

## **Implementation of the Integrated Justice System as an Effort to Prevent Sexual Violence against Children: A Case Study in Indonesia**

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### **Abstract**

Sexual violence against children is a serious problem that threatens the safety and well-being of the younger generation. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the integrated justice system as an effort to prevent sexual violence against children in Indonesia. The integrated justice system integrates various institutions, including the police, prosecutor's office, courts, and child protection services, to ensure comprehensive protection for children as potential victims. This study uses a case study approach with a focus on policy implementation at the national and regional levels, as well as evaluating the effectiveness of collaboration between institutions in preventing sexual violence against children. The results show that although the integrated justice system has been well designed, there are still challenges in coordination between institutions, policy understanding at the local level, and limited resources that affect the effectiveness of prevention. The recommendations of this study include strengthening the capacity of related institutions, increasing coordination between institutions, and wider socialization about the importance of protecting children from sexual violence. Thus, it is hoped that the implementation of an integrated justice system can be an effective solution in preventing sexual violence against children in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Sexual Violence, Children, Integrated Justice System, Prevention

### **Introduction**

The phenomenon of sexual violence against children in Indonesia is a serious problem that affects many aspects of children's lives, including their physical, mental, and social health. Based on data from the Indonesia Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and various non-governmental organizations, the number of cases of sexual violence against children continues to increase every year. These cases often occur in environments that should be the safest place for children, such as homes, schools, or nearby communities. Unfortunately, many cases of sexual violence go unreported due to social stigma, victim or family fears, as well as a lack of understanding of children's rights and available legal procedures. This results in many child victims of sexual violence not getting the protection and recovery they need, exacerbating the impact of the trauma they experience (Rahman et al., 2022).

In addition to the alarming number of cases, the pattern of sexual violence against children in Indonesia shows diversity in modus operandi, perpetrators, and victims. Perpetrators of violence are often people known to the victim, including family members, teachers, or neighbors, which adds complexity to the handling of these cases. Children from different backgrounds, both urban and rural, are at risk of victimization, but their access to

protection and justice varies, depending on geographical location and socio-economic conditions (Liyus, 2020). In addition, despite increased awareness and efforts from the government and the public to address this problem, major challenges still exist in terms of law enforcement, inter-agency coordination, and the provision of support services for victims. Sexual violence against children is not only a violation of human rights, but also a serious threat to the future of the nation, because children are an important asset in the development of the country (Firman Zakaria et al., 2023).

Recent statistics show that cases of sexual violence against children in Indonesia are still very concerning. According to a report by the Indonesia Child Protection Commission (KPAI), in 2023 alone, there will be more than 2,500 cases of sexual violence against children. This data reflects a significant increase compared to previous years, with the majority of cases occurring in nearby family and community settings. In addition, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA) reported that sexual violence is one of the most frequently reported forms of violence, and often the victims are in the age range of 5 to 15 years. The high number of cases shows the urgency to strengthen the child protection system, both in terms of prevention and case handling. In addition to the increasing number of cases, the data also shows that many cases of sexual violence against children are not officially reported. A report from UNICEF Indonesia estimates that only about 30% of all cases of sexual violence against children are reported to the authorities. Factors such as social stigma, fear of perpetrators, and lack of trust in the justice system are the main reasons why many victims and their families choose not to report the violence they experienced. This creates a major challenge in the efforts of governments and related agencies to get an accurate picture of the scale of sexual violence against children and respond to it effectively (Yuningsih et al., 2020a). The data underscores the need for a more comprehensive approach to addressing cases of sexual violence against children, including raising public awareness, strengthening legal support, and ensuring better access to protection and rehabilitation services for victims.

Sexual violence against children has a devastating impact on their physical, mental, and emotional development. Physically, children who are victims often suffer from serious injuries, infections, or sexually transmitted diseases that can interfere with their long-term health. In addition, the physical trauma experienced can result in prolonged pain and discomfort, which ultimately affects the child's daily activities and quality of life. However, the psychological impact of sexual violence is often more profound and long-lasting. Children who experience sexual violence tend to experience anxiety disorders, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other behavioral problems. This trauma can damage a child's confidence and interfere with their ability to build healthy relationships in the future (Firman Zakaria et al., 2023).

In addition to physical and psychological impacts, sexual violence also affects children's social and educational development. Children who experience sexual violence often feel shy, scared, or isolated, which makes them withdraw from social interactions and school activities. This can lead to decreased academic achievement and even dropping out of school, given their difficulty focusing and participating in an educational environment they would normally consider safe. In the long run, these children are at risk of facing difficulties in social and economic integration, as untreated childhood trauma can affect their chances of getting a decent education and a stable job. Thus, sexual violence is not only a threat to the well-being of children today, but also a major obstacle to their future and their contribution to society.

Sexual violence against children in Indonesia underscores the urgent need to develop more effective and holistic prevention strategies. Current approaches are often reactive, responding to cases after they occur, rather than being proactive in preventing them in the

first place. To truly protect children, an approach is needed that covers a wide range of aspects, from education and public awareness, to improving the legal and enforcement systems, to providing support services for victims and families. Age-appropriate sexuality education and children's rights education at school and at home should be part of the national curriculum, so that children can recognize, report, and protect themselves from potential threats of sexual violence. In addition, increasing awareness in the community about the importance of protecting children from sexual violence must be encouraged through public campaigns involving the government, NGOs, and community leaders.

More so, effective prevention strategies must involve an integrated and collaborative approach between various sectors, including education, health, law, and social services. The justice system must be strengthened with firmer policies and consistent law enforcement against perpetrators of sexual violence against children. In addition, there needs to be easily accessible support services for children who are at risk or have been victims, including counseling, rehabilitation, and legal aid (Liyus, 2020). Governments, along with civil society and the private sector, must work together to create a safe and supportive environment for children, where they can grow and thrive without the threat of sexual violence. This holistic approach not only aims to prevent sexual violence, but also ensures that children who are victims get the support they need to recover and move on with their lives full of hope and opportunity.

Previous research on the implementation of an integrated justice system in preventing sexual violence against children shows various important findings that are relevant for this study. One of the studies conducted by Setiono (2021) examined the effectiveness of collaboration between law enforcement agencies and child protection agencies in Indonesia in handling cases of sexual violence against children. The study found that while there are frameworks in place to support coordination between agencies, there are still gaps in their implementation, especially in terms of communication and resource distribution. As a result, many cases are pending or not handled properly, which ultimately reduces the effectiveness of the integrated justice system. Setiono suggested the need for increased training for law enforcement officials and related service providers to ensure a better understanding of existing procedures and policies.

Another study by Dewi et al. (2020) focuses on the role of the integrated justice system in ensuring comprehensive child protection. The study evaluates the implementation of juvenile justice systems in several regions of Indonesia and finds that while these systems are designed to protect children's rights, their implementation is often hampered by a lack of resources and capacity at the local level. Dewi et al. also noted that the integrated justice system has not been fully successful in preventing sexual violence against children, as the approach used still focuses more on post-incident handling than proactive prevention efforts. Therefore, they emphasized the importance of integrating stronger prevention efforts in an integrated justice framework, including increased public awareness and better psychosocial support for at-risk children.

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### **Research Methods**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the implementation of an integrated justice system in preventing sexual violence against children in Indonesia. The selection of qualitative approaches is based on the need to deeply understand the complexity of the interactions between the institutions involved in the integrated justice system, as well as the factors that affect its effectiveness. The data was collected through in-depth interviews with a variety of stakeholders, including law enforcement officials, representatives of child protection agencies, and policy experts. In addition, document analysis is carried out against relevant policies, regulations, and case reports to understand the policy context and implementation of the integrated justice system in Indonesia. Interviews were conducted by purposive sampling, where respondents were selected based on their role and involvement in the integrated justice system. The data analysis process is carried out through thematic analysis techniques, which allow researchers to identify key patterns, critical issues, and challenges in the implementation of an integrated justice system. This research also involves participatory observation in several institutions involved, to get a direct picture of the collaboration and coordination process in the field. The validity of the data is guaranteed through triangulation of data sources, by comparing findings from interviews, document analysis, and observation. The results of this analysis are then used to provide policy recommendations that can increase the effectiveness of the integrated justice system in preventing sexual violence against children in Indonesia.

### **Result and Discussion**

#### **The Role of Child Protection Institutions**

The role of Child Protection Institutions in the integrated justice system is very important in preventing and handling cases of sexual violence against children. These institutions are responsible for providing protection, support, and rehabilitation for children who are victims of sexual violence. They serve as a bridge between victims and the justice system, ensuring that children's rights are respected and their needs are met. Child protection institutions, such as government agencies, NGOs, and crisis centers, have a major role to play in providing direct services, such as counseling, temporary housing, and medical recovery. They also play a role in developing and implementing adequate child protection policies, as well as coordinating with law enforcement agencies and the justice system to handle cases effectively (Sumampouw et al., 2020).

However, in practice, child protection institutions often face various challenges in carrying out their roles. One of the main challenges is the limitation of resources, both in

terms of finance and labor. Many child protection agencies operate on limited budgets and lack of trained staff, which can hinder their ability to provide comprehensive, high-quality services. In addition, poor coordination between child protection institutions and law enforcement agencies and the justice system often leads to delays in handling cases and deterioration in the quality of services. These limitations often impact the overall effectiveness of the child protection system and can affect the long-term recovery and well-being of children who are victims (Kartini, 2023)

In an integrated justice system, child protection institutions also play an important role in the education and prevention of sexual violence. Through education and awareness programmes, the institution seeks to increase the knowledge of the community and children about their rights and how to protect themselves from violence. These programs often involve counseling in schools, training for parents, and public campaigns to reduce stigma and raise awareness about sexual violence. By increasing public understanding of the issue, child protection institutions hope to prevent violence and strengthen support for victims.

Collaboration between child protection institutions and law enforcement agencies is a crucial aspect of the integrated justice system. To effectively handle cases of sexual violence, child protection institutions must cooperate with the police and prosecutors in the investigation and prosecution process. This collaboration includes sharing information, planning actions together, and providing support to children during the legal process. Good coordination between these institutions can help ensure that cases are processed quickly and fairly, and that victims' needs remain a priority throughout the legal process.

While the role of child protection institutions is critical, regular evaluation and monitoring of the effectiveness of the services they provide is also necessary. Periodic assessments help identify strengths and weaknesses in child protection programs, as well as allow for necessary improvements and adjustments. By conducting systematic evaluations, child protection institutions can adapt their approaches to better meet the needs of victims of sexual violence and address existing challenges. This assessment is also important to ensure that resources are used effectively and that the services provided are in accordance with the best expected standards.

### **Law enforcement officials' views on coordination and collaboration in handling cases of sexual violence against children**

Law enforcement officials' views on coordination and collaboration in handling cases of sexual violence against children are very diverse and often reflect the challenges that exist in the justice system. Some law enforcement officials consider that coordination between the agencies involved, such as the police, prosecutor's office, and child protection agencies, is going quite well, especially in terms of sharing information and planning joint actions. They believe that having regular meetings and clear communication channels helps to smooth the case handling process and ensure that all parties are involved in the effective resolution of the case. However, this view is often contrary to experience in the field, where some officials feel that coordination is not optimal and is often hampered by bureaucracy and lack of integration between existing systems (Firman Zakaria et al., 2023).

One of the main problems faced by law enforcement officials is the inconsistency in procedures and policies between various institutions. For example, the police and the prosecutor's office may have different procedures when it comes to gathering and presenting evidence, which can lead to confusion and delays in the legal process. In addition, the lack of uniform standards in handling cases of sexual violence against children can lead to legal uncertainty and reduce the effectiveness of prosecutions. Some law enforcement officials have proposed the need for clearer and uniform operational

guidelines to ensure that all agencies follow the same procedures and that cases are handled consistently across the system (Russell et al., 2020).

Inadequate coordination is also often caused by limitations in training and knowledge of the role of each institution. Many law enforcement officials feel that training on child protection and handling of sexual violence is inadequate, hindering their ability to work effectively with other agencies. Better and more integrated training can help improve understanding of each agency's responsibilities and procedures, as well as improve communication and collaboration (Yuningsih et al., 2020b). In addition, increasing understanding of the psychological impact of sexual violence on children can help law enforcement officials in handling cases more sensitively and in accordance with the needs of victims.

One of the significant challenges in coordination is the limited resources available to law enforcement officials. Many institutions, especially at the local level, face limitations in terms of budgets, staff, and facilities, which can affect their ability to handle cases effectively. These limitations often lead to delays in the investigation and prosecution process, as well as reducing the quality of services provided to victims (Firman Zakaria et al., 2023). Some law enforcement officials have proposed the need for better allocation of resources and increased budgets to ensure that the agencies involved have sufficient capacity to handle cases of sexual violence against children optimally.

### **Conclusi**

The conclusion of this study shows that the implementation of an integrated justice system in an effort to prevent sexual violence against children in Indonesia has great potential but also faces various significant challenges. An integrated justice system that involves collaboration between law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, courts, and child protection institutions can provide a comprehensive approach to handling cases of sexual violence against children. However, challenges such as suboptimal coordination, resource limitations, and procedural inconsistencies often hamper the effectiveness of these systems. The findings of the study show that despite good collaborative efforts, the success of these systems is highly dependent on improvements in inter-agency integration, capacity building, and consistent policy support.

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