

Combating Sexual Violence and Strengthening Child Protection: An Analysis of Policy Implementation in Indonesia

Hendry¹, Dey Ravena¹, Syafrinaldi²

¹Doctoral Program of Law Science, Faculty of Law Science, Universitas Islam Bandung

²Law Science Study Program, Faculty of Law Science, Universitas Islam Riau

ABSTRACT

Legal protection for victims of sexual violence constitutes a fundamental aspect of the rule of law and the realization of human rights. Beyond imposing sanctions on perpetrators, the state bears responsibility for ensuring justice, recovery, and the restoration of victims' dignity, particularly for children who are highly vulnerable to physical and psychological harm. This study aims to analyze the implementation of policies addressing sexual violence in Indonesia, with a focus on their effectiveness in providing legal protection for child victims, and to develop a conceptual model for strengthening such protection. This research employs a normative juridical method, drawing on statutory regulations, judicial decisions, legal doctrines, and relevant theoretical frameworks. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, the study systematically examines the coherence between legal norms and their practical enforcement. The findings indicate that, despite significant normative progress in Indonesia's legal framework on sexual violence, the implementation of these policies remains suboptimal. Persistent structural and functional gaps between legal formulation and law enforcement practices hinder the realization of effective protection for child victims. From the perspective of criminal law policy, this underscores the discrepancy between "law in the books" and "law in action." To address these challenges, the study proposes an integrated policy implementation model consisting of three interrelated components: (1) a national regulatory framework as the normative foundation for guaranteeing children's rights; (2) internal organizational policies focused on child safeguarding mechanisms; and (3) a community-based protection approach that positions local communities as key actors in prevention and response. This model offers a comprehensive strategy for enhancing the effectiveness of legal protection for child victims of sexual violence in Indonesia and provides broader insights for similar jurisdiction.

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Corresponding author

Name: Hendry

Email: Hendryhendry007@proton.me

INTRODUCTION

Sexual violence continues to stand as one of the most serious violations of human dignity and fundamental human rights. It is a problem that persists across societies, cutting through differences in culture, geography, and economic development (Ardiansyah et al.,

2025). While anyone can become a victim, children remain among the most vulnerable. Their physical and psychological immaturity, combined with their dependence on adults and institutions, places them in a position where they are less able to protect themselves or seek help. For child victims, sexual violence is not only an immediate harm but also a deeply disruptive experience that can shape their emotional development, social relationships, and future well-being in lasting ways (Sianturi & Rahaditya, 2025). These consequences make it clear that responding to sexual violence requires more than simply identifying and punishing perpetrators. It requires a system that is capable of protecting, supporting, and restoring victims in a meaningful and sustained manner.

Over the past few decades, there has been a noticeable shift in how legal systems approach crimes such as sexual violence. Traditional models of criminal justice tended to focus almost entirely on the offender, emphasizing investigation, prosecution, and punishment. While these elements remain important, they are no longer seen as sufficient on their own. Increasingly, attention has turned toward the position of the victim within the legal process. This shift is closely connected to broader developments in human rights discourse, which emphasize that justice must include recognition of the victim's experience, protection from further harm, and access to recovery (Rizki et al., 2026). In this context, the role of the state has expanded. It is no longer limited to enforcing criminal law but extends to ensuring that victims receive adequate protection, assistance, and opportunities for rehabilitation.

Even with these normative developments, a gap often persists between what legal frameworks promise and what victims actually experience. Laws may formally guarantee protection, but in practice, victims can still face significant obstacles. These may include difficulties in reporting cases, lack of access to legal assistance, delays in the justice process, and insufficient support services (Sianturi & Rahaditya, 2025). For children, these barriers are often more complex. They may depend on adults to report abuse, encounter systems that are not designed to be child-friendly, or experience additional trauma during legal proceedings (Rafferty, 2008). As a result, the existence of protective laws does not always translate into effective protection on the ground.

One of the key issues underlying this gap is the challenge of policy implementation. Legal provisions do not operate in isolation. They depend on institutions, resources, coordination, and social acceptance in order to function effectively. When these elements are weak or fragmented, the impact of the law becomes limited. In many cases, different agencies involved in handling sexual violence cases may operate without sufficient coordination, leading to inconsistent responses and gaps in protection. At the same time, broader social factors such as stigma, fear, and cultural attitudes toward victims can discourage reporting and reduce the likelihood that cases will be resolved in a way that supports the victim's recovery (Puannandini et al., 2025).

In Indonesia, these challenges are particularly relevant. As a country with a diverse social and legal landscape, Indonesia has made significant efforts in recent years to strengthen its response to sexual violence. Public concern over cases involving women and children has increased, leading to greater attention from policymakers, civil society

organizations, and the wider community. This has resulted in the development of more comprehensive legal instruments intended to address sexual violence and improve protection for victims (Sosia, 2025). These reforms represent an important step toward aligning national law with broader human rights principles and demonstrate a growing awareness of the need for a more victim-centered approach.

However, legal reform on its own is not enough. The persistence of sexual violence cases, especially those involving children, indicates that important challenges remain in translating legal norms into effective action. In practice, child victims may still encounter uneven access to protection depending on their location, the availability of services, and the responsiveness of local institutions. Support systems such as counseling, legal aid, and rehabilitation services are not always accessible or adequately coordinated (Ente, 2025). In some instances, the response to sexual violence remains reactive, addressing cases after they occur rather than focusing on prevention and early intervention.

These conditions highlight the importance of examining not only the content of legal policies but also how they are implemented. Understanding implementation requires attention to the interactions between different actors, including law enforcement agencies, judicial institutions, social services, and community organizations. It also requires consideration of the broader environment in which these actors operate. Legal effectiveness is shaped not only by formal rules but also by institutional capacity, professional practices, and social attitudes. Without a clear understanding of these factors, it is difficult to identify why legal protections may fail to achieve their intended outcomes.

This study begins from the premise that improving legal protection for child victims of sexual violence requires a more comprehensive approach that goes beyond formal legal analysis. It seeks to explore how policies addressing sexual violence are implemented in Indonesia and to what extent they are able to provide real and meaningful protection for child victims. By focusing on implementation, the study aims to uncover the factors that influence the success or failure of legal protections in practice.

The contribution of this study lies in its attempt to bridge the gap between legal theory and practical implementation. By analyzing existing policies and identifying their limitations, it seeks to provide insights that can inform future improvements. While the focus is on Indonesia, the issues addressed in this study are not unique to a single country. Many jurisdictions face similar challenges in ensuring that legal protections for victims of sexual violence are effectively implemented (Rizki et al., 2026). As such, the findings of this research may also offer relevance for broader discussions on victim protection and criminal justice reform.

Ultimately, strengthening legal protection for child victims of sexual violence requires more than formal commitments. It demands sustained effort to ensure that laws are applied consistently, institutions are equipped to respond effectively, and communities are engaged in protecting their members. It also requires a willingness to recognize and address the gaps that exist between intention and reality. By examining these issues in a comprehensive and grounded way, this study aims to contribute to the development of a

system in which legal protection is not merely an abstract principle, but a lived reality for those who need it most.

METHOD

The research adopts a normative juridical approach, focusing on the analysis of legal norms governing the protection of child victims of sexual violence. The study is based on primary legal materials, including statutory regulations and relevant legal instruments, complemented by secondary materials such as legal doctrines, scholarly works, and academic commentaries. Rather than treating these sources descriptively, the analysis is conducted through a systematic and critical examination to assess the coherence, consistency, and adequacy of the existing legal framework.

To strengthen the analysis, this study also incorporates a conceptual and analytical approach to policy implementation, allowing the research to move beyond purely normative interpretation. In this regard, the study examines how legal provisions are translated into practice by considering institutional arrangements, inter-agency coordination, and structural constraints that influence enforcement. This approach enables a more grounded understanding of the gap between normative expectations and empirical realities, particularly in the context of protecting child victims.

The research is descriptive-analytical in nature. It first outlines the structure and substance of existing legal policies, and then critically evaluates their implementation using relevant theoretical perspectives from criminal law policy and child protection frameworks. Through this method, the study aims to identify not only normative strengths but also practical limitations, thereby providing a basis for developing a more integrated and effective model of legal protection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Normative Framework of Legal Protection for Child Victims

From a normative perspective, the protection of child victims of sexual violence in Indonesia is grounded in a layered legal framework that reflects both constitutional mandates and statutory developments. At the highest level, the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia establishes the fundamental obligation of the state to protect human rights, including the rights of children. Article 28B paragraph (2) explicitly affirms that every child has the right to live, grow, and develop, and to be protected from violence and discrimination (Niken Fernanda et al., 2025). This provision serves as the constitutional basis for all subsequent legal instruments addressing child protection and forms the normative foundation for state responsibility in responding to sexual violence.

This constitutional commitment is further elaborated through statutory regulations, most notably Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, which amends Law Number 23 of 2002. This law places a clear obligation on the state, government, and society to provide special protection to children who are victims of violence, including sexual violence. It emphasizes not only preventive measures but also the need for comprehensive handling, covering protection, assistance, and rehabilitation

(Kusuma & Kusuma, Amalia, 2015). In this sense, the law reflects an understanding that child protection cannot be reduced to punitive measures alone but must include a broader system of care and recovery.

A more recent and significant development is reflected in Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning the Crime of Sexual Violence. This law marks a turning point in Indonesia's legal approach to sexual violence by offering a more comprehensive and victim-centered framework. Unlike earlier regulations, which often treated sexual violence in a fragmented manner, this law provides clearer definitions of various forms of sexual violence and explicitly recognizes the rights of victims (Sosia, 2025). These rights include access to protection, legal assistance, restitution, medical and psychological services, and social rehabilitation. The inclusion of these provisions demonstrates a shift toward acknowledging the complex and long-term impact of sexual violence, particularly on children.

From the perspective of criminal law policy, these developments indicate a transition from a retributive model toward a more restorative and victim-oriented approach. The law no longer focuses solely on punishing offenders but also seeks to restore the position of victims as rights-bearing individuals. This shift aligns with broader human rights principles, particularly those reflected in international instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which emphasizes the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all actions concerning children (Tuliakov, 2023).

However, while the legal framework appears normatively comprehensive, a closer examination reveals several critical issues that limit its effectiveness. One important concern lies in the consistency and coherence of legal provisions across different regulations. Although multiple laws address aspects of child protection and sexual violence, overlaps and ambiguities can arise in their application. This can create uncertainty for law enforcement officials and other stakeholders, potentially affecting the consistency of legal responses.

In addition, the normative framework tends to assume that the existence of legal provisions is sufficient to guarantee protection. In reality, legal norms require clear operational mechanisms in order to function effectively. For example, while the law recognizes the right of victims to receive restitution and rehabilitation, the procedures for accessing these rights are not always clearly defined or easily implemented. This can result in situations where rights exist in principle but are difficult to realize in practice.

Another important aspect is the extent to which the legal framework accommodates the specific needs of child victims. Although the laws emphasize protection and rehabilitation, their implementation requires child-sensitive approaches that take into account the psychological condition and vulnerability of children. Without clear guidelines and specialized procedures, there is a risk that legal processes themselves may become a source of additional trauma for victims (Odinye, 2018).

These observations suggest that, while Indonesia's legal framework demonstrates significant normative progress, it still faces challenges in terms of coherence, clarity, and operationalization. The existence of comprehensive laws reflects a strong commitment at the formal level, but their effectiveness ultimately depends on how well they are translated

into practice. This highlights the need to move beyond a purely normative assessment and to examine how these legal provisions function within the broader system of policy implementation.

In this context, the legal-normative framework can be seen as a necessary but not sufficient condition for effective protection. It provides the foundation upon which protection mechanisms are built, but it does not, by itself, guarantee that these mechanisms will function as intended. Understanding this limitation is essential for developing a more realistic and grounded approach to strengthening legal protection for child victims of sexual violence.

Institutional Dimensions of Policy Implementation

While the legal-normative framework provides the formal foundation for protecting child victims of sexual violence, its effectiveness is ultimately determined by how it is implemented across institutions. The realization of legal protection depends on the interaction of multiple actors, including law enforcement agencies, judicial institutions, social services, and supporting sectors such as healthcare and education. In this context, policy implementation becomes a critical arena where legal norms are translated into concrete actions that directly affect victims.

The institutional structure for handling cases of sexual violence against children in Indonesia reflects an integrated approach in principle. Law enforcement institutions, such as the police and prosecutors, are responsible for investigation and prosecution. Courts play a central role in adjudicating cases and ensuring justice, while social service agencies and specialized institutions are tasked with providing assistance, protection, and rehabilitation to victims. In addition, the involvement of institutions such as the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and local integrated service centers (P2TP2A) indicates an effort to create a coordinated response system (Simbolon & Ablisar, 2018).

However, the findings indicate that the implementation of this institutional framework remains uneven and fragmented in practice. One of the primary challenges lies in the lack of effective coordination among institutions. Although legal provisions emphasize integrated handling, institutional actors often operate within their respective mandates without sufficient synchronization. This can result in delays, duplication of processes, or even gaps in protection, particularly during critical stages such as reporting, investigation, and victim assistance.

Another significant issue concerns institutional capacity. The effectiveness of policy implementation is closely linked to the availability of resources, including trained personnel, infrastructure, and financial support. In many cases, institutions responsible for handling sexual violence lack adequate training in child-sensitive approaches, which are essential when dealing with child victims. As a result, procedures may not fully accommodate the psychological and emotional needs of children, potentially leading to secondary victimization during the legal process (Boro et al., 2026).

Disparities between regions further complicate the implementation of legal protection. Urban areas tend to have better access to support services, including legal aid,

counseling, and rehabilitation facilities, while rural or less developed regions often face significant limitations. This uneven distribution of resources creates inequalities in the level of protection available to victims, undermining the principle of equal access to justice.

In addition to structural and resource-related constraints, institutional culture also plays an important role in shaping implementation outcomes. The effectiveness of legal protection depends not only on formal rules but also on how these rules are understood and applied by practitioners. In some cases, a lack of sensitivity toward victims, combined with procedural rigidity, can hinder efforts to provide a supportive and protective environment (Lahabu et al., 2026). This is particularly problematic in cases involving children, where the approach of institutions should prioritize the best interests of the child.

From a policy implementation perspective, these challenges reflect broader issues of governance and institutional integration. Implementation is not simply a matter of executing legal provisions but involves complex interactions between actors, resources, and organizational practices. When coordination is weak and institutional capacity is limited, even well-designed legal frameworks may fail to achieve their intended objectives (Hardyanthi et al., 2022).

These findings suggest that strengthening legal protection for child victims of sexual violence requires a more systematic approach to institutional development. This includes improving coordination mechanisms among relevant agencies, enhancing the capacity of personnel through specialized training, and ensuring more equitable access to services across regions. It also requires fostering an institutional culture that prioritizes victim protection and adopts child-sensitive approaches in all stages of case handling.

In this sense, the institutional dimension serves as a crucial bridge between law and practice. Without effective institutions, legal norms remain abstract and disconnected from the realities faced by victims. Therefore, any effort to improve legal protection must address not only the content of the law but also the institutional conditions under which it is implemented.

The Gap Between Law in the Books and Law in Action

One of the most significant findings of this study is the persistent gap between what is formally regulated in legal texts and what is experienced in practice by child victims of sexual violence. Although Indonesia has developed a relatively comprehensive legal framework that recognizes victims' rights and emphasizes protection, assistance, and recovery, the realization of these rights often remains limited. This condition reflects what is commonly described in legal scholarship as the distinction between "law in the books" and "law in action."

From a normative standpoint, existing laws provide a strong foundation for protecting child victims. Rights to legal assistance, restitution, medical care, psychological support, and social rehabilitation are clearly articulated. However, in practice, access to these rights is frequently constrained by procedural, institutional, and socio-cultural barriers. As a result, there is a disconnect between the promises embedded in legal norms and the actual outcomes experienced by victims (Sianturi & Rahaditya, 2025).

One of the key factors contributing to this gap is the complexity of legal procedures. While legal mechanisms are designed to ensure due process and accountability, they can also become difficult for victims, particularly children, to navigate. The process of reporting, investigation, and trial often involves multiple stages that require coordination among different institutions (Lestari, 2023). In the absence of clear and accessible procedures, victims and their families may face confusion, delays, and additional stress. This situation can discourage reporting and reduce the likelihood that cases will proceed through the legal system.

Another important factor is the issue of enforcement. Legal norms depend on the willingness and ability of institutions to apply them consistently. In some cases, inconsistencies in interpretation and application of the law can lead to unequal treatment of victims. This may manifest in differences in how cases are handled, the level of protection provided, or the extent to which victims' rights are fulfilled (Baharuddin, 2023). Such inconsistencies undermine legal certainty and weaken public trust in the justice system.

Socio-cultural dynamics also play a critical role in shaping the gap between law and practice. Social stigma surrounding sexual violence, particularly when it involves children, can create significant barriers to reporting and seeking help. Victims and their families may fear social judgment, discrimination, or retaliation, leading them to remain silent (Afifah & Yuningsih, 2015). In addition, cultural attitudes that place blame on victims or normalize certain forms of violence can further hinder the effectiveness of legal protection. These factors operate outside the formal legal system but have a profound influence on how laws function in reality.

From the perspective of criminal law policy, this gap highlights a fundamental limitation of relying solely on normative legal reform. The existence of well-drafted laws does not automatically result in effective protection if the supporting structures and conditions are not in place. Legal effectiveness requires alignment between normative frameworks, institutional practices, and social acceptance. When these elements are not synchronized, the law risks becoming symbolic, offering formal recognition of rights without ensuring their practical realization.

This condition also illustrates the importance of adopting a more holistic approach to evaluating legal protection. Rather than focusing exclusively on the content of legal norms, it is necessary to consider how these norms are implemented and experienced by those they are intended to protect. For child victims of sexual violence, this means assessing whether the legal system is accessible, responsive, and capable of addressing their specific needs.

The findings suggest that bridging the gap between law in the books and law in action requires targeted interventions at multiple levels. Procedural reforms are needed to simplify access to justice and make legal processes more child-friendly. Institutional improvements are necessary to ensure consistent and coordinated implementation of legal provisions. At the same time, broader social efforts are required to address stigma and promote a more supportive environment for victims.

In essence, the gap between legal norms and practical outcomes represents one of the central challenges in the protection of child victims of sexual violence. Recognizing and addressing this gap is essential for transforming legal commitments into meaningful protection. Without such efforts, the promise of legal protection will remain incomplete, and the rights of child victims will continue to be only partially realized.

Toward an Integrated Model of Legal Protection for Child Victims of Sexual Violence

The analysis of the legal framework, institutional implementation, and the gap between normative provisions and practical realities demonstrates that existing approaches to protecting child victims of sexual violence remain fragmented. While each component of the system performs certain functions, the lack of integration among them limits overall effectiveness. In response to these challenges, this study proposes an integrated model of legal protection that emphasizes coordination, complementarity, and shared responsibility across multiple levels.



Figure 1. Integrated Policy Model of Sexual Violence Victim Protection Policy

The integrated policy model developed in this study is designed to address the limitations identified in the implementation of legal protection for child victims of sexual violence. It reflects a shift from fragmented, institution-centered approaches toward a more holistic and coordinated system that connects legal norms, institutional practices, and

community participation. The model is structured around seven interrelated components, each representing a critical dimension of effective policy implementation.

The first component, strong legal foundation, emphasizes the importance of harmonizing existing legal frameworks to ensure clarity, consistency, and enforceability. This includes aligning statutory regulations such as Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection and Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Sexual Violence Crimes with constitutional guarantees and international human rights standards. A coherent legal foundation is essential to provide certainty regarding victims' rights, including protection, assistance, restitution, and rehabilitation. Without such clarity, implementation risks becoming inconsistent and ineffective.

The second component, institutional coordination, highlights the need for clear roles and responsibilities among agencies involved in handling sexual violence cases. Effective protection requires strong coordination between law enforcement, judicial institutions, social services, and healthcare providers. This component addresses the fragmentation identified in practice by promoting integrated case management systems and strengthening communication across sectors and administrative levels. Through improved coordination, the response to sexual violence can become more timely, consistent, and victim-centered.

The third component, victim-centered approach, represents a fundamental shift in how legal protection is conceptualized and implemented. This approach ensures that all procedures are sensitive to the needs and vulnerabilities of child victims. It prioritizes the best interests of the child by providing accessible legal aid, psychosocial support, and medical services, while also safeguarding privacy and dignity. By placing victims at the center of the system, this component seeks to minimize secondary victimization and enhance the overall effectiveness of protection measures.

The fourth component, prevention and community engagement, recognizes that legal protection cannot rely solely on reactive mechanisms. Preventing sexual violence requires active involvement from communities, including families, schools, and local organizations. This component emphasizes awareness-raising, education, and early detection, as well as the development of community-based protection systems. By strengthening community participation, the model expands the reach of protection efforts and addresses socio-cultural factors such as stigma and silence.

The fifth component, capacity building and rehabilitation, focuses on strengthening the ability of institutions and service providers to respond effectively to cases of sexual violence. This includes training law enforcement officers, judicial personnel, and social workers in child-sensitive approaches, as well as expanding access to rehabilitation services such as counseling and reintegration programs. Ensuring adequate capacity is crucial for translating legal norms into meaningful support for victims.

The sixth component, effective law enforcement, underscores the importance of ensuring that legal provisions are implemented consistently and fairly. This includes prompt and impartial investigations, strong prosecution, and the imposition of proportionate sanctions on perpetrators. At the same time, law enforcement must uphold the rights of

victims throughout the process. This component reinforces accountability while maintaining a balance between punitive and protective objectives.

The seventh component, data, monitoring, and evaluation, provides the foundation for evidence-based policymaking. Integrated data systems enable better tracking of cases, identification of trends, and evaluation of policy effectiveness. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are essential for identifying gaps in implementation and informing continuous improvement. By incorporating data-driven approaches, the model enhances transparency, accountability, and responsiveness.

Taken together, these seven components form a comprehensive and interconnected system of legal protection. The model emphasizes that no single component is sufficient on its own. Instead, effectiveness depends on the interaction between legal frameworks, institutional mechanisms, and social participation. By integrating these elements, the model offers a more realistic and actionable approach to strengthening legal protection for child victims of sexual violence. It moves beyond formal legal compliance and focuses on ensuring that protection is actually experienced by those who need it most.

In conclusion, strengthening legal protection for child victims of sexual violence requires a shift from fragmented approaches to a more integrated system. By combining strong legal foundations with effective institutional practices and active community involvement, it becomes possible to move closer to a system in which legal protection is not only formally guaranteed but also meaningfully realized in practice.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Indonesia's legal framework for protecting child victims of sexual violence is normatively robust but operationally fragile. While constitutional guarantees and statutory instruments, particularly Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection and Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Sexual Violence Crimes, reflect a clear transition toward a victim-oriented and rights-based paradigm, their transformative potential is constrained by weak implementation. In other words, the problem is no longer the absence of law, but the failure of law to function effectively in practice.

The findings confirm that the central challenge lies in the disconnection between legal design and institutional reality. Fragmented governance, inconsistent inter-agency coordination, uneven institutional capacity, and the lack of standardized child-sensitive procedures systematically undermine the delivery of protection. As a result, legal rights that are formally guaranteed remain contingent, uneven, and in many cases inaccessible. This condition reinforces a structural gap between law in the books and law in action, where legal certainty does not translate into legal effectiveness.

More critically, this gap is not merely institutional but also socio-legal. Cultural stigma, underreporting, and societal resistance to confronting sexual violence continue to weaken the reach of legal mechanisms. This indicates that legal reform, when pursued in isolation, is inherently limited. Legal protection must be understood as a systemic outcome shaped by the interaction between norms, institutions, and social context. Without

alignment across these dimensions, even progressive legislation risks becoming symbolic rather than transformative.

In response, this study advances an integrated policy model that reframes legal protection as a coordinated system rather than a collection of isolated interventions. The model underscores three imperatives: coherence in the legal framework, integration in institutional practice, and participation at the community level. Its significance lies not in introducing new legal norms, but in reorganizing how existing norms are operationalized. By linking victim-centered procedures, institutional accountability, rehabilitation mechanisms, and data-driven governance, the model offers a pathway for converting formal rights into enforceable and accessible protection.

The theoretical contribution of this study is its repositioning of legal effectiveness as a function of systemic integration rather than normative completeness. It challenges the assumption that stronger laws necessarily produce better outcomes and instead emphasizes the conditions under which law becomes operative. From a policy perspective, this implies that future reforms should prioritize implementation architecture, institutional capacity, and social engagement as much as legislative development. However, the study is limited by its reliance on normative juridical analysis, which does not fully capture variations in implementation across local contexts. Further empirical research is necessary to test the applicability of the proposed model and to identify context-specific barriers and enabling factors. Ultimately, strengthening legal protection for child victims of sexual violence requires a decisive shift from legal formalism to implementation realism. The effectiveness of the law will not be measured by its normative sophistication, but by its capacity to deliver protection where it matters most. Without such a shift, the promise of justice will remain formal, and the rights of child victims will continue to be only partially realized.

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