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Efforts of the Pohuwato Police Resort in Enforcing and Preventing Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence against Children

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the factors that cause the occurrence of sexual violence against children in Pohuwato Regency and the efforts of the Pohuwato Resort Police in preventing and enforcing the law against these crimes. This study uses an empirical legal method with the research location at the Pohuwato Resort Police, specifically the Women and Children's Service Unit, and is supported by a library study of laws and criminal law literature. The results of the study indicate that the factors causing sexual violence against children include the vulnerability of victims, technological developments and access to pornography, low education and economic conditions, the residential environment, and power relations that facilitate perpetrators to commit crimes. Research data shows that there have been cases of sexual violence against children in recent years, with acts such as sexual intercourse and molestation. The efforts of the Pohuwato Resort Police are carried out through routine patrols, legal counseling in schools and villages, increasing public awareness, and repressive actions through the investigation and inquiry process. This study concludes that the prevention of sexual violence against children must be carried out in an integrated manner through pre-emptive, preventive, and repressive strategies involving families, schools, communities, village governments, and law enforcement officials.

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1. Introduction

Children are part of the nation's next generation who must receive legal, social, and moral protection. This protection is important because children are in a vulnerable position, both physically, psychologically, and socially. In Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights, children are understood as human beings under the age of eighteen and unmarried, including children who are still in the womb if this is in their interests [1]. Protection for children was then strengthened through the Child Protection Law which has undergone several amendments to address the development of forms of crimes against children [2]. Strengthening sanctions is also evident in Law Number 17 of 2016 which regulates criminal threats against perpetrators of sexual crimes against children, including additional penalties in certain circumstances [3].

Sexual violence against children is a serious crime because it not only damages the victim's body, but also impacts the child's psychological condition, social development, and future. In the context of child law, the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration in all legal actions and child protection policies [4]. However, social reality shows that children are still frequently victims of sexual violence, both in the family, school, and community environments. These crimes can occur due to unequal power relations, weak family supervision, uncontrolled technological developments, and low public awareness of child protection.

Under criminal law, sexual violence against children is an act that can be held criminally responsible. A crime is understood as an act prohibited by law and is punishable by punishment for anyone who violates it [5]. The principle of legality in criminal law emphasizes that a person can only be punished if the act has been regulated in advance by statutory regulations [6]. Therefore, law enforcement against sexual violence against children cannot be separated from the basis of criminal law, criminal procedure law, and special provisions for child protection.

In Pohuwato Regency, cases of sexual violence against children are a problem that requires serious attention. Based on data and descriptions in the research, these crimes occur through various methods, including persuasion, threats, coercion, opportunities due to weak supervision, and close relationships between victims and perpetrators. This situation shows that prevention is not enough to be carried out only after the crime has occurred, but also needs to be built through strengthening early protection, public education, and an active role of the police. Based on this background, this article discusses two main issues: the factors that cause the occurrence of sexual violence against children in Pohuwato Regency and the efforts of the Pohuwato Police in preventing and enforcing the law against these crimes.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that cause the occurrence of sexual violence against children in Pohuwato Regency and to explain the efforts of the Pohuwato Police Resort in preventing and enforcing the law against such crimes. Through this objective, this study is directed at providing an understanding of the relationship between factors such as victims, perpetrators, the environment, technological developments, educational conditions, and the economy with the emergence of sexual violence against children. Furthermore, this study also aims to assess the forms of police efforts, both pre-emptive, preventive, and repressive, in establishing legal protection for children.

The urgency of this research lies in the increasing need to protect children from sexual crimes, which can have long-term impacts on victims, their families, and the community. This research is important because children, as a vulnerable group, require legal treatment that is not only oriented towards punishing perpetrators, but also focuses on prevention, education, rehabilitation, and strengthening the role of the community. In the context of Pohuwato Regency, this research is relevant in providing an empirical overview of the patterns causing sexual violence against children and police strategies that can be strengthened to make law enforcement and prevention more effective.

2. Research Methods

This study uses an empirical legal research method, namely legal research that examines the application of law in social reality through field data. The research location is the Pohuwato Police Resort, specifically the Women and Children's Services Unit, because this unit handles cases related to sexual violence against children. This research is supported by secondary data in the form of laws and regulations, criminal law textbooks, criminology literature, and supporting documents related to child protection.

Primary data was obtained through interviews with members of the Women and Children's Service Unit of the Pohuwato Police and through the collection of relevant case data. Secondary data were obtained from primary legal materials, secondary legal materials, and literature sources. The collected data were analyzed qualitatively by outlining the research findings, relating them to criminal law and criminology theories, and drawing conclusions regarding the causal factors and police efforts in preventing sexual violence against children.

Data collection techniques included interviews and documentation. Interviews were used to obtain direct information from members of the Women and Children's Services Unit of the Pohuwato Police regarding the causes, treatment methods, and prevention strategies for sexual violence against children. Documentation was used to trace case data, archives, and supporting materials relevant to crimes of sexual violence against children within the jurisdiction of the Pohuwato Police.

The problem-solving process in this study involves identifying the factors contributing to sexual violence against children, classifying these factors based on the victim, perpetrator, environment, technology, education, and economic aspects, and analyzing them using criminal law and criminology approaches. Furthermore, the efforts of the Pohuwato Police Resort are analyzed through pre-emptive, preventive, and repressive approaches to assess how law enforcement and prevention can be implemented in an integrated manner between the police, families, schools, village governments, and the community.

3. Results and Discussion

Discussions on sexual violence against children need to be placed within the framework of criminal law, victimology, and child protection. In criminal law, the term crime or criminal act refers to actions that are prohibited by law and subject to criminal sanctions [7]. Crimes are not only seen as a formulation of norms, but also as social events that cause harm to victims and society [8]. From a criminological perspective, crime is understood as behavior that is detrimental to society and elicits

a state reaction through criminal law [9]. Meanwhile, victimology positions victims as important subjects who must receive protection, recovery, and access to justice [10]. Therefore, handling sexual violence against children must combine aspects of law enforcement, prevention, victim protection, and social recovery.

Sexual violence against children can take various forms, ranging from molestation, rape, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, to other forms that attack the child's body and dignity. Legal literature on sexual violence against children emphasizes that this violence can occur through physical contact or non-physical actions that lead to sexual activity [11]. The National Commission on Violence Against Women also identifies various forms of sexual violence, including rape, sexual intimidation, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, human trafficking for sexual purposes, forced prostitution, sexual slavery, forced marriage, forced pregnancy, and other forms that degrade the victim's dignity [12]. In the context of children, any sexual act involving children must be viewed as a serious violation because children are not yet in an equal position to give free consent.

3.1. Factors Causing Sexual Violence Against Children in Pohuwato Regency

The results of the study indicate that the factors causing sexual violence against children in Pohuwato Regency do not stand alone, but are related to the conditions of the victim, the perpetrator, the environment, technological developments, and weak social supervision. One of the factors found is the vulnerability of children as victims. Children often do not have sufficient physical, mental, and social abilities to fight the perpetrator, especially if the perpetrator is an adult, a family member, or someone close to the victim. In research on child criminalization and the age limit of children, the age of children indicates a developmental phase that still requires special protection from adults [13]. Therefore, the vulnerability of victims should not be interpreted as the victim's fault, but rather as a reason to strengthen legal and social protection.

Another prominent factor is technological advancements. Access to pornographic content via the internet and digital devices can influence perpetrators' behavior, especially if it lacks self-control, moral education, and social supervision. Research findings indicate that some perpetrators commit acts driven by lust, influenced by viewing pornography, alcohol consumption, opportunity, or close relationships with victims. This situation suggests that preventing child sexual violence must incorporate digital literacy, family supervision, and education about the dangers of pornography as part of a child protection strategy.

Low education and economic conditions are also contributing factors. Low education can affect a person's understanding of legal boundaries, moral values, and the criminal consequences of their actions. Low economic conditions cannot justify crime, but they can be a social situation that increases vulnerability, especially when accompanied by an unhealthy family environment, cramped housing, or weak supervision of children. Environmental factors have also been found to be influential because children can find themselves in situations that create opportunities for perpetrators, both within and outside the family.

Research data from the Women and Child Protection Unit of the Pohuwato Police Department shows that the number of cases of sexual violence against children fluctuates. In 2020, there were 30 cases, 53 in 2021, 25 in 2022, 23 in 2023, and 16 cases as of June 2024. These data indicate that despite a decline after 2021, cases of sexual violence against children continue to occur and require ongoing prevention measures. Several cases analyzed showed that perpetrators came from various age groups, educational backgrounds, and occupations. The methods identified included seduction, exploiting close relationships, taking advantage of vulnerable victims, and repeated acts of sexual abuse or sexual intercourse.

In the context of law enforcement, sexual crimes against children must be processed based on the provisions of material criminal law and criminal procedure law. The Criminal Code is the general basis for criminal acts, while criminal procedure law regulates the procedures for investigation, inquiry, prosecution, examination, and implementation of decisions [14], [15]. In addition, special provisions in the Child Protection Law provide a more specific basis for protecting child victims and increasing the criminal responsibility of perpetrators. One example of a local case that has attracted public attention is the news about sexual violence against children in Pohuwato which was allegedly committed by someone close to the victim, thus demonstrating the importance of family supervision and a quick response by law enforcement officers [16].

3.2. Efforts of the Pohuwato Police Resort in Preventing and Enforcing the Law

The Pohuwato Police Department's efforts to prevent sexual violence against children are carried out through preemptive, preventive, and repressive measures. Preemptive measures are aimed at instilling legal values, morality, and awareness of child protection before the intention to commit a crime arises. In this context, the police can educate the community, schools, parents, village governments, and community leaders about the forms of sexual violence, their impact on children, and the potential criminal penalties for perpetrators.

Preventive measures are implemented by eliminating opportunities for crime to occur. Based on research findings, the Pohuwato Police conduct routine patrols to improve public safety and order. Furthermore, the police conduct outreach programs in schools to ensure students understand the dangers of sexual crimes from an early age. Outreach programs are also provided to village communities, village heads, village chiefs, and local government officials so they can recognize potential sexual violence and take swift action if there are indications of crimes against children.

The role of families and communities is also crucial in prevention. Families need to monitor children's technology use, strengthen communication, teach them about body boundaries, and ensure children are not placed in situations where perpetrators can easily exploit them. Communities need to foster awareness of their surroundings and not view sexual violence as a purely private family matter. If there are allegations of sexual violence against children, the community should encourage reporting to law enforcement so that victims receive protection and cases can be processed according to the law.

Repressive measures are taken after a crime has occurred. In this case, the police conduct an investigation, cross-examine witnesses, gather evidence, and hand over the case to the prosecutor's office in accordance with criminal procedural law. Repressive measures aim not only to punish the perpetrator but also to provide protection to child victims and prevent

recurrence of the crime. In cases of sexual violence against children, law enforcement officers must pay attention to the victim's psychological well-being, avoid questions that could put them in a negative light, maintain the victim's confidentiality, and ensure assistance throughout the legal process.

Overall, the efforts of the Pohuwato Police demonstrate that prevention and law enforcement against child sexual violence must be carried out in an integrated manner. Police cannot work alone without the support of families, schools, local governments, child protection agencies, and the community. Effective prevention strategies must focus on reducing risk factors, increasing legal literacy, monitoring the environment, controlling digital content, and taking firm action against perpetrators. This way, child protection can be implemented not only after the victim experiences violence, but also before the crime occurs.

4. Conclusion

Factors contributing to sexual violence against children in Pohuwato Regency include the vulnerability of children as victims, technological advancements and access to pornography, low levels of education and economic conditions, the residential environment, and power relations or situations that create opportunities for perpetrators. Research data shows that cases of sexual violence against children have continued to occur in recent years, with acts such as sexual intercourse and molestation. This situation demonstrates that sexual violence against children is a legal and social issue that requires ongoing prevention.

The Pohuwato Police Department's efforts to prevent and enforce the law against sexual violence against children are carried out through pre-emptive, preventive, and repressive measures. These efforts include routine patrols, legal counseling in schools, counseling for village communities, raising public awareness, and legal proceedings against perpetrators through investigations and inquiries. This study recommends the need to strengthen cooperation between the police, families, schools, village governments, and the community to ensure more effective child protection, particularly through legal education, technological monitoring, and the courage to report any suspected sexual violence against children.

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