

Review Article

Police Responses to Child Sexual Violence: An Empirical Study of Legal Protection and Institutional Challenges in Madiun, Indonesia

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the role of the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) of the Madiun City Police in handling cases of sexual violence against children, as well as the factors that influence the effectiveness of its implementation. The study employed an empirical legal method with a qualitative approach. Primary data were obtained through interviews with the Head of the PPA Unit and investigators from the PPA Unit, supported by observations and documentation, while secondary data were sourced from relevant laws and regulations and literature. The results indicate that the PPA Unit plays a role in receiving reports, conducting investigations, providing victim support, and coordinating with relevant institutions. The effectiveness of carrying out these roles is influenced by legal factors, law enforcement, resources and facilities, the community, and culture. Although regulations have provided an adequate legal foundation, limitations in human resources and facilities, as well as social stigma, remain obstacles to victim protection. Strengthening the capacity of officials, supporting facilities, and interagency coordination is necessary to improve the effectiveness of protecting child victims of sexual violence.

Keywords: Child Sexual Violence, Legal Protection, PPA Unit, Police Response, Legal Effectiveness.

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A. INTRODUCTION

The protection of women and children is an integral part of human rights (Saraswati, 2015). Within the Indonesian legal framework, there are various laws that guarantee the protection of women and children. One of these is Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, which affirms that every child has the right to protection from all forms of violence and exploitation (Jamaludin, 2021). In addition, Law No. 23 of 2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence also provides a legal basis for addressing domestic violence, in which women are often the victims.

The importance of this protection stems from the long-term impacts experienced by victims of sexual violence and domestic violence. Victims often suffer profound physical, psychological, and social trauma, which affects their quality of life (Riswanto & Rahmiwati, 2020). Therefore, the handling of cases of violence against women and children must involve a holistic approach, encompassing legal protection, psychological support, and physical healing.

The PPA Unit was established to handle various cases involving women and children (Kasuma *et al.*, 2020). This unit is tasked with providing protection, supporting victims, and ensuring that legal proceedings proceed properly. In handling cases of sexual violence, the PPA Unit plays a role in receiving reports from victims, conducting examinations, issuing medical-legal reports, and collaborating with other institutions such as psychological services, hospitals, and social service agencies (Soraya, 2018). The process of supporting victims is also a crucial part of the PPA Unit's duties, given that the trauma experienced by victims can affect their ability to navigate the legal process.

As a unit specifically tasked with addressing issues of sexual violence, the PPA Unit has a dual role: as a protector of victims and as a driving force for law enforcement. According to existing regulations, every member of the PPA Unit must possess specialized expertise—in law, psychology, and social work to provide appropriate care for victims (Dewi *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, the effectiveness of the PPA Unit heavily depends on the quality of its human resources.

In the context of addressing sexual violence against children, the PPA Unit within the police force plays a strategic role. This unit is tasked with receiving reports, conducting investigations, providing psychological support, and collaborating with hospitals and social service agencies to ensure that child victims receive adequate protection. Several previous studies have shown that although the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) plays a crucial role in handling cases of sexual violence, there are still various obstacles that reduce the effectiveness of handling such cases. For example, a study by Zainal Abidin (2020) at the Pontianak Police Department found that a lack of support facilities—such as safe spaces for victims—and a shortage of personnel trained to handle cases of sexual violence are major obstacles to improving the quality of case management. Furthermore, a study by Siti Nurjanah (2021) at the Semarang Police Department revealed that weak coordination among relevant agencies also hinders the handling of cases of violence against women and children, resulting in suboptimal victim recovery and law enforcement (Nurjanah, 2021).

Although various policies and regulations are in place, the handling of sexual violence cases against children still faces numerous challenges. Key obstacles include a shortage of trained personnel, inadequate support facilities (such as child-safe rooms), and suboptimal inter-agency coordination. Furthermore, social stigma against child victims also hinders reporting and victim recovery.

The Indonesian government has issued various regulations and policies to strengthen protection for victims of sexual violence, with the aim of providing justice and recovery for victims and preventing further acts of violence. One of the key regulations serving as the foundation for addressing sexual violence is the Law on Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence (UU TPKS). This law represents a significant step forward in combating sexual violence in Indonesia, providing a clear definition of sexual violence that encompasses various forms of abuse, ranging from sexual harassment to rape. One of the key strengths of the UU TPKS is its more comprehensive protection for victims, which includes physical, psychological, and social safeguards (Nurisman, 2022). The law also addresses victim recovery, which involves psychological counseling and legal assistance.

The Law on Sexual Violence Crimes strengthens protections for victims through more responsive reporting mechanisms, the provision of safe houses, and a stronger legal basis for the PPA Unit to provide protection, support, and recovery for victims (Aldama *et al.*, 2023). Prior to the enactment of the Sexual Violence Crimes Act (UU TPKS), protection for child victims of sexual violence was guided by Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection, which mandates the provision of comprehensive protection and recovery

through legal, psychological, and social support (Salwa *et al.*, 2024).

One of the provisions in this law is the obligation of the authorities to provide temporary protection to victims, which can be carried out through the use of safe houses or temporary shelters for victims. The PPA Unit is also expected to carry out this role in close coordination with other institutions, such as social service agencies, hospitals, and psychological counseling centers.

In addition to the main law, the Indonesian government has also issued a number of regulations that support the implementation of policies to protect victims of sexual violence. One of these is Government Regulation No. 21 of 2008 on the Establishment and Operation of Safe Houses for Victims of Violence. This regulation provides the legal basis for the provision of safe house facilities for victims of sexual violence, enabling them to receive temporary protection from threats by perpetrators (Alpian, 2022).

Furthermore, Presidential Decree No. 85 of 2020 on the Establishment of a Task Force for Handling Sexual Violence Crimes also supports interagency coordination efforts in addressing cases of sexual violence. The establishment of this Task Force demonstrates the government's commitment to addressing sexual violence more seriously by involving various stakeholders, including the police, social institutions, and civil society organizations.

The PPA Unit is tasked with enforcing the law against perpetrators while providing protection and recovery for victims of sexual violence in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Furthermore, the PPA Unit plays a role in raising awareness about victims' rights and available legal mechanisms to enhance awareness, foster a sense of safety, and encourage victims to report acts of violence without fear or intimidation.

Empirically, cases of sexual violence against children in Indonesia show a persistently high incidence and require serious attention from law enforcement authorities. Data from various child protection agencies indicate that sexual violence against children remains one of the most prevalent forms of crime occurring in social settings, both in public spaces and within the family.

At the regional level, including within the jurisdiction of the Madiun City Police Department, the handling of child sexual abuse cases has shown a rising trend in the number of cases over the past few years. This situation underscores the critical importance of the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) in carrying out its functions of protection, law enforcement, and victim support. However, the rising number of cases

has not always been accompanied by optimal case management, highlighting the need to analyze the factors influencing the PPA Unit's role in the case handling process.

Data from the PPA Unit of the Madiun City Police Department shows an increase in cases of sexual violence against children over the past three years: 18 cases in 2023, 22 cases in 2024, and 25 cases in 2025. A similar trend is also observed at in several police jurisdictions across East Java, indicating that sexual violence against children remains a serious issue. Although all reports have been handled by the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA), the effectiveness of case resolution and victim support still varies due to internal and external factors. This situation indicates that the PPA Unit's role has not yet been fully optimized, necessitating a study to analyze the factors influencing the effectiveness of its operations in handling cases of sexual violence against children.

The urgency of this study lies in the importance of analyzing the effectiveness of the Women's and Children's Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children from an empirical legal perspective. This study is expected to contribute to the development of research on criminal law and child protection, while also serving as a basis for evaluation by law enforcement officials to improve the quality of services, protection, and victim assistance. Furthermore, this study is crucial for bridging the gap between legal provisions and their implementation in the field to strengthen the legal protection system for child victims of sexual violence. Based on this background, this study focuses on analyzing the role of the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children at the Madiun City Police Department, as well as the factors influencing the effectiveness of that role.

2. METHOD

This study is an empirical legal study using a qualitative and sociological approach aimed at analyzing the role of the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) at the Madiun City Police Department in handling cases of sexual violence against children and identifying the factors that influence the effectiveness of carrying out that role. An empirical legal approach was used to examine law as "law in action," specifically by observing the implementation of legal provisions in the practical handling of child victims of sexual violence.

The research was conducted at the PPA Unit of the Madiun City Police Department. The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants who possess knowledge of and are directly involved in handling child victims of sexual violence. Informants were selected purposively based on the relevance of their duties, experience, and involvement in

the case-handling process. To maintain confidentiality and facilitate the identification of data sources in the presentation of research results, each informant was assigned a code as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Research Informants

Code	Informant
PPA-1	Head of the PPA Unit, Madiun City Police Department
PPA-2	Investigator, PPA Unit
OR-1	Parent/guardian of the victim
PH-1	Legal Counsel/Attorney

Secondary data was obtained through a review of laws and regulations, official documents, case handling reports, scientific literature, and previous research relevant to child protection and the handling of sexual violence crimes. The data obtained was then qualitatively analyzed through a process of organizing, categorizing, interpreting, and drawing conclusions based on patterns and relationships among the findings. The results of the interviews were then linked to the provisions of laws and regulations and analyzed using Role Theory and Legal Effectiveness Theory to explain the alignment between normative provisions and their implementation in practice.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Role of the PPA Unit in Handling Cases of Sexual Violence Against Children at the Madiun City Police Department

The Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) at the Madiun City Police plays a highly strategic role in the child protection system, particularly in handling cases of sexual violence against children. Previous research indicates that effective child protection requires the integration of legal and psychological aspects, as well as interagency coordination, in which each institution must fulfill its role optimally (Setiyadi, 2020). This analysis employs Role Theory and the Theory of Legal Effectiveness to assess the alignment of the PPA Unit's practices with child protection principles, both in terms of legal procedures and psychological implementation.

Role Theory emphasizes that individuals or institutions occupying specific positions are expected to carry out functions and responsibilities in accordance with social norms and societal expectations (Prasetyo *et al.*, 2021). In the context of the PPA Unit, these roles include receiving reports, conducting investigations, providing psychological support to child victims, and coordinating with external institutions such as hospitals, social service agencies, and the victims' attorneys. The practices implemented by the PPA Unit demonstrate that each stage of the procedure is designed to meet these expectations, with the child's psychological needs as a central consideration.

The primary duties of the PPA Unit at the Madiun Police Station include receiving case reports, conducting initial investigations, providing psychological support to child victims, and coordinating with various relevant agencies, including hospitals, psychologists, social service agencies, and the victims' attorneys. The Head of the PPA Unit emphasized that every case of sexual violence against children is always handled with the goal of providing the best possible protection for the victim, prioritizing safety, the fulfillment of children's rights, and the restoration of their psychological well-being. Every report received is processed in accordance with legal procedures through official documentation, accompanied by psychological support and coordination with various relevant parties to ensure that the handling process does not cause repeated trauma to the victim. According to her, every child victim of sexual violence has different needs and therefore requires professional, comprehensive handling that involves cross-sectoral support to ensure the fulfillment of the child's rights and best interests (Interview with PPA-1, March 16, 2026).

The Head of the PPA Unit explained that every member of the PPA Unit has received specialized training in handling child victims of sexual violence, which includes the ability to recognize signs of trauma, apply communication techniques appropriate to the child's age and psychological condition, and conduct interviews in a sensitive manner that prioritizes the victim's perspective. According to her, this training aims to create a safe and comfortable environment so that children feel protected and are more open to providing the necessary statements during the legal process. In addition to involving psychologists or counselors, all members of the PPA Unit are equipped with the knowledge to provide initial psychological support and foster a child-friendly environment. Furthermore, coordination with parents or guardians is consistently maintained to ensure victims receive optimal protection and are shielded from pressure or repeated trauma during the case handling process (Interview with PPA-1, March 16, 2026).

The Head of the PPA Unit explained that the handling of child sexual abuse cases has followed standardized operating procedures, from receiving reports, documenting every stage of the process, to coordinating with relevant agencies. Documentation is conducted comprehensively to ensure administrative order, maintain the continuity of the handling process, protect the victims' rights, and minimize the risk of repeated trauma. Data from the PPA Unit of the Madiun City Police also shows an upward trend in reported cases, rising from 18 cases in 2023 to 22 cases in 2024 and 25 cases in 2025. In 2023, out of 18 reported cases, 10 were concluded at the investigation stage, 7 were transferred to the prosecutor's office, and 1 case was not pursued due to insufficient evidence. In 2024, the number of cases increased to 22, with 14 cases concluded at the

investigation stage, 6 transferred to the prosecutor's office, and 2 cases discontinued. Meanwhile, in 2025, there were 25 cases, with 16 cases completed at the investigation stage, 8 cases entering the prosecution stage, and 1 case discontinued. In general, no cases were found to have been left unaddressed, indicating that the PPA Unit continues to actively carry out its case-handling functions. However, the resolution rate and the effectiveness of support services still show variations influenced by internal and external factors.

During this period, the PPA Unit of the Madiun City Police handled various cases of sexual violence against children, predominantly involving the crimes of sexual intercourse and indecent acts. This situation indicates that children remain a vulnerable group and therefore require optimal legal protection. In this regard, the PPA Unit plays a crucial role in conducting investigations, providing victim support, and ensuring the fulfillment of children's rights in accordance with the provisions of Law No. 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Crimes.

Interviews with the Head of the PPA Unit revealed that although case handling has been carried out in accordance with applicable regulations, its effectiveness remains constrained by limitations in human resources, supporting facilities, safe spaces, and psychological support staff. Nevertheless, the PPA Unit continues to prioritize the protection of children's rights through coordination with various relevant agencies at every stage of case handling. In practice, case handling involves investigations, psychological counseling, and coordination with hospitals, schools, and the victim's family to support the processes of evidence collection, recovery, and child protection. These findings indicate that the effectiveness of the PPA Unit's role is influenced not only by regulatory aspects but also by the availability of resources and supporting facilities.

Based on an in-depth interview conducted on March 17, 2026, an investigator handling child cases at the PPA Unit of the Madiun City Police provided an operational overview of the investigation process for cases of sexual violence against children. This interview emphasized that handling child victims of sexual violence requires a highly sensitive approach, given that children are a vulnerable group who may experience additional trauma if interactions are handled inappropriately. It was also explained that handling child victims of sexual violence requires a careful, child-centered approach to prevent the recurrence of trauma during the investigation process. According to her, every communication process and the collection of statements are conducted carefully with the involvement of a psychologist as a support person, so that the victim feels safe, comfortable, and able to provide complete and accurate statements to support the law enforcement process (Interview with PPA-2, March 17, 2026).

The handling of child sexual violence cases at the Madiun Police Department's PPA Unit has followed standardized procedures, ranging from receiving reports, conducting investigations, providing psychological support, to coordinating with schools, hospitals, families, and relevant agencies. In practice, examinations are conducted in stages using a child-friendly approach, with a psychologist present, and tailored to the victim's psychological condition so that the child feels safe and does not experience repeated trauma. This approach is considered essential for obtaining optimal testimony while ensuring the protection and fulfillment of children's rights throughout the law enforcement process.

Investigators explained that a child-centered approach is effective in obtaining statements from victims while minimizing trauma during the examination process. However, the effectiveness of case handling still faces challenges, including a shortage of personnel with specialized expertise, a lack of safe spaces, and a limited number of psychologists, meaning that support for victims cannot yet be provided optimally when multiple cases are handled simultaneously. To address this, the PPA Unit continues to strengthen coordination with hospitals, psychologists, social service agencies, and legal counsel to ensure that children's rights are upheld and to support the smooth handling of cases.

The process begins when the child victim or a parent reports a case of sexual violence experienced by the child to the PPA Unit. The report is officially recorded, including the child's identity, a brief chronology of events, and other necessary supporting information. This documentation is essential for recording the case and serves as the foundation for the subsequent stages of the process. The head of the PPA Unit emphasizes that systematic documentation also functions as a reference for all unit members, ensuring that each case is handled consistently and in accordance with procedures.

After a report is received, investigators conduct an initial investigation using an approach that is highly sensitive to the child's needs. Interviews are conducted in a child-safe room with the support of a psychologist or counselor, so that the child feels comfortable and safe while providing a statement. One investigator explained, "When investigating cases involving children, we always adapt our language and communication methods to the child's age and psychological condition. A psychologist is present during every interview to ensure the child does not feel afraid and can recount the events in full." This investigation is conducted carefully to gather valid evidence while safeguarding the psychological well-being of the child victim.

Furthermore, the PPA Unit provides psychological support for child victims. Counselors or psychologists conduct regular counseling sessions to

help children cope with trauma and foster a sense of security. This support runs parallel to the investigation and legal coordination processes, ensuring that children receive comprehensive psychological support. The victims' parents stated that this support greatly helps their children remain calm and feel confident in following legal procedures. Some parents even noted that children who received intensive support felt more confident and were more cooperative during the investigation process (Interview with OR-1).

The handling process also involves interagency coordination. The PPA Unit communicates and collaborates with hospitals to conduct medical examinations, with social service agencies for additional support, with schools regarding cases occurring on school premises, and with attorneys who ensure the child's legal rights are upheld. The victim's attorney emphasized that effective coordination is a key factor in the success of child protection, as it ensures that all parties involved understand their roles and support the fulfillment of the victim's rights (Interview with PH-1).

The final stage is child protection, in which the PPA Unit ensures that the child's rights are fully upheld, including physical safety, psychological recovery, and access to a fair legal process. The PPA Unit also provides guidance to parents on how to support their child at home to minimize trauma. Based on the interviews, the attorney and the victim's parents agreed that the integrated protection process, which involves all parties, makes the child feel safe and ensures their rights are protected throughout the legal process.

Overall, the procedures for handling cases involving child victims of sexual violence at the PPA Unit of the Madiun City Police Department constitute a multidisciplinary system that combines legal measures, psychological support, and interagency coordination. The findings suggest that this systematic and child-sensitive approach may contribute to minimizing re-traumatization and improving the effectiveness of case handling. However, the limited availability of specially trained personnel and supporting facilities remains a challenge that must be addressed to improve the quality of child protection in the future.

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the Women and Children's Empowerment Unit (PPA) at the Madiun City Police Department plays a strategic role in handling child victims of sexual violence. The PPA Unit fulfills its role in accordance with the principles of Role Theory, which emphasizes the importance of institutions performing their functions in line with social norms and community expectations. These functions include receiving reports, conducting sensitive investigations, providing psychological support to children, and coordinating with external institutions, including hospitals, social service agencies, and the victims' attorneys.

Procedures for handling child victims of sexual violence are carried out systematically and focus on the psychological protection of the victims. The implementation of these procedures aligns with the principles of the Theory of Legal Effectiveness, in which an institution's success is influenced by internal factors such as the quality of human resources and facilities as well as external factors such as interagency coordination, family involvement, and public perception of the victim. This approach enables the PPA Unit to provide adequate legal and psychological protection while ensuring that children's rights are fulfilled.

Overall, the PPA Unit has played a substantial role in handling cases of sexual violence against children, although several institutional constraints continue to limit the effectiveness of its implementation. However, the success of these efforts still needs to be enhanced through improvements in human resources, facilities, and coordination mechanisms to ensure the maximum possible protection of child victims of sexual violence.

3.2. Factors Influencing the Madiun Police PPA Unit in Handling Cases of Sexual Violence Against Children

The role of the PPA Unit in handling cases of sexual violence against children is not only repressive in terms of law enforcement but also preventive and protective in providing protection to child victims so that they do not experience repeated trauma during the legal process. Therefore, the PPA Unit serves as the frontline in ensuring that the principles of child protection and justice for victims are effectively implemented. However, in empirical practice in the field, the fulfillment of this role is influenced by various factors that affect its effectiveness both supportive factors and obstacles. These factors include legal factors, law enforcement factors, infrastructure and facility factors, community factors, and cultural factors.

First, legal factors. In this study, the law is one of the primary factors influencing the role of the Women's and Children's Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children at the Madiun City Police Department. This factor relates to the entire body of laws and regulations that serve as the legal basis for police operations, particularly regarding the protection of children as victims of criminal acts. Normatively, there are several key regulations that serve as the legal foundation for handling cases of sexual violence against children, namely Law No. 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Crimes (TPKS Law), Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, as well as internal police regulations set forth in the Indonesian National Police's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) regarding the handling of women and children who are victims of crime.

The existence of the UU TPKS significantly strengthens Indonesia's legal protection system, as it not only emphasizes the punishment of perpetrators but also gives special attention to the recovery of victims, including children (Shelly & Rahaditya, 2026). Meanwhile, the Child Protection Law affirms that every child has the right to protection from all forms of violence, exploitation, and treatment that degrades their dignity. The National Police SOP serves as a technical guideline for the PPA Unit in carrying out its operational duties, ranging from receiving reports, examining victims, and conducting investigations to coordinating with relevant agencies.

The Head of the PPA Unit at the Madiun City Police Department explained that the PPA Unit carries out its duties in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, particularly the Law on Sexual Violence Crimes, the Child Protection Law, and police standard operating procedures. According to him, these regulations provide a clear legal foundation for every stage of case handling, ensuring that all actions are carried out in a targeted, consistent, and manner, in accordance with applicable procedures. This finding indicates that legal aspects serve as a key supporting factor, providing legal certainty while also serving as a guideline for the PPA Unit in carrying out its duties to protect child victims of sexual violence.

However, although the legal framework is comprehensive, its effectiveness still depends on implementation in the field. In practice, existing SOPs must be adapted to the psychological condition of child victims, so that they are not merely formalistic but also capable of providing humane protection. This indicates that legal factors function not only as written norms but also as guidelines that must be implemented adaptively in each case. These factors have a positive and fundamental influence on the role of the PPA Unit in handling cases of sexual violence against children, as they serve as the basis for legitimacy, operational guidelines, and a guarantee of legal protection for victims.

Second, the law enforcement factor is one of the most dominant factors influencing the role of the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children at the Madiun City Police Department. This factor relates to the quality of human resources (HR), the level of competence among officers, and the workload borne by PPA Unit members in carrying out their duties. In the context of this study, the PPA Unit at the Madiun City Police Department faces the challenge of a limited number of personnel with specialized expertise in handling child victims of sexual violence. Handling cases involving children requires a different approach compared to general criminal cases, as victims are in a psychologically vulnerable state and require an approach that is sensitive, humane, and trauma-informed.

Investigators from the PPA Unit stated that handling child victims of sexual violence requires specialized competencies not only in legal aspects but also in child psychology and the ability to communicate sensitively. However, the limited number of personnel with such expertise, coupled with the rising number of cases, has led to an increasingly heavy workload, meaning that investigative processes and victim support are not always carried out optimally. This situation indicates that the competence of law enforcement officials and the availability of human resources are critical factors influencing the effectiveness of handling child sexual abuse cases (Interview with PPA-2, March 17, 2026).

Empirically, this heavy workload affects the effectiveness of services provided to victims, particularly in terms of psychological support and the speed of case handling. Nevertheless, the PPA Unit continues to strive to perform its duties optimally by prioritizing cases deemed to be of high urgency. Thus, the law enforcement factor in this study can be concluded as a factor that has a significant influence on the role of the PPA Unit in handling cases of sexual violence against children. Human resource limitations, competency levels that still need to be improved, and a high workload are the main aspects affecting the effectiveness of task implementation in the field.

Third, infrastructure and facilities are among the factors influencing the role of the PPA Unit in handling cases of sexual violence against children. In handling cases where children are victims, the availability of supporting resources cannot be viewed merely as an administrative matter but is an essential part of legal protection for victims. Child victims of sexual violence are in a psychologically vulnerable state; therefore, the processes of examination, counseling, and legal evidence gathering must be supported by facilities that are safe, comfortable, and do not impose additional stress on the victims.

The resources and facilities addressed in this study include child-friendly examination rooms, the availability of psychologists or psychological counselors, and access to forensic medical examination services as a form of evidence in legal proceedings. These three elements are directly linked to the effectiveness of the PPA Unit's role, as without adequate facility support, the case handling process cannot proceed optimally even if law enforcement officials possess the necessary commitment and a clear legal basis.

Child-friendly rooms are a crucial facility in the victim examination process. These rooms should be designed so that children feel safe, unafraid, and do not feel as though they are being interrogated, as is often the case in standard criminal investigations. In cases of sexual violence, children often experience trauma,

shame, fear, and even difficulty recounting the sequence of events they have experienced. Therefore, child-friendly examination rooms can help victims feel calmer while providing their statements.

In addition to child-friendly rooms, the presence of psychologists is also a crucial element in supporting the role of the PPA Unit. Psychologists are needed to assist in supporting victims, assess the child's psychological condition, and help law enforcement officials determine the appropriate communication methods during the examination process. In some cases, child victims are unable to directly describe their experiences due to trauma or emotional distress. Therefore, the involvement of psychologists can help ensure that the process of gathering information does not cause re-traumatization. Thus, it is clear that psychological support plays a major role in safeguarding the child's mental well-being throughout the legal process. However, if the number of psychologists is limited or coordination of support is not implemented promptly, the protection provided to the victim cannot be considered optimal. This demonstrates that factors related to resources and facilities are not limited to buildings or rooms but also include the availability of experts who support the victim's recovery.

Medical examination facilities also play a crucial role in handling cases of sexual violence against children. The medical examination report (*visum et repertum*) serves as medical evidence that can support the investigation and prosecution of criminal acts. In sexual violence cases, the results of the medical examination often serve as crucial evidence to corroborate the victim's statement, particularly when the victim's testimony requires medical support. Therefore, prompt access to medical examination services is a key indicator of the effectiveness of case handling by the PPA Unit.

Research findings indicate that resources and facilities are key factors influencing the effectiveness of the Child Protection Unit's role in handling cases of sexual violence against children. The availability of child-friendly spaces, psychologists, and medical examination facilities supports victim protection and the smooth progress of legal proceedings; however, their capacity remains limited and is thus unable to keep pace with the increasing number of cases and the complexity of support needs. Therefore, improvements to resources and facilities are necessary so that the PPA Unit can provide legal and psychological protection more effectively.

Fourth, societal factors. These are external factors that significantly influence the role of the Women and Children's Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children. These factors relate to the public's level of legal awareness, their willingness to report incidents, and evolving social

attitudes toward victims of sexual violence. In many cases, the effectiveness of the response is determined not only by law enforcement officials but also by the community's response and participation in uncovering and reporting criminal acts that occur. One of the key aspects of societal factors is the social stigma against victims of sexual violence. This stigma often causes victims and their families to feel afraid, ashamed, or reluctant to pursue legal proceedings. This situation directly contributes to delays in reporting cases; in some instances, it can even result in cases going unreported altogether. Social stigma can also affect a child's psychological well-being, as victims feel pressured by the perceptions of those around them. In addition to stigma, the public's willingness to report incidents is also a critical factor in the effectiveness of the PPA Unit's role. Without an initial report from the public or the victim's family, the legal process cannot be initiated optimally. The willingness to report is heavily influenced by the public's level of legal understanding and their trust in law enforcement officials. The higher the public's trust, the greater the likelihood that cases of sexual violence will be uncovered and addressed promptly.

The public's legal awareness is another equally important aspect. Low legal awareness leads some members of the public to fail to understand that sexual violence against children is a serious criminal offense that must be reported and prosecuted (Shelly & Rahaditya, 2026). In some cases, the community still views such cases as a family disgrace and therefore prefers to resolve them privately without going through legal channels. Thus, the community factor can be concluded to have a dual impact on the role of the PPA Unit in handling cases of sexual violence against children. On the one hand, social stigma, low legal awareness, and fear of reporting can act as barriers to the law enforcement process. On the other hand, increasing public trust in law enforcement officials can accelerate the reporting and handling of cases. Therefore, societal factors are a crucial aspect that must be considered in efforts to enhance the effectiveness of legal protection for child victims of sexual violence.

Fifth, Cultural factors are among the external factors that influence the role of the Women and Children's Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children at the Madiun City Police Department. These factors relate to social values, norms, customs, and the mindset of communities that have developed and exist within specific social environments. In the context of addressing sexual violence against children, cultural factors exert a significant influence because they can shape the community's attitudes toward both the victims and the case reporting process.

From a sociological perspective, the culture that still prevails in some communities tends to be influenced

by patriarchal values, a sense of shame, and a tendency to protect the family's reputation. This situation often results in cases of sexual violence against children not being promptly reported to the authorities, as they are viewed as a shameful secret that must be concealed. Additionally, the tendency to blame the victim (victim blaming) is also part of the cultural factors that can hinder the process of law enforcement and child protection.

In practice, these cultural factors are often closely linked to the public's willingness to report incidents and the victims' openness in recounting their experiences. Child victims often face social pressure that makes them reluctant to describe what actually happened, especially if the perpetrator is a family member or has a close social relationship with the victim.

Furthermore, cultural factors also influence how society views victims of sexual violence (Kifli *et al.*, 2022). In some cases, victims do not receive full social support but instead face stigma or social exclusion. This can worsen the psychological condition of child victims and hinder the recovery process, which should be an integral part of the legal protection provided by the state. Thus, cultural factors can be concluded to have a significant influence on the role of the Child Protection Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children. These factors affect not only the initial reporting stage but also the victims' recovery process and the overall effectiveness of legal protection. Therefore, educational efforts and social change are needed to reduce stigma and raise public awareness so that protection for child victims of sexual violence can be implemented optimally.

Based on the overall research findings, which include interviews, empirical data on case handling, and an analysis of factors influencing legal effectiveness, the role of the Women and Children Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children at the Madiun City Police Department was analyzed using Soerjono Soekanto's legal effectiveness approach, which encompasses legal factors, law enforcement factors, infrastructure and facilities factors, societal factors, and cultural factors.

Regarding legal factors, the role of the PPA Unit is considered to be strongly supported by the availability of complete and comprehensive regulations, namely Law No. 12 of 2022 on Sexual Violence Crimes, Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, and Law No. 11 of 2012 on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System. This factor provides a strong basis of legitimacy for every action taken in handling cases, and thus can be categorized as a factor that strongly supports the effectiveness of the PPA Unit's role.

Regarding law enforcement, it was found that although PPA Unit personnel demonstrate commitment

and professionalism in handling cases, there are limitations in human resources both in terms of numbers and specialized expertise in handling child victims of sexual violence. This situation results in a heavy workload and suboptimal support across all cases; therefore, this factor is considered significantly influential but not yet fully optimized.

Next, regarding infrastructure and facilities, child-friendly spaces, psychological services, and medical examination facilities are available and utilized in the case-handling process. However, limitations in capacity and the number of supporting facilities mean that services are not yet fully equitable and optimal across all cases; thus, this factor falls into the “moderately supportive” category.

Regarding the community factor, social stigma, low legal awareness, and the fear of victims and their families to report incidents are still present. Nevertheless, there has been an increase in public trust in the PPA Unit in some cases. Therefore, this factor is categorized as less supportive but beginning to show improvement.

Meanwhile, regarding cultural factors, social values such as a sense of shame, the practice of keeping cases within the family, and stigma against victims still significantly influence the reporting and handling of cases. These cultural factors remain a significant non-legal barrier to the effectiveness of legal protection and are therefore categorized as factors that tend to hinder progress.

4. CONCLUSION

The PPA Unit has fulfilled its role optimally within the framework of expected responsibilities and the principle of legal effectiveness, through systematic case-handling procedures, adequate psychological support, and interagency coordination that supports child protection. The PPA Unit’s performance is rated as “good,” as evidenced by a fairly high case resolution rate, although there are still limitations in providing support to victims. Meanwhile, the factors influencing the role of the Women’s and Children’s Empowerment Unit (PPA) in handling cases of sexual violence against children at the Madiun City Police Department include legal factors, law enforcement factors, infrastructure and facility factors, community factors, and cultural factors, as outlined in Soerjono Soekanto’s theory of legal effectiveness. Here, legal factors consist of legislation such as the Law on the Prevention and Eradication of Sexual Violence Against Children (TPKS), the Child Protection Act, and the SPPA Act serve as the normative foundation supporting the PPA’s duties, while law enforcement and infrastructure factors continue to influence the optimization of case handling. Meanwhile, societal and cultural factors tend to act as barriers in the reporting process and victim protection; thus, overall, the role of the PPA Unit is influenced by a combination of

internal and external factors, with a dominant emphasis on law enforcement, infrastructure, and the socio-cultural conditions of the community.

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