis that maps the practice of Jugun Ianfu in Java into the stages of psychological warfare according to William E. Daugherty's theory. Stages *Vague Terms* appears in the way Japan framed Jugun Ianfu as a moral and social solution, albeit contrary to human values. Next, the stage *Bandwagon* was manifested through the cultivation of Hakkou Ichiu's ideology and symbolic changes in the social structure, which encouraged society to follow the dominant current without criticism. Stages *Using All Forms of Persuasion* can be seen from the use of job promises, education, and talent development that have never been realized, while *Snob Appeal* manifested through the involvement of local figures in Tonari Gumi. Overall, this table confirms that Daugherty's theory can operationally explain how Japanese propaganda works across ideological, social, and psychological levels in facilitating systematic sexual exploitation.

Table 3. Discussion Change Findings

Old Term	New Designation	Administrative Meaning	Psychological Warfare Function
Village	Son	Adopted from Japanese village system	Integrated local communities into centralized control, reinforcing collective responsibility
Village Head	Soncho	Equivalent to Japanese village chief	Enabled local authority to legitimize recruitment and diffuse coercion
District	Gun	Equivalent to Japanese district	Strengthened hierarchical supervision and surveillance
Regent	Kencho	Head of prefecture	Symbolized ideological alignment with Japanese governance

Table 3 demonstrates that administrative and linguistic restructuring under Japanese rule was not merely bureaucratic adaptation but functioned as an embedded mechanism of psychological warfare. By redefining local governance structures through Japanese terminology, authority and coercion were normalized within everyday social organization, allowing recruitment practices to appear as communal obligations rather than imposed violence. When students analyzed this structural transformation, they were able to recognize how institutional power shaped individual experiences and limited victims' agency. This structural perspective strengthened their contextual understanding and reduced simplistic moral judgments, thereby contributing to the development of disciplined historical empathy grounded in systemic analysis rather than emotional reaction alone.

Table 4. Indicators of Students' Historical Empathy

Empathy Dimension	Student Response Indicators
Emotional response	Shock, sadness, anger toward injustice
Perspective-taking	Understanding victims' lack of choice
Moral judgement	Condemnation of sexual violence
Historical awareness	Linking past violence to present issues

Based on Table 4 and the supporting student statements, it can be interpreted that learning about psychological warfare in the Jugun Ianfu system contributes to the development of students' historical empathy across emotional, cognitive, and moral dimensions. Students did not merely absorb historical facts but demonstrated emotional engagement, contextual understanding of victims' experiences, ethical reflection, and awareness of the relevance of history to contemporary issues. These findings suggest that integrating survivor-centered narratives and psychological warfare analysis into history education can foster deeper historical empathy and critical historical consciousness among students.

In terms of emotional response, students demonstrated affective engagement with the suffering experienced by Jugun Ianfu victims. This emotional involvement is evident in students' expressions of sadness, anger, and shock, which indicate an initial empathetic connection to the historical experience, as reflected in the following statements:

"I feel very sad and angry because the women were deceived and forced. I never imagined that propaganda could destroy someone's life like that." (Student 2)

"This history made me shocked because war is not only about fighting soldiers, but about women who suffered silently." (Student 6)

These responses indicate that students were able to emotionally engage with the historical narrative beyond factual understanding. Perspective-taking emerged when students demonstrated an understanding of the victims' constrained choices under psychological warfare:

"The women did not really choose to become Jugun Ianfu. They were trapped by poverty, fear, and promises that were never real." (Student 4)

"I understand now that refusing was not an option because they were threatened and controlled by the system." (Student 9)

Such statements show students' ability to situate historical actors within their social and political contexts, a core component of historical empathy. Moral judgment was evident in students' critical evaluation of wartime sexual violence and manipulation:

"What Japan did was not just wrong, it was a crime against humanity, especially toward women." (Student 1)

"Using ideology and fake promises to exploit women cannot be justified in any situation." (Student 7)

These reflections demonstrate that students were able to make ethical judgments grounded in historical understanding rather than presentism alone. Finally, historical awareness appeared in students' ability to connect past events with contemporary issues:

"This history helps me understand why discussions about women's rights and trauma are still important today." (Student 10)

"Psychological warfare still exists today, just in different forms, such as manipulation through media." (Student 5)

This indicates that students could relate historical psychological warfare to broader, ongoing social and human rights concerns.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that the historical learning of psychological warfare in the Jugun Ianfu system functions not only as a medium for transmitting historical content, but also as an affective and reflective pedagogical process. The reconstruction of psychological warfare stages brainwashing, deception, aestheticization, manipulation, and demoralization enabled students to interpret history as a structured system of power rather than as isolated events. This finding aligns with recent studies emphasizing the importance of centering victims' lived experiences in historical narratives to avoid reductive, event-centered interpretations (Shaffira et al., 2024; Yuliyanti, 2022). Students' emotional responses, including sadness, anger, shock, and compassion, indicate that survivor-centered narratives effectively activate the affective dimension of historical empathy while simultaneously encouraging deeper contextual reasoning.

From the perspective of historical empathy theory, this emotional engagement represents the initial stage of empathetic understanding. As argued by Endacott & Brooks (2013), emotional connection is a necessary but insufficient component of historical empathy; it must be accompanied by contextualization and perspective-taking. The findings of this study show that students did not remain at the level of emotional reaction alone. Instead, they progressed toward an understanding of how psychological warfare constrained the agency of Jugun Ianfu victims through structural forces such as poverty, military intimidation, ideological indoctrination, and social pressure. This pattern aligns with Kiswanto et al (2024) who argue that the Jugun Ianfu system operated through deeply embedded social and ideological mechanisms rather than individual moral failure. Such understanding reflects what Seixas (2017) describes as disciplined historical empathy, in which learners interpret historical actors within the limitations and pressures of their historical contexts.

Importantly, students' reflections reveal that learning about psychological warfare reshaped their interpretation of choice, responsibility, and victimhood in historical contexts. Several students explicitly acknowledged that refusal was not a realistic option for the women involved, demonstrating an ability to suspend present-day assumptions and adopt historically grounded perspectives. This finding is significant because it indicates that students were able to overcome presentism—a persistent challenge in history education—and instead engage in empathetic reasoning informed by structural and psychological constraints. This echoes Abdilla et al (2025), who highlight that integrating gendered violence narratives into history learning encourages students to critically reassess simplified notions of agency and consent in colonial contexts.

Furthermore, the moral judgments expressed by students suggest that historical learning of the Jugun Ianfu system facilitated ethical reflection rooted in historical understanding. Rather than offering simplistic moral condemnation detached from context, students evaluated the actions of the Japanese military by considering ideological manipulation, coercive propaganda, and systemic abuse. This supports Barton & Levstik (2004) assertion that history education can function as a space for moral inquiry when students confront injustice, power relations, and human suffering through evidence-based and contextualized narratives. In this sense, the psychological warfare framework enabled students to recognize sexual violence not as incidental wartime behavior, but as a deliberate strategy of domination.

Another significant dimension emerging from the findings is students' growing historical awareness, particularly their ability to connect past psychological warfare to contemporary forms of manipulation and violence. By recognizing similarities between wartime propaganda and modern media manipulation, students demonstrated what Seixas (2017) identifies as ethical historical consciousness an awareness that historical understanding informs present-day moral and civic reasoning. This finding extends prior research on Jugun Ianfu memory studies (Shaffira et al, 2024) by demonstrating that survivor-centered historical learning can bridge past trauma with contemporary social concerns, especially those related to gender-based violence, misinformation, and psychological coercion.

The depth of students' empathetic engagement can also be attributed to the pedagogical approach that foregrounded survivor-centered narratives and psychological processes rather than military achievements or political chronology alone. Previous studies in history education consistently show that narrative-based and trauma-informed instruction enhances students' capacity for empathy and reflective judgment (Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013). The present findings reinforce and extend this scholarship by demonstrating that when students analyze psychological warfare through structured theoretical frameworks – such as Daugherty's mode they are better equipped to understand both the emotional and systemic dimensions of historical violence.

However, several findings of this study diverge from previously published research in important ways. While earlier studies on Jugun Ianfu in Indonesia primarily emphasize historical documentation, collective memory, or gender-based victimization (Suliyati, 2018; Yanti, 2022). they rarely conceptualize the system explicitly as a structured model of psychological warfare grounded in a formal theoretical framework. By operationalizing Daugherty's psychological warfare stages to analyze recruitment, ideological normalization, and demoralization processes, this study moves beyond descriptive historiography toward a systematic interpretive model. Furthermore, prior research in history education often examines historical empathy in relation to political events or moral dilemmas in general contexts (Endacott & Brooks, 2013; Seixas, 2017), but does not specifically explore wartime sexual violence through a psychological warfare lens. In this respect, the present findings suggest that integrating structured psychological analysis may produce deeper contextual reasoning and reduced presentism compared to conventional narrative-based approaches. This indicates a pedagogical shift from empathy as emotional reaction toward empathy as analytically grounded historical consciousness.

Overall, this study illustrates that historical learning of psychological warfare in the Jugun Ianfu system serves as a powerful pedagogical tool for cultivating students' historical empathy. Through emotional engagement, contextual reasoning, ethical evaluation, and reflective awareness, students experienced history as a complex human reality shaped by power, ideology, and suffering. These findings underscore the importance of integrating psychologically and ethically challenging historical narratives into history education, not only to preserve historical memory but also to foster empathetic, critical, and socially responsible learners.

This framework also proved effective in addressing the challenge of presentism, a common difficulty in history education whereby students judge past actions solely through contemporary moral standards. By focusing on psychological warfare mechanisms – such as deception, ideological conditioning, and structural coercion –



students were guided to understand historical actors within the constraints and power relations of their time, rather than as isolated moral agents. In contrast to traditional political-chronological approaches that emphasize dates, leaders, and military events, this trauma-informed instructional approach foregrounded lived experiences and decision-making under coercion. As a result, students were better able to contextualize victims' actions without normalizing violence, enabling a deeper empathetic understanding grounded in historical context rather than present-day moral projection.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: This study concludes that the Jugun Ianfu system in Java (Banten Bay, Indramayu, and Kragan) was not incidental wartime exploitation but a deliberately structured form of psychological warfare. Through propaganda, ideological indoctrination, coercive recruitment, and systematic sexual violence, the Japanese military embedded domination within both social and administrative systems, producing long-term psychological trauma and human rights violations. By analyzing these mechanisms through Daugherty's framework, students were able to interpret victims' experiences as structurally constrained rather than individually chosen, thereby fostering disciplined historical empathy grounded in contextual and ethical understanding. **Implication:** In history education, integrating the Jugun Ianfu case through a psychological warfare and survivor-centered approach can strengthen students' historical empathy, ethical awareness, and critical understanding of gendered violence and power relations in the past. Such integration encourages students to move beyond memorizing political events toward analyzing how ideology, coercion, and structural power shaped individual experiences. Pedagogically, this approach supports trauma-informed and inquiry-based learning, enabling students to contextualize historical actors within their socio-political constraints while engaging in evidence-based moral reasoning. Therefore, incorporating psychologically grounded historical cases into the curriculum may contribute to the development of reflective, empathetic, and critically conscious learners. **Limitation:** This study relies on historical documents and survivor testimonies with limited archival completeness, particularly at the local administrative level. In addition, the study does not include direct empirical measurement of students' historical empathy within classroom settings. As a result, the findings primarily offer interpretive historical and pedagogical insights rather than quantitatively measurable learning outcomes. **Future Research:** Future studies may address these limitations by employing mixed-methods or longitudinal classroom-based research designs to examine the educational impact of trauma-informed history instruction. Specific variables that warrant investigation include students' long-term retention of ethical reasoning, the development and sustainability of moral judgment, and shifts in empathetic understanding over time. Furthermore, comparative research across different regions in Indonesia could deepen understanding of how local historical contexts influence students' engagement with sensitive historical narratives and psychological warfare frameworks.

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*** Yessy Harun (Corresponding Author)**

Japanese Language and Culture Study Program,
Universitas Darma Persada,
Jl. Taman Malaka Selatan, Kecamatan Duren Sawit, Jakarta Timur, 13450, Indonesia
Email: yessy_harun@fs.unsada.ac.id

Juliansyah

Japanese Language and Culture Study Program,
Universitas Darma Persada,
Jl. Taman Malaka Selatan, Kecamatan Duren Sawit, Jakarta Timur, 13450, Indonesia
Email: Juliansyah@fs.unsada.ac.id

Hargo

English Language and Culture Study Program,
Universitas Darma Persada,
Jl. Taman Malaka Selatan, Kecamatan Duren Sawit, Jakarta Timur, 13450, Indonesia
Email: hargo@fs.unsada.ac.id

Tia Martia

Japanese Language and Culture Study Program,
Universitas Darma Persada,
Jl. Taman Malaka Selatan, Kecamatan Duren Sawit, Jakarta Timur, 13450, Indonesia
Email: tia_martia@fs.unsada.ac.id

Aisyah Ananda Noviani

Japanese Language and Culture Study Program,
Universitas Darma Persada,
Jl. Taman Malaka Selatan, Kecamatan Duren Sawit, Jakarta Timur, 13450, Indonesia
Email: aisyah_ananda_noviani@fs.unsada.ac.id
