

# Implementation of Legal Protection for Child Victims of Sexual Violence: A Review of Secondary Victimization at Polrestabes Semarang

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## Abstract

Sexual violence against children frequently occurs in Semarang, affecting not only the physical but also the psychological well-being of children. In response to the high number of cases of sexual violence against children in Semarang, Polrestabes Semarang as a law enforcement agency, is obligated to provide legal protection to victims. This article aims to analyze the implementation of legal protection for child victims of sexual violence at Polrestabes Semarang and the factors that lead to secondary victimization during the legal process at Polrestabes Semarang. This study uses victimology with a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques in this study were interviews, observation, and document study. Based on the research results, Polrestabes Semarang has implemented legal protection in a preventive and repressive manner. However, several obstacles are still found in its implementation, such as a lack of female investigators, limited psychologists, and cases that suddenly stop (stalled). In addition, child



victims of sexual violence still experience secondary victimization during the investigation stage at Polrestabes Semarang, including repeated investigations, victim blaming by investigators, a lengthy legal process, and community stigma. Therefore, it can be concluded that Polrestabes Semarang has sought protection law for child victims of sexual violence, but in its implementation there are still obstacles found until secondary victimization practices towards the victim.

### **KEYWORDS**

Child victims of sexual violence, Semarang City, legal protection, secondary victimization

## **Introduction**

Sexual violence is unwanted sexual advances or pressure from the victim, including touching, kissing, and other harmful actions. Perpetrators of sexual violence often humiliate, torture, and even force victims to engage in sexual intercourse, both physically and non-physically.<sup>1</sup> As explained in Article 1 paragraph (1) of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence, "Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence are all acts that fulfill the elements of a criminal act as regulated in this Law and other acts of sexual violence as regulated in the Law as long as they are determined in this Law."<sup>2</sup>

The phenomenon of sexual violence occurs frequently in the community. Children are often the most vulnerable to becoming victims of sexual violence. Article 1 paragraph (4) of Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Child Criminal Justice System explains that children who are victims of criminal acts, hereinafter referred to as child victims, are children under the age of 18 (eighteen) years who experience physical, mental, and/or economic suffering caused by criminal acts.<sup>3</sup> As also

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<sup>1</sup>Novita Rina Antarsih, *Women and Media*, ed. Putri Wahyuni, Ade Irma, and Syamsul Arifin (Aceh: Syiah Kuala University Press, 2021), 154.

<sup>2</sup>Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence.

<sup>3</sup>Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Criminal Justice System.

explained in Article 1 paragraph (1) of Law Number 35 of 2014, "A child is a person who is not yet 18 (eighteen) years old, including a child who is still in the womb.<sup>4</sup> Deviant behavior that occurs in children, such as sexual violence, is increasingly occurring outside of marriage.<sup>5</sup> This occurs in response to biological urges or sexual hormones that begin to become active, such as the emergence of a desire to have premarital sexual relations which can cause uncontrolled sexual stimulation and urges.<sup>6</sup>

Sociologically, cases of sexual violence against children in Indonesia, including of Semarang City, show a fairly high trend. According to data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, there were a total of 3,141 cases of sexual violence against children in Central Java. These cases occurred between 2021 to 2025.<sup>7</sup> One of the areas contributing to the high rate of sexual violence against children is Semarang City. According to police reports on sexual violence against children, the PPA Unit of the Semarang Police Criminal Investigation Unit received 78 reports from 2022 to 2024.<sup>8</sup> Data from the Semarang City Women's and Children's Empowerment Agency recorded 141 cases of violence against children from 17 sub-districts between January 1, 2025 to November 17, 2025.<sup>9</sup> This data not only reflects the increasing crime rate, but also illustrates the weakness of the protection system that should protect children as a vulnerable group.

Sexual violence leaves deep scars on child victims who lack the emotional maturity or ability to understand the traumatic situation they've

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<sup>4</sup>Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection.

<sup>5</sup>Indah Sri Utari, "Prevention of Child Delinquency with Social Control: Criminology Study of Deviant Child Behavior Trends in the Community," *KnE Social Sciences*, (2019): 260-262, <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v3i18.4719>.

<sup>6</sup>Novita Rina Antarsih, *Women and Media*, 153.

<sup>7</sup>"Data on Violence Against Women & Children in Central Java Province 2021-2025", Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, accessed on November 24, 2025,

[https://ppid.dp3akb.jatengprov.go.id/uploads/media/Media20250219542DATA%20KEKERASAN%20PEREMPUAN%20&%20ANAK%20PROVINSI%20JAWA%20TENGAH%20TAHUN%202021-2025%20\(Januari\).pdf](https://ppid.dp3akb.jatengprov.go.id/uploads/media/Media20250219542DATA%20KEKERASAN%20PEREMPUAN%20&%20ANAK%20PROVINSI%20JAWA%20TENGAH%20TAHUN%202021-2025%20(Januari).pdf).

<sup>8</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>9</sup>"Simfoni-PPA", Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, accessed on November 24, 2025, <https://kekerasan.kemenpppa.go.id/ringkasan>.

been exposed to. The suffering they experience extends beyond the physical injuries caused by the perpetrator's actions to far more complex psychological aspects.<sup>10</sup> In fact, child victims of sexual violence not only suffer physical and mental harm as a result of the perpetrator's actions, but also endure further suffering from the abuse they experience from their environment. This continued suffering is known as secondary victimization.<sup>11</sup> As for victimization, it is the process by which someone can be said to be a victim of crime.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, secondary victimization occurs when victims suffer psychological, social, and legal consequences due to inappropriate responses from law enforcement officials (APH), related agencies or institutions, and the community. In some cases, child victims of sexual violence are labeled a "disgrace" and even blamed for the incident (victim blaming).<sup>13</sup> A situation like this illustrates that the victim's suffering does not stop with the crime they experienced, but must continue due to treatment from the victim's environment. Victims can also experience secondary victimization on social media through comments, posts, and messages on social media.<sup>14</sup> The continued suffering experienced by victims results in a recurrence of deep trauma. In addition to prolonged trauma, children who are victims of sexual violence often experience depression and social difficulties, often withdrawing from school and friendships.

Philosophically, children are viewed as a gift from God Almighty, endowed from birth with rights that cannot be diminished by anyone. A

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<sup>10</sup>Iza Agna Batian and Hartanto, "Sexual Violence Against Children: Impacts and Protection Efforts," *Indonesian Journal of Law Research* 2, no. 2 (2024): 34, <https://doi.org/10.60153/ijolares.v2i2.48>.

<sup>11</sup>An Nisya Nursabilah et al., "Legal Protection for Victims of Cyber Scam Crimes and Its Impact on Victims as a Form of Secondary Victimization," *Journal of Social Law and Humanities* 2, no. 3 (2025): 181, <https://doi.org/10.62383/humif.v2i3.1912>.

<sup>12</sup>Eka Susanti, "A Review of Victimology of Victims of Sexual Violence Crimes in Indonesia," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Legal Perspectives* 1, no. 1 (2024): 41, <https://doi.org/10.70837/afg20c04>.

<sup>13</sup>Amira Paripurna et al., *Victimology and the Criminal Justice System*, (Yogyakarta: Deepublish Publisher, 2021), 28-29.

<sup>14</sup>Gina Maulida and Muhamad Romdoni, "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Harassment Who Experience Secondary Victimization on Social Media," *Southeast Asian Journal of Victimology* 2, no. 1 (2024): 68, <https://dx.doi.org/10.30624/sajv.v2i1>.

child born into this world is inherently capable of optimal growth and development, both physically and psychologically. Furthermore, children play a strategic role in ensuring the continuity of religion, family, nation, and state.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, in line with the mandate in Article 20 of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, it explains that "The State, Government, Regional Government, Community, Family, and Parents or Guardians are obliged and responsible for implementing Child Protection."<sup>16</sup> It is important to emphasize that the rights of child victims of sexual violence, which are part of human rights (HAM), must be guaranteed, protected, and fulfilled. Human rights are a fundamental concept in protecting the dignity, freedom, and well-being of every individual.<sup>17</sup> Article 1 of Law Number 39 of 1999 defines human rights as a set of rights inherent in the nature and existence of humans as creatures of God Almighty and are His gifts which must be respected, upheld and protected by the state, law, government and every person for the sake of honor and protection of human dignity and honor.<sup>18</sup> This article means that children who are victims of sexual violence have rights that must be respected and protected as mandated in Article 65 which states "Every child has the right to receive protection from sexual exploitation and harassment, kidnapping, child trafficking, and from various forms of abuse of narcotics, psychotropics, and other addictive substances."

Fulfilling victims' rights is a state obligation and is implemented according to the victim's condition and needs. Victims' rights include the right to treatment, protection, and recovery. Protection for child victims of sexual violence is regulated in Article 69 of Law Number 12 of 2022. Article 69 letter e outlines the victim's right to protection from demeaning attitudes

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<sup>15</sup>Mahrus Munajat, *Criminal Law for Children in Indonesia* (Jakarta: PT Sinar Grafika, 2022), 43.

<sup>16</sup>Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection.

<sup>17</sup>Hanif Maulana Yusuf et al., "Human Rights (HAM)," *Advances in Social Humanities Research* 1, no. 5 (2023): 512, <https://doi.org/10.46799/adv.v1i5.58>.

<sup>18</sup>Law Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights.

and behavior by law enforcement officials.<sup>19</sup> This regulation serves as a tool to prevent secondary victimization by law enforcement agencies, including the police. In handling sexual violence cases at the Polrestabes Semarang, this article also serves as a basis for measuring the extent to which the Polrestabes Semarang, as a law enforcement agency, provides protection that reflects respect for the victim's dignity. In line with the victim-centered approach that is important to implement at the Polrestabes Semarang, it not only focuses on physical protection but also psychological protection for children because it is in line with previous research that the consequences of crime extend beyond physical losses to impact victims in various ways.<sup>20</sup> In addition, physical and psychological protection can provide comfort to child victims of sexual violence during the legal process.

However, according to Mrs. Ida Amelia Sari, a victim companion from the Semarang City UPTD PPA, not all child victims of sexual violence in Semarang receive good treatment from investigators at the Polrestabes Semarang, which causes ongoing trauma. Furthermore, trauma in child victims of sexual violence is not age-specific; all children can experience trauma, from children under 5 to over 10 years old. Children under 5 years old tend to experience more severe trauma, leading to crying. Meanwhile, children over 10 years old are still less able to control their emotions. They simply remain silent when uncomfortable with the questions asked by investigators.<sup>21</sup> Not only APH, but victims of sexual violence need comprehensive support from those closest to them and the community. Therefore, it is important in this study to identify in more depth the factors that cause secondary victimization of child victims of sexual violence at the Polrestabes Semarang because it is clear that quite a few child victims of sexual violence experience secondary suffering during the legal process.

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<sup>19</sup>Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence.

<sup>20</sup>Viacheslav Tuliakov, "Victimization and Victim-Oriented Development of Ukrainian Doctrine of Criminal Law through European Union Dimensions," *International Annals of Criminology* 62, no. 2 (2024): 439, <https://doi.org/10.1017/cri.2024.22>.

<sup>21</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

Based on the previous paragraph, there is a gap between the reality on the ground and the applicable legal norms. In Das Sollen, the Republic of Indonesia upholds the human rights of children to survival, growth, and development, and has the right to protection from violence and discrimination based on Article 28B paragraph (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia<sup>22</sup>. In addition, protection for child victims of sexual violence is also regulated in several articles that have been described in the previous paragraph. Children's rights are affirmed in the International Convention on the Rights of the Child through Presidential Decree Number 36 of 1990, namely the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Presidential Decree (Keppres) Number 36 of 1990. Responding to the existing legal basis, it is appropriate for the state through law enforcement agencies such as the Polrestabes Semarang to provide optimal legal protection for child victims of sexual violence in Semarang City, rather than being the party that blames and corners the victim. This is in line with previous research that suboptimal legal protection is caused by the minimal commitment of law enforcement officers in providing legal protection for child victims of sexual violence<sup>23</sup>.

Polrestabes Semarang as a legal institution has a central role in handling cases of sexual violence against children. In line with previous research, Polres Boalemo is a legal institution that plays a role in handling cases of sexual violence against children, such as socialization through Bhabinkamtibmas and village programs, providing protection for witnesses and victims, and facilitating psychological protection<sup>24</sup>. The same thing is also relevant to the research in Sartini's thesis, Polresta Mamuju have made

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<sup>22</sup>The 1945 Constitution of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

<sup>23</sup>Restyana Widyaningsih, "Legal Protection for Child Victims of Sexual Violence Based on Justice Values" (Sultan Agung Islamic University, 2024), 116, [https://repository.unissula.ac.id/35561/1/Magister Ilmu Hukum\\_20302200348\\_fullpdf.pdf](https://repository.unissula.ac.id/35561/1/Magister_Ilmu_Hukum_20302200348_fullpdf.pdf).

<sup>24</sup>Rahmat Huruji, Moh Rusdiyanto U Puluhulawa, and Mohamad Muhtar Hidayat, "Law Enforcement of Sexual Violence Against Children at the Boalemo Police (Case Study in the Boalemo Police Resort Area)," *Scientific Research Journal* 1, no. 5 (2024): 287–288, <https://doi.org/10.62335>.

preventive and repressive efforts in handling cases of sexual violence, although several obstacles are still found in it, such as the lack of human resources in the PPA Unit and infrastructure that is not yet fully adequate.<sup>25</sup> The investigation phase aims not only to clarify a crime through evidence, but also to protect the human rights of children as victims of sexual violence throughout the legal process. Polrestabes Semarang strives to provide a sense of security throughout the legal process to prevent recurrence of trauma for victims of sexual violence. Victims of sexual violence require comprehensive support from those closest to them and the community. Special treatment for children as victims of sexual violence is crucial for the Polrestabes Semarang, as children are considered a vulnerable group. Based on the previous studies that have been explained above, many have researched the legal protection of child victims of sexual violence by the police in several regions, but there are still few researchers who discuss the implementation of legal protection by Polrestabes Semarang, even research that identifies in depth the phenomenon of secondary victimization experienced by victims when undergoing legal processes at the Polrestabes Semarang is almost never there. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the implementation of legal protection for child victims of sexual violence at the Polrestabes Semarang and identify the factors that cause secondary victimization when victims undergo legal proceedings at the Polrestabes Semarang.

## **Method**

This study uses a victimology study with a qualitative approach. The reason for using a qualitative approach in this article is because it aligns with the formulation of the problem being studied, namely to analyze the implementation of legal protection for child victims of sexual violence in Semarang City by Polrestabes Semarang and to identify factors that cause

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<sup>25</sup>Sartini, "Legal Protection for Children as Victims of Sexual Violence (Case Study of the Polresta Mamuju)" (Bosowa University Makassar, 2021), 108.

secondary victimization of child victims of sexual violence during the legal process at the Polrestabes Semarang. The data used in this study consists of primary data sourced from interviews with informants such as investigators from the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit and victim companion from the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit (UPTD PPA), as well as observations at the Polrestabes Semarang. Second, this study is strengthened by secondary data sourced from information from previous research results, papers, literature, archives, expert opinions, and other legal materials relevant to the issue being studied. The tertiary data used in this article are the legal dictionary (Black Law Dictionary) and the official websites of related institutions such as the Ministry of Women and Child Protection and the Semarang City DP3A. This study uses data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and document studies as a triangulation method to strengthen the validity of the data. Triangulation according to Lexy J. Moleong is a technique for checking the validity of data by utilizing something other than the data obtained so that it functions as a comparison for the data.<sup>26</sup> The data was analyzed by confirming all information obtained from the Polrestabes Semarang with information obtained from interviews at the UPTD PPA Semarang City, then supported by secondary data from theses, dissertations, or articles relevant to the topic of this research.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **1. Implementation of Legal Protection for Child Victims of Sexual Violence by Polrestabes Semarang**

Legal protection is one of the efforts undertaken by law enforcement officials to fulfill the inherent rights of every individual. The Indonesian National Police (Polri) plays a central role in realizing domestic security by

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<sup>26</sup>Lexy Maloeng, *Qualitative Research Methodology* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018).

maintaining order, enforcing the law, and providing protection, patronage, and services, as stipulated in Article 4 of Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police.<sup>27</sup> Through these legal provisions, Polrestabes Semarang are seeking several forms of legal protection in response to the high number of sexual violence cases in Semarang, with the majority of victims being women. Several factors contributing to their becoming victims of sexual violence in Semarang include social interactions within their communities, coming from broken homes, and exposure to social media.<sup>28</sup> *Vinculum juris* according to Satjipto Rahardjo, it is a legal obligation between two people. In the case of sexual violence that occurred in Semarang City, there is a bond between the perpetrator and the child as the victim.<sup>29</sup> When the perpetrator commits a crime against a child, that person immediately violates their legal obligations and directly damages the child's human rights, such as the right to security, dignity, and physical and mental health.

According to Philipus M. Hadjon, legal protection is divided into two forms, preventive and repressive legal protection. Preventive legal protection is the protection provided to legal subjects to raise objections before the government issues a definitive decision or before the decision takes effect. The goal of preventive legal protection is to prevent disputes from occurring, while repressive legal protection aims to resolve disputes.<sup>30</sup> Preventive protection implemented by the Polrestabes Semarang includes holding seminars, serving as resource persons, and conducting outreach at the village, sub-district, and district levels, as well as at the Semarang City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency (DP3A). Furthermore, outreach also reaches schools and the general public, particularly those in need of child protection education. Repressive action,

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<sup>27</sup>Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Republic of Indonesia National Police.

<sup>28</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>29</sup>Satjipto Rahardjo, *Legal Studies*, 5th ed. (Bandung: Citra Aditya Bakti, 2000), 54.

<sup>30</sup>Philipus M. Hadjon, *Legal Protection for the People in Indonesia* (Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1987), 2.

Polrestabes Semarang take action in accordance with applicable legal regulations, in accordance with SOPs, and by enforcing articles related to sexual violence against children.

Handling of police reports or complaints regarding cases of sexual violence against children at the Polrestabes Semarang is carried out using systematic procedures, namely:<sup>31</sup>

1. Reports or complaints from the public are submitted to the Integrated Police Service Center (SPKT). Those visiting the SPKT must fulfill document requirements, such as providing identification, bringing witnesses or submitting witness IDs, and providing evidence of the incident, such as a card from the hospital the victim was taken to, a birth certificate, a family card, and photocopies of both parents' IDs. The reporter must also explain the chronology of the incident that befell the victim.
2. Polrestabes Semarang coordinate and consult with the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA/TPPO). After the complaint is received by the police, a case review is conducted to determine the investigative steps. If the complaint indicates that the child is indeed a victim of sexual violence, Polrestabes Semarang will issue a task order, an investigation order, an investigation plan, and a SP2HP A1 (report analysis results).
3. Conducting an investigation through clarification with witnesses and victims, which is documented in a clarification report and accompanied by an investigation report. To determine whether the case has sufficient evidence, Polrestabes Semarang conduct a second case review. If sufficient evidence is found in a case of child sexual abuse, the case can be escalated for investigation. However, if insufficient evidence is found, a SP2HP A2 (termination of investigation) will be issued.

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<sup>31</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

4. With sufficient evidence and the case being investigated, Polrestabes Semarang proceeded to conduct a third case review. The purpose of this third case review was to identify the suspect, along with administrative documents such as a task order, an investigation warrant, an investigation plan, and a SP2HP A3 (submitted for investigation).
5. With sufficient evidence and the case being investigated, Polrestabes Semarang proceeded to conduct a third case review. The purpose of this third case review was to identify the suspect, along with administrative documents such as a task order, an investigation warrant, an investigation plan, and a SP2HP A3 (submitted for investigation).
6. Once a suspect in a sexual assault case is identified, investigators are required to submit a case report (SPDP) to the Public Prosecutor (JPU) within seven days of the suspect's determination. Therefore, after the investigator determines the suspect, the SPDP will be submitted to the prosecutor's office. The next step is to compile the case file and submit it to the prosecutor for review, known as stage I filing.
7. If the prosecutor determines that the files still need to be completed, a P-19 and P-18 will be issued and returned to the police. The prosecutor has fourteen days to review the files.
8. Once completed by the investigator, the files are returned according to the prosecutor's instructions. If the prosecutor deems the case complete, a P-21 is issued. The investigator submits the suspect and the complete evidence to the prosecutor's office for prosecution in court (stage II).

Satjipto Rahardjo explains that an interest is the target of rights, not only because it is protected by law, but also because there is recognition of it.<sup>32</sup> Looking at cases of sexual violence against children can be understood as a conceptual basis that protection for child victims of sexual violence does

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<sup>32</sup>SatjiptoRahardjo, *Legal Studies*, 54.

not only arise from the laws that regulate it, but also because the Indonesian State has recognized that things such as safety, dignity, mental health, and a sense of security are important things to pay attention to so that the inherent rights of children must be protected. This recognition can be seen, among others, through the Regulation of the Chief of Police Number 10 of 2007 concerning the Women and Children Service Unit which was not only established as an official authority, but the state has previously recognized that children are a vulnerable group, the safety and dignity of children are very important, and these interests deserve to be elevated to rights that must be protected by the police as Law Enforcement Officers. These legal provisions provide real protection space for child victims of sexual violence through the PPA Unit with the facilities and infrastructure available within it.

Based on observations, the facilities and infrastructure at the PPA Unit are adequate, including a playroom and a rest area. In practice, child victims of sexual violence who are still traumatized or depressed are given the opportunity by investigators to provide information in any location they feel comfortable.<sup>33</sup> In some cases, examinations of child victims of sexual violence are conducted at the victim's home, even at restaurants with playgrounds. Investigators and victim advocates may also visit the victim's home. The time limit for examinations conducted at the victim's home is no later than 6:00 PM WIB.<sup>34</sup> Investigators wear casual and neat clothing, not paraphernalia, during the examination of child victims of sexual violence. This aligns with Article 22 of the Law on the Juvenile Criminal Justice System (SPPA), which states, "Investigators, Public Prosecutors, Judges, Community Counselors, Advocates or other legal aid providers, and other officers examining cases involving child victims must not wear togas or

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<sup>33</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>34</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

official attire.” Article 26 of Law Number 12 of 2022 outlines victim companions which include:

- a. LPSK officers;
- b. UPTD PPA officers;
- c. health workers;
- d. psychologist;
- e. social worker;
- f. social welfare workers;
- g. psychiatrist;
- h. legal assistance, including advocates and paralegals;
- i. officers of Community-Based Service Provider Institutions; and
- j. another companion.

However, in practice, child victims of sexual violence only agree to be accompanied by investigators and officers from the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit (UPTD PPA). According to Mrs. Ida, a companion from the UPTD PPA, victims who are reluctant to be accompanied by their parents often believe that if their parents come along during the examination, all the actions they have suffered will be exposed. Given this situation, children are released according to their wishes regarding the parties who will accompany them during the examination. If the victim does not want to be accompanied by their parents, the investigators and UPTD PPA officers will accommodate this request. The victim's lawyer will wait in the investigator's room.<sup>35</sup> He added, "So, as a victim companion and investigator, I'm like a parent adjusting to the child's condition. If the child wants to play, let them play first, or if the child wants to eat, let them eat first." Furthermore, the interview time depends on the child victim of sexual violence. If the victim can provide a clear statement, it won't take more than 1-2 hours. However, if the child victim of sexual violence is still traumatized

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<sup>35</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

or depressed, the victim will be given the opportunity to be interviewed in a shelter, rest room, or playroom.<sup>36</sup>

Based on the previous paragraph, the author analyzes that the examination mechanism for child victims of sexual violence at the Polrestabes Semarang accommodates legal protection oriented towards the comfort and interests of the victim. If a child victim of sexual violence undergoes an examination together with many people, it will cause the victim to feel surrounded and embarrassed. Therefore, through the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA/TPPO), the Law Enforcement Agency (APH) has a dual role: in addition to enforcing the law against perpetrators, it also plays a role in protecting the rights of victims, namely children, so that they receive optimal legal protection during the examination.

Victim companion from the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit (UPTD PPA) cannot specify when they will be required to attend due to the lengthy legal process, except during the case conference. This is because the conference is an internal function of the Polrestabes Semarang. UPTD PPA officers conduct an initial assessment to identify the victim's needs, including counseling. Counseling is not limited to the initial assessment; it is provided according to the victim's needs. If counseling is identified, the victim will be referred to a psychologist. If the victim does not require counseling, counseling will not be provided.<sup>37</sup> According to information from Mr. AKP Agus Tri Yulianto, counseling is carried out in stages up to 3-5 times.<sup>38</sup>

Highlighting the examination mechanism that is implemented flexibly and adaptively reflects Satjipto Rahardjo's thoughts regarding the presence of Law Enforcement Officers and related parties in protecting children's human rights, namely by prioritizing the comfort, security, and

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<sup>36</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>37</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

<sup>38</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

dignity of victims in line with Satjipto Rahardjo's theory of legal protection that law is an instrument that is a means of legal protection to protect the interests and sustainability of a person, including children, by providing a human right to act in the interests of their interests. This is carried out by Polrestabes Semarang and UPTD PPA officers by implementing a flexible examination mechanism by paying attention to the conditions and wishes of child victims of sexual violence.

Sexual violence cases at the Polrestabes Semarang begin with reports or complaints received from the public. Generally, victims of sexual violence refer to both adults and children. Adult victims report their crimes themselves. Meanwhile, reports of sexual violence against children are facilitated by parents or others trusted by the child to access legal proceedings at the Polrestabes Semarang. This is because child victims of sexual violence are believed to have difficulty navigating the legal process independently.<sup>39</sup> In addition to officers from the Semarang City UPTD PPA, DP3A also provides psychologists to provide counseling to child victims of sexual violence. This is a form of implementation of Article 6 paragraph (1) of Law Number 31 of 2014, which states that victims of sexual violence have the right to legal protection in the form of medical assistance and psychosocial and psychological rehabilitation assistance<sup>40</sup>. Furthermore, it has been regulated in Article 69A of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection that children who are victims of sexual crimes have the right to receive special protection, one of which is psychosocial assistance during treatment until recovery.<sup>41</sup> If a child victim of sexual violence is initially asked for clarification and is able to answer, a psychologist is not required. Psychologists are only present in certain circumstances, such as when completing files and providing additional evidence, as sexual assault

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<sup>39</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>40</sup>Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Protection of Witnesses and Victims.

<sup>41</sup>Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection.

cases are difficult to find witnesses.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, the results of psychological examinations from hospitals are used as supporting evidence. However, in practice, the number of psychologists at the Semarang City DP3A is very limited. According to Dr. Eko Krisnarto, Sp.KK, Head of the Women's and Children's Empowerment Agency, the number of victims of sexual violence is not balanced with the number of psychologists.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, Polrestabes Semarang have partnered with Dra. Probowatie Tjondronegoro, M.Sc., Psychologist, to address cases of child sexual abuse.

Another obstacle is the inability of the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit (UPTD PPA) to issue psychological examination results to strengthen evidence in sexual violence cases. The reason for this is that psychological examination results from the UPTD PPA do not have letterheads, making them unusable in legal proceedings. Therefore, the hospital has the authority. In response to this obstacle, Polrestabes Semarang and the UPTD PPA have collaborated with KRMT Wongsonegoro Regional Hospital, Bhayangkara Semarang Hospital, Telogorejo Hospital, St. Elisabeth Semarang Hospital, and other hospitals with letterheads.<sup>44</sup> In addition to the limited capacity of the Semarang City Technical Implementation Unit (UPTD) to issue official psychological examination results, another reason the Polrestabes Semarang is collaborating with various public and private hospitals is to address the limited number of psychologists at the UPTD PPA in Semarang City. Polrestabes Semarang also collaborates with the Social Services Department. If the child, at the request of their parents or family, submits a written statement, they can be placed at the Taruna Yodha Sukoharjo Social Home. In addition to the written statement, other administrative requirements include a birth certificate and Family Card (KK). Through this home, child victims of sexual

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<sup>42</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

<sup>43</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>44</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

violence will gain both knowledge and skills. Furthermore, child victims of sexual violence can interact daily with children who gather at school rather than within the home.<sup>45</sup> This interaction process can improve the social attitudes of child victims of sexual violence. Furthermore, child victims of sexual violence who have suffered psychologically can receive assistance in their recovery.

The synergy between agencies such as the Polrestabes Semarang, the Semarang City UPTD PPA, and various hospitals in Semarang City demonstrates that child protection cannot be implemented partially. This synergy demonstrates the implementation of legal protection as initiated by Satjipto Rahardjo, that legal protection can be achieved through concrete actions that help victims access their rights. This article argues that structural support is crucial to overcoming administrative challenges and thus optimally accommodating evidence in sexual violence cases at the Polrestabes Semarang. If victims cannot access their rights, it is understandable that there is still a gap between the law on the books and the law in action. Furthermore, the interests of children in undergoing the legal process cannot run as they should. In line with Satjipto Rahardjo's theory of legal protection, legal protection is defined as providing protection for human rights losses and the protection provided aims to enable those who are harmed to enjoy the rights granted by law.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, Satjipto Rahardjo stated that the law protects a person's interests by allocating power to him to act in the interests of that person.<sup>47</sup>

During the legal process at the Polrestabes Semarang, counseling provided by psychologists from the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit (UPTD PPA) is tailored to the victim's gender. The UPTD PPA provides both male and female companion. Previously, victims of sexual violence were typically offered a choice between male and female

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<sup>45</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>46</sup>Romli, *Legal Protection*, ed. Qodariah Barkah, 1st ed. (Palembang: CV Doki Course and Training, 2024), 143.

<sup>47</sup>Satjipto Rahardjo, *Legal studies*, 53.

companion. For example, if the victim of sexual violence is a boy, the UPTD PPA always strives to have a male companion provide support.<sup>48</sup> However, this article argues that it is crucial to increase the number of human resources, especially psychologists, available at the UPTD PPA in response to the high number of sexual assault cases reported to the Polrestabes Semarang. However, there is a gap in the implementation of legal protection by the Polrestabes Semarang, where examinations of child victims of sexual violence are conducted by the investigator on duty that day. If the investigator on duty is male, the legal process continues even if the victim is female.

Implementation of examinations with investigators of the same gender should be important. Article 8 paragraph (1) of the Chief of Police Regulation Number 3 of 2008 states that personnel in the RPK are prioritized as female police officers and female civil servants<sup>49</sup>. The Special Service Room (RPK) is a space in a police station designated for witnesses and female and child victims. The term RPK has now shifted to the PPA/TPPO Unit, which focuses on providing protection to women and children who are victims of crime. This is in accordance with Satjipto Rahardjo's view that the law is a means to protect human interests. This article interprets that interests here are further defined as rights. Child victims of sexual violence have basic rights that must be protected by law. Therefore, it is appropriate for Polrestabes Semarang to guarantee the basic rights of child victims of sexual violence by seeking special protection through the assignment of investigators who are appropriate to the child's gender and by increasing the number of human resources, especially for female investigators.

This article argues that child victims of sexual violence have the right to feel comfortable during their investigations at the Polrestabes Semarang.

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<sup>48</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

<sup>49</sup>Regulation of the Chief of Police Number 3 of 2008 concerning the Establishment of Special Service Rooms (RPK) and Procedures for Examination of Witnesses and/or Victims of Crime.

However, the limited number of human resources at the Polrestabes Semarang, particularly female investigators, poses a barrier. The imbalance between the number of cases received and the number of human resources in the Women and Child Protection Unit (PPA/TPPO), sometimes leaves investigators overwhelmed in handling complaints or reports of the large number of cases.<sup>50</sup> This finding aligns with previous research by Endra Fatdiansyah, which revealed that in the field, several cases of sexual violence are still investigated by male investigators, even though the victim is female. Child victims of sexual violence feel embarrassed to testify before investigators. Endra Fatdiansyah, in his research, also stated that this may be due to the limited number of investigators at the Polrestabes Semarang.<sup>51</sup> Indirectly, the author found that the implementation of the principle of "the best interest of the child," which is the basis for child protection, has not been optimally realized. Furthermore, one of the variables influencing the success of implementation is resources. Resources are divided into several elements, one of which is staff, also known as Human Resources (HR).<sup>52</sup> According to this article, limited human resources are a failure of the legal system to carry out its function as a means of protecting humans (law for human beings).

The principle of legal protection put forward by Satjipto Rahardjo provides a deeper understanding of the protection of human rights (HAM). One way to protect victims' rights is by responding to real needs by increasing the number of human resources at the Polrestabes Semarang. In the context of sexual violence cases that occurred in Semarang City, it can be analyzed that the need for child victims of sexual violence is special protection that is more sensitive to the victim's condition. Therefore,

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<sup>50</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>51</sup>Endra Fatdiansyah, "Medicolegal Aspects of Children as Victims of Sexual Violence (Case Study of Polrestabes Semarang)" (Thesis, Sultan Agung Islamic University, 2024), 71.

<sup>52</sup>Iwan Henri Kusnadi and Muhammad Rifqi Baihaqi, "Implementation of the Online Single Submission (OSS) System Policy at the Investment and One-Stop Integrated Services Agency (DPMPTSP) in Subang Regency," *World of Public Administration Journal* 2, no. 2 (2020): 133-137, <https://doi.org/10.37950/wpaj.v2i2.926>.

fulfilling the number of female investigators is an important aspect, especially considering that in practice, cases of sexual violence against children in Semarang City often target women. Although in practice, the Polrestabes Semarang has a special unit to provide protection for women and children through the Women and Child Protection Unit (PPA), if the human resources within it are insufficient, the needs of child victims are not fully met. The needs of society should be guaranteed by legal institutions, whose existence is a tool for community support<sup>53</sup>.

Human rights protection at Polrestabes Semarang has not been fully achieved because protection is only limited to physical facilities through the PPA Unit, while the most important element to encourage the realization of optimal implementation such as the number of human resources is not yet competent. The limited number of human resources, namely investigators of child victims of sexual violence, especially female investigators, is a substantial obstacle to the realization of optimal special protection according to the mandate of Article 59 paragraph (1) of Law Number 35 of 2014. In relation to Satjipto Rahardjo's view, this problem requires a structural and moral evaluation in the law enforcement agency, namely Polrestabes Semarang, so that APH is believed to be a law enforcer who is truly present to meet the needs of victims by strengthening the victim-based approach (victim-centered approach). The victim-based approach is very important to be implemented in providing protection for children who are classified as vulnerable groups.

A victim-centered approach can be pursued through the provision of education and training (diklat) to investigators of the PPA/TPPO Unit at Education Centers (Pusdik) designated by the National Police Headquarters through the National Police Education and Training Agency (Diklat), such as at the Central Java Regional Police SPN, the SPN Pusdik Binmas, and the National Police Badiklat in the Bandung and Lembang areas. The purpose of this education and training is to improve the competence and

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<sup>53</sup>Satjipto Rahardjo, *Legal Studies*, 118.

understanding of investigators in the examination process, both at the inquiry and investigation stages by applying social, psychological, psychiatric, and child-friendly behavioral approaches. In addition, this training also aims to enable investigators to understand and apply legal provisions appropriately, particularly those regulated in Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection.<sup>54</sup> The implementation of education and training aimed at investigators shows that the police institution has implemented the mandate of Article 21 paragraph (1) letters a and b of Law Number 12 of 2022.

Article 21 paragraph (1) of Law Number 12 of 2022 reads:

“Investigators, public prosecutors, and judges handling cases of sexual violence must meet the following requirements:<sup>55</sup>

- a. have integrity and competence in handling cases from a human rights and victim perspective; and
- b. have attended training related to handling cases of sexual violence crimes.”

This provision means that investigators as law enforcement officers (APH) are not only tested for competence in technical matters such as preparing case files, but also that the phenomenon of sexual violence against children places children as victims who are categorized as a vulnerable group from a criminological perspective, also known as a vulnerable group. Satjipto Rahardjo explained that the law serves as a means of protection to protect the interests of victims<sup>56</sup>. Child victims of sexual violence who are categorized as a vulnerable group have an interest in receiving special protection through a victim-based approach by Polrestabes Semarang investigators.

Furthermore, Polrestabes Semarang, as a law enforcement agency, strives to maintain the victim's confidentiality by only providing their

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<sup>54</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>55</sup>Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence.

<sup>56</sup>Satjipto Rahardjo, Legal Studies, 53.

initials and address, including the sub-district. However, for perpetrators who are adults, their full identity, including their full name, is still required to be disclosed.<sup>57</sup> Article 69 letter d of Law Number 12 of 2022 states the victim's right to protection of identity confidentiality<sup>58</sup>. Furthermore, Article 5 paragraph (1) letter i of Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Protection of Witnesses and Victims also mandates that apart from witnesses, there are victims whose identities must be kept confidential.<sup>59</sup> When analyzed through a human rights framework, maintaining the confidentiality of victims' identities is related to the principle of the right to privacy. Child victims of sexual violence in Semarang City have the right to grow and develop without being burdened by their past being continually publicized. If the public knows the victim's identity, it often leads to moral judgments that are detrimental to the victim. The right to confidentiality of the identity of child victims of sexual violence demonstrates that the law does not stop in the courtroom. Rather, the law that lives in society continues in the social order. This means that optimal legal protection by Polrestabes Semarang also requires the role of the community. Although victim confidentiality has been implemented by Polrestabes Semarang in collaboration with various sectors, if the wider community lacks empathy for the victim, it can cause the victim to feel threatened not only during the legal process but also until the legal process is completed or when the victim returns to the social order.

The identity of child victims of sexual violence who have been protected by Polrestabes Semarang is one form of protection provided to the victim's human rights. As Satjipto Rahardjo's theory of legal protection states, legal protection is an effort to provide protection for human rights that have been violated by others, in the context of this case, child victims of sexual violence. Practically, maintaining the confidentiality of the victim's identity

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<sup>57</sup>AKP Agus Tri Yulianto (Head of Unit VI PPA/PPO), Interview with Researchers at Polrestabes Semarang, November 10, 2025.

<sup>58</sup>Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence.

<sup>59</sup>Law Number 31 of 2014 concerning Protection of Witnesses and Victims.

supports the process of social reintegration after a court decision. According to Mrs. Ida Amelia Sari, a victim companion from the UPTD PPA Semarang City, many child victims of sexual violence need time to re-socialize, go to school, and return to life as usual. Giving initials to child victims of sexual violence is one form of ongoing legal protection.

Another obstacle besides the limited number of investigators at the Polrestabes Semarang, especially female investigators, there are other obstacles in protecting against sexual violence cases in Semarang City, namely the existence of cases that are suddenly declared closed without a continuous handling process.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, as the victim's legal representative, she was unaware of the reason the case was dropped and withdrawn by the victim's family. Ida Amelia Sari stated that investigators often said, "Just settle, and you'll get this much," or, in Javanese, "a promise."<sup>61</sup> Even the investigator's response when asked by the victim's advocate from the UPTD PPA regarding the reason for the case being dropped was that it had been withdrawn by the victim's family. In response to this practice of legal protection by Polrestabes Semarang, the UPTD PPA did not recommend mediation because protecting the child's interests in the future is more important. For example, when a child victim of sexual violence, especially a female, is told by her future husband, "Why are you no longer a virgin?", the victim can explain to her husband, "Here, I have proof."

Based on the interview results, it can be concluded that the existence of formal evidence in cases of sexual violence against children not only serves to protect interests during the legal process, but also has a lasting impact on the victim's social well-being. Furthermore, if the victim is female, the social impact is more pronounced in the context of marriage. Evidence from the Polrestabes Semarang serves as legally valid evidence, acting as an indirect

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<sup>60</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

<sup>61</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

protection instrument, responding to the moral judgments of the victim's immediate environment. The state, through the Polrestabes Semarang, has a responsibility to ensure that every stage of case handling, including all administrative processes, is carried out carefully and sensitively for the victim's long-term needs. This is in line with Satjipto Rahardjo's stated goal of legal protection, which states that the law aims to protect a person's interests.<sup>62</sup> According to victimology studies, one of the interests and needs of victims is sustainability.<sup>63</sup> Sustainability is defined as the application of consistent approaches and methods across agencies, as well as ensuring continuity of support for victims at all stages of the judicial process up to the trauma recovery phase.<sup>64</sup>

Recognition of victims rights in the judicial system is ipso facto a fundamental aspect of human rights. This implies that the rights of child victims of sexual violence must be automatically recognized by the Polrestabes Semarang and are inherently part of human rights, without requiring any additional conditions. Therefore, when child victims of sexual violence are viewed as human rights subjects, recognition of the victims' rights arises immediately.

## **2. Factors Contributing to Secondary Victimization of Child Victims of Sexual Violence During Legal Proceedings at the Polrestabes Semarang**

Sexual violence against children in Semarang City requires increased attention. This is because child victims of sexual violence not only experience physical harm but also psychological harm. Moreover, the negative impacts experienced by child victims of sexual violence do not only occur within a specific timeframe, a condition known as primary

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<sup>62</sup>SatjiptoRahardjo, *Legal Studies*, 53.

<sup>63</sup>AmiraParipurna et al., *Victimology and the Criminal Justice System*, 51.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, 52.

victimization. Primary victimization is defined as the initial suffering experienced by the victim as a result of the criminal acts perpetrated by the perpetrator. For example, children who experience sexual violence experience injuries, such as physical pain, bleeding, or even sexually transmitted infections (STIs).<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, primary victimization is defined as a form of interaction that occurs between the perpetrator and the victim, resulting in physical, mental, financial, and moral harm, either directly or indirectly. Based on victimology studies, the social reaction to primary victimization, which constitutes a further violation of the victim's rights, is called secondary victimization. Secondary victimization is understood as a process of injustice experienced by victims after experiencing initial trauma. At this stage, victims hope for recognition and protection from those who should help. However, in practice, victims often experience the phenomenon of victim blaming. Victims, on the other hand, do not receive validation for their feelings and experiences.<sup>66</sup> Based on the growing evidence, victims not only experience initial suffering but also continue to experience secondary suffering, or secondary victimization. This secondary victimization means that the victim continues to suffer, and the criminal justice system is often the cause of secondary victimization. In the context of sexual violence cases, it is clear that child victims, during the criminal justice process, actually exacerbate their suffering, particularly mentally and psychologically. First, victims experience losses during the crime. Furthermore, in pursuing justice through legal channels, victims again face burdens in the form of time, energy, and material costs, from the investigation stage to the final verdict. Furthermore, child victims of sexual violence often experience inadequate treatment from law enforcement

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<sup>65</sup>Nazwa Aulia Khairunnisa et al., "The Impact of Sexual Violence on Women's Psychology," *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 3, no. 3 (2025): 359-361, <https://doi.org/10.62383/wissen.v3i3.1083>.

<sup>66</sup>Hilda Adinta Wulandari and Riska, "The Urgency of Legal Protection for Children as Victims of Sexual Abuse Who Experience Secondary Victimization in the Criminal Justice System," *Jurnal Nalar Keadilan* 3, no. 2 (2023): 59, <https://jurnal.universitaskarta.ac.id/index.php/jurnal-fh-unija/article/view/69/39>.

officers.<sup>67</sup> Things like this are so invasive that they make the victim consider himself a second victim or secondary victimization.

As a law enforcement institution, Polrestabes Semarang plays a role in creating truly optimal legal protection so that no practices can lead to secondary victimization. Although Polrestabes Semarang have made efforts to implement legal protection for child victims of sexual violence, in practice, investigators still find practices that have the potential to cause child victims to experience secondary victimization. Based on the description above, several factors causing secondary victimization of victims at the Polrestabes Semarang include:<sup>68</sup>

1. The investigation was carried out repeatedly

Repeated investigations aim to verify whether child victims of sexual violence consistently answer investigators' questions. This is done by asking an initial question followed by several different questions. The investigator then repeats the initial question. However, if the child victim's answers are inconsistent, the investigator instructs the victim's companion from the UPTD PPA to seek counseling. The victim's companion coordinates with a psychologist to help clarify any questions the victim finds difficult to answer and potentially traumatizing. Once the victim's companion has received a brief report from the psychologist, it is relayed to the investigator. This coordination helps investigators determine the child's answers without the child providing any information. Repeated investigations are also caused by evidentiary factors. For example, if there is a lack of witness testimony in a sexual violence case at the Polrestabes Semarang, the investigator writes the police report (BAP) based on the child victim's own answers. For example, if the victim says they forgot, the investigator still writes "I forgot" in the BAP. In response to this situation, investigators will

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<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

continue to question the victim again on a different day.<sup>69</sup> Repeated examinations with the same questions force child victims of sexual violence to remember the events that happened to them.

## 2. Victim Blaming by Investigators

According to the victimology perspective, victim blaming is a phenomenon of blaming the victim that is often experienced by victims of sexual violence.<sup>70</sup> Although Polrestabes Semarang are trying to develop the quality of human resources, namely investigators, through education and training to improve the competence and understanding of investigators in the investigation process, in practice, victim blaming practices are still found by some investigators. On average, those who still stigmatize the victim behind the victim's back are male investigators who perceive that the victim also enjoyed the incident. This is even more so if the victim is over 15 years old and is considered by the investigator to understand that the act is wrong. According to Mrs. Ida Amelia Sari, a victim companion from the UPTD PPA Semarang City, investigators usually say behind the victim's back, "They must love each other." Other words often said, "It's the woman's fault for that." In response to the practice of victim blaming by investigators at the Polrestabes Semarang against child victims of sexual violence, victim advocates play a role in continuously reminding the victim that the victim is a child. In addition, victim companion also ask investigators to remain professional in front of child victims of sexual violence. Although the words uttered by investigators are limited to two-way communication with the victim companion outside the investigation room, these words are heard by the victim. There are even child victims of sexual violence, aged 15 and above, who have asked their companions, "Miss, what did the police officer say?" The child victims

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<sup>69</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

<sup>70</sup>Gina Maulida and Muhamad Romdoni, "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Harassment Who Experience Secondary Victimization on Social Media," 59-78.

of sexual violence asked their companions via WhatsApp messages.<sup>71</sup> This is in line with previous research that one of the factors that causes secondary victimization is stereotypes or gender bias which has a perspective on attitudes or behavior that corners the victim, causing the victim to lack self-confidence, tend to blame themselves, and potentially cancel their report<sup>72</sup>.

### 3. A Long Legal Process

The lengthy legal process causes trauma for child victims of sexual violence because they are constantly questioned by investigators. This leaves them traumatized, dazed, and even crying. Child victims of sexual violence are often questioned by investigators when they need information and to supplement information not yet obtained from the victim. When the case reaches court, child victims of sexual violence are brought in only once during the initial hearing, and subsequent appearances are not required. Child victims of sexual violence not only experience trauma and cry during the questioning phase at the Polrestabes Semarang, but also continue to cry after leaving the courtroom. The victim companion from the Semarang City Women and Child Protection Unit (UPTD PPA) responds to this situation by bringing in a psychologist. At subsequent hearings, parents can simply observe and seek further information from the victim companion or prosecutor.<sup>73</sup>

### 4. Social Stigma

Children are more afraid of facing social stigma, especially if the case has spread throughout the school, so that the label "bad kid" is not only for the perpetrator, but also for the victim of sexual violence. This causes child victims of sexual violence to be shunned and ostracized by their peers. Victims often express concerns to their counselors, such as, "My

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<sup>71</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

<sup>72</sup>Amira Paripurna et al., *Victimology and the Criminal Justice System*, 27-29.

<sup>73</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

friends won't know, right, Miss?" or "If the police come to my house, they won't be wearing uniform, right, Miss?"<sup>74</sup>

## Conclusion

The phenomenon of sexual violence against children in Semarang City has become a fairly high trend, as evidenced by police reports and data from the Semarang City Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency. Most victims are female. Factors that cause them to become victims of sexual violence in Semarang City include bad associations from their surroundings, from broken homes, to the influence of social media content. The implementation of legal protection carried out by Polrestabes Semarang includes preventive and repressive protection. Polrestabes Semarang have implemented preventive legal protection through seminars and outreach at the village, sub-district, DP3A Semarang City, schools, and even through the general public. As for repressive, the Polrestabes Semarang enforce the law according to applicable SOPs against perpetrators. Child victims of sexual violence also receive protection such as regular counseling services from psychologists provided by Semarang City UPTD PPA or public and private hospitals in Semarang City, child-friendly facilities and infrastructure at the PPA/TPPO Unit, flexible examinations, freedom to choose a companion, and assistance from the UPTD PPA tailored to the victim's gender. Polrestabes Semarang also protects the identity of victims by providing initials. In addition to collaborating with the Semarang City UPTD PPA and several hospitals, Polrestabes Semarang also collaborates with the Social Service which facilitates child care for victims of sexual violence, specifically at the Taruna Yodha Sukoharjo Social Center with the permission of the family. However, in response to several obstacles in implementing

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<sup>74</sup>Ida Amelia Sari (UPTD PPA Officer), Interview with Researchers at UPTD PPA Semarang City, November 17, 2025.

protection for child victims of sexual violence at Polrestabes Semarang, it is necessary to optimize the implementation of the Sexual Violence Crime Law without excessive evidentiary obstacles, add female investigators, and increase the number of psychologists at Semarang City UPTD PPA to ensure optimal assistance and recovery for victims. Meanwhile, to respond to the high number of sexual violence in Semarang City, Polrestabes Semarang should be able to strengthen prevention based on local cultural wisdom through a family approach.

Furthermore, several secondary victimization practices were still found among child victims of sexual violence during the legal process at the Polrestabes Semarang, such as repeated investigations, the phenomenon of victim blaming by investigators, lengthy legal proceedings, and stigma from the community. Based on these findings, investigators at the Polrestabes Semarang should be able to increase their capacity and sensitivity through ongoing training on a child-friendly justice approach so that victim examinations are carried out empathetically without the practice of victim blaming. Furthermore, examinations can be optimized by reducing repeated examinations and strengthening coordination with psychologists and victim advocates to prevent retraumatization. Polrestabes Semarang, as a legal institution, needs to reduce negative stigma by educating the community to realize the protection and best interests of children.

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