

Legal Analysis of Child Protection in Blitar City Based on Statutory Regulations

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ABSTRACT

Child protection is the responsibility of the state, local government, community, family, and all stakeholders as mandated in various laws and regulations. This study aims to analyze the implementation of child protection in Blitar City based on Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023 concerning Gender Mainstreaming and Fulfillment of Children's Rights, and Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities. The study uses an empirical juridical method with a qualitative approach through documentation studies and in-depth interviews with informants selected purposively. The results show that the Blitar City Government has implemented various child protection programs through the Children's Forum, Child-Friendly Schools, victim assistance services, child protection outreach, and strengthening the Child-Friendly City Task Force. However, various cases of violence against children, bullying, neglect, and sexual violence are still found, indicating a gap between legal norms and their implementation in the field. Key obstacles include low public legal awareness, limited human resources for child advocates, and increasing threats to children in the digital space. This research confirms that effective child protection requires strengthened inter-institutional coordination, increased community participation, and optimized implementation of regional policies on a sustainable basis.

Keywords: *Child Protection, Law Implementation, Blitar City, Regional Policy, Child-Friendly City.*

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INTRODUCTION

Children are a strategic asset of the nation that determines the sustainability of national development in the future. Therefore, the fulfillment and protection of children's rights are an inseparable part of the state's responsibility as guaranteed in Article 28B paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. This provision emphasizes that every child has the right to survive, grow and develop, and receive protection from all forms of violence and discrimination. This constitutional mandate is then elaborated through various regulations, including Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Amendments to Law Number 23 of 2002 concerning Child Protection, Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System, and Government Regulation Number 78 of 2021 concerning Special Protection for Children. The presence of these various legal

instruments shows that child protection has become a priority in the national legal system with the aim of ensuring the fulfillment of children's rights in full.

Despite the comprehensive development of the national legal framework, various forms of violations of children's rights continue to occur in Indonesia. Physical violence, sexual violence, bullying, economic exploitation, child trafficking, and even IT-based crimes are issues that demonstrate that existing regulations are not yet fully capable of providing effective protection. These phenomena occur not only in public spaces but also in families, schools, educational institutions, and religious institutions, which should be safe spaces for children. Furthermore, the development of digital technology has also given rise to new forms of threats, such as *ascyberbullying*, online sexual exploitation, and the distribution of content inappropriate for children, thus requiring a more adaptive and comprehensive protection approach.

In the context of regional government, the implementation of child protection requires policies that can translate national regulations into programs appropriate to regional characteristics. The Blitar City Government demonstrates this commitment through Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023 concerning Gender Mainstreaming and Fulfillment of Children's Rights and Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities. These two regulations serve as the basis for the integration of child protection into the regional development process through various programs such as the Children's Forum, Child-Friendly Schools, victim assistance services, and strengthening coordination across regional apparatus organizations. However, the continued discovery of various cases of violence, neglect, bullying, and violations of children's rights in Blitar City indicates that the implementation of regional policies still faces challenges that require comprehensive evaluation.

Research on child protection has been extensively conducted from various perspectives. Suryantoro (2025) explains that Law Number 35 of 2014 provides a strong legal basis, but the effectiveness of its implementation is still influenced by low public legal awareness. Agustin, Wijaya, and Nugraha (2025) highlight the development of child protection in the criminal justice system, while Muhammad et al. (2023) show that the application of child protection principles has adhered to international standards, although various implementation obstacles remain. Nugraha (2023) also states that the substance of child protection law in Indonesia is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but still requires strengthening at the regional implementation level. From a public policy perspective, Ariani et al. (2025), Afandy and Desiandri (2023), Hernitawati and Pasaribu (2025), Jehudat et al. (2024), and Saragih et al. (2024) emphasize that the success of child protection is greatly influenced by inter-institutional coordination, community participation, resource availability, and the effectiveness of policy implementation at the regional level.

Based on a review of previous research, most studies still focus on the normative aspects of child protection, the juvenile criminal justice system, or policy implementation in specific regions. These studies have not specifically examined the relationship between national regulations and regional policies in the implementation of child protection in Blitar

City. Thus, there are still *research gap* in the form of the absence of a study that integrates the analysis of Law Number 35 of 2014, Law Number 11 of 2012, Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023, and Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023 in one empirical legal analysis framework that focuses on the implementation of child protection in Blitar City.

Novelty (*novelty*) This research focuses on analyzing the synchronization between national regulations and regional policies in the implementation of child protection in Blitar City. The research not only examines the normative aspects of laws and regulations, but also analyzes their implementation through an empirical legal approach, thus providing an overview of the effectiveness of child protection policy implementation at the regional government level. This approach is expected to contribute to the development of legal studies, particularly regarding the implementation of child protection policies within the framework of government decentralization.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the legal provisions regarding child protection based on national legislation and regional policies and to evaluate the implementation of child protection in Blitar City from an empirical legal perspective. The research findings are expected to provide recommendations for the local government and stakeholders in improving the effectiveness of child protection policies and strengthening inter-institutional synergy to ensure the sustainable fulfillment of children's rights.

METHOD

This research uses an empirical legal method with a qualitative approach. The empirical legal approach was chosen because the research not only examines legal norms governing child protection in various laws and regulations (*law in books*), but also analyze the implementation of these provisions in the practice of implementing child protection in Blitar City (*law in action*). Through this approach, research is able to describe the suitability between normative provisions and empirical conditions that occur in society.

The research location was Blitar City, East Java Province, considering that the local government already has a specific policy regarding child protection through Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023 concerning Gender Mainstreaming and Fulfillment of Children's Rights and Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities. The research focused on the implementation of these two regulations in supporting the fulfillment of children's rights at the regional level.

The research data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with informants selected using purposive sampling techniques, namely parties who have authority or direct involvement in the implementation of child protection in Blitar City. Research informants included officials from the DP3AP2KB of Blitar City, the Women and Children's Service Unit (PPA) of the Blitar City Police, the Social Service, child protection institutions, and educators at the schools used as research locations. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained through a literature

review that included laws and regulations, government policy documents, books, scientific articles, and various literature relevant to child protection.

Data collection was conducted using two techniques: documentation studies and semi-structured interviews. Documentation studies were used to identify and analyze various regulations and documents related to child protection, while interviews were conducted to obtain information on policy implementation, implementation constraints, and efforts made by the local government and stakeholders to protect children's rights in Blitar City.

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively through stages data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The analysis process is carried out by connecting empirical findings obtained in the field with applicable legal provisions, in particular Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System, Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023, And Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023. To ensure the validity of the research results, the technique used source triangulation, namely comparing interview results, official documents, and various scientific references so that credible data is obtained that can be academically accounted for.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

Implementation of Child Protection in Blitar City

The results of the study indicate that the Blitar City Government has implemented various child protection programs as a form of implementation of Law Number 35 of 2014, Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023, and Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023. This implementation is realized through the establishment of a Children's Forum, the development of Child-Friendly Schools, the provision of complaint services and victim assistance, the implementation of child protection socialization, and the establishment of a Child-Friendly City Task Force. These various programs show that the local government has made efforts to integrate the fulfillment of children's rights into regional development policies through cross-sectoral collaboration.

These findings demonstrate that the Blitar City Government not only carries out a repressive protective function through case handling, but also applies a preventative approach through public education and child involvement in the regional development process. This preventive approach aligns with the principles of child protection, which place prevention as a crucial part of ensuring optimal child growth and development. The existence of the Children's Forum also reflects the application of the principle of child participation in regional governance, so that children are no longer positioned as objects of development, but rather as subjects with the right to express their aspirations.

The results of this study reinforce Suryantoro's (2025) findings, which state that the success of child protection is significantly influenced by policy implementation at the regional level. Similarly, research by Ariani et al. (2025) indicates that inter-agency coordination is a key factor in realizing an effective child protection system. Thus, policy

implementation in Blitar City has shown positive progress, although its effectiveness still requires strengthening in the implementation aspect.

Child Protection Cases in Blitar City

Despite the implementation of various programs, research shows that violations of children's rights continue to occur in Blitar City. According to data from the Blitar City DP3AP2KB (Regional Child Protection Agency), 54 cases involving children were recorded in 2025, including physical violence, sexual violence, and bullying (*bullying*), neglect, custody disputes, and various other forms of support. Interviews with victim advocates revealed that most cases stem from family conflict, while sexual violence cases have psychological impacts that require a long-term recovery process.

These findings indicate that the existence of regulations has not been fully effective in suppressing child rights violations. Legal protection is not solely determined by the quality of legislation but is also influenced by social and cultural conditions and the level of public awareness of children's rights. Therefore, the effectiveness of child protection is measured not only by the number of regulations in place, but also by the ability of local governments to implement policies consistently and sustainably.

This finding aligns with research by Hernitawati and Pasaribu (2025), which states that the implementation of child protection policies still faces obstacles in the form of limited human resources and low public understanding of children's rights. This situation indicates that the challenges of implementing child protection policies remain a common problem across various regions.

Efforts to Prevent Violence Against Children

Research shows that the Blitar City Government prioritizes prevention as a key strategy for child protection. The DP3AP2KB (Regional Child Protection Agency) routinely conducts outreach activities on the protection of women and children, involving community leaders, religious leaders, PKK (Family Welfare Movement) members, and educational institutions. Furthermore, the local government is strengthening the role of the Women and Children Protection Task Force at the sub-district level as the frontline in receiving reports and providing initial assistance in cases of suspected violence against children.

This preventive approach demonstrates that child protection is not solely focused on post-violation responses but also on building public legal awareness. This strategy is crucial because most cases of violence against children are still influenced by parenting patterns that consider verbal and physical violence to be part of the child's education process. Therefore, increasing public legal literacy is a crucial factor in achieving effective child protection.

The Role of Schools in Child Protection

Schools play a strategic role in supporting the implementation of child protection. Interviews indicate that schools in Blitar City have Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers who handle student complaints regarding bullying and other social issues. The local

government has also developed Child-Friendly Schools and Population Alert Schools programs as part of efforts to build character, increase understanding of reproductive health, and strengthen students' ability to protect themselves from various social risks.

The role of schools is becoming increasingly important as digital media use among children grows. Bullying via social media is a form of abuse that is relatively difficult for families and schools to detect. Therefore, synergy between schools, families, and local governments is necessary to create a safe educational environment that supports optimal child psychological development.

Obstacles to Implementing Child Protection

The research results identified several major obstacles in the implementation of child protection in Blitar City, namely low public awareness of children's rights, delays in reporting cases of sexual violence due to social pressure, increasing threats in the digital space, and limited numbers of companions and psychologists compared to the increasing need for services.

These findings indicate that the effectiveness of child protection is influenced not only by legal substance but also by institutional readiness and human resource capacity. Strengthening the number of professional advocates and improving the quality of psychosocial services are urgently needed to ensure optimal victim recovery.

Analysis of Child Protection Policy Implementation

Based on the overall research findings, the implementation of child protection in Blitar City has shown progress through institutional strengthening, the establishment of various child protection programs, and community involvement in the process of preventing violence against children. However, the research results also show that there is still a gap between legal norms (*law in books*) and its implementation in practice (*law in action*). This condition is reflected in the continued discovery of cases of violence against children even though adequate regional regulations are in place.

In the perspective of Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory, the effectiveness of law is influenced by three main components, namely legal structure (*legal structure*), legal substance (*legal substance*), and legal culture (*legal culture*). This study shows that Blitar City has a relatively adequate institutional structure and legal substance through the existence of DP3AP2KB, Children's Forum, Child-Friendly City Task Force, Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023, and Mayoral Regulation Number 20 of 2023. However, the legal culture of the community remains a major challenge because some people do not fully understand children's rights or the importance of reporting any form of violence.

Therefore, the effectiveness of child protection in Blitar City requires strengthening the legal culture through increased public education, digital literacy development for children and parents, enhanced inter-agency coordination, and capacity building for human resources involved in child protection services. This approach is expected to narrow the gap between applicable regulations and child protection practices, thereby sustainably achieving the goal of developing a Child-Friendly City.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the implementation of child protection policies in Blitar City has progressed through the establishment of institutional mechanisms and preventive programs, including the Children's Forum, Child-Friendly Schools, complaint services, victim assistance, public socialization, and the Child-Friendly City Task Force. These programs demonstrate that the Blitar City Government has attempted to integrate child rights into regional development through preventive, participatory, and cross-sectoral approaches. The involvement of children through the Children's Forum is particularly important because it reflects a shift in the position of children from objects to subjects of development who have the right to express their aspirations. However, the continued occurrence of 54 child-related cases in 2025 indicates that the existence of regulations and programs has not yet completely prevented violations of children's rights. This condition shows a gap between *law in books* and *law in action*, in which the effectiveness of child protection depends not only on the availability of legal instruments but also on their consistent implementation, institutional capacity, and community awareness.

These findings are consistent with Suryantoro (2025), who emphasizes that the effectiveness of child protection is strongly influenced by policy implementation at the regional level, and with Ariani et al. (2025), who identify inter-agency coordination as an important factor in establishing an effective child protection system. The findings also support Hernitawati and Pasaribu (2025), who highlight limited human resources and low public understanding of children's rights as challenges in implementing child protection policies. In the context of Blitar City, these challenges are reflected in delays in reporting sexual violence, family conflicts, limited numbers of professional companions and psychologists, and the increasing risks associated with children's use of digital media, including cyberbullying. From the perspective of Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory, the legal structure and legal substance in Blitar City are relatively supported by the existence of DP3AP2KB, the Children's Forum, the Child-Friendly City Task Force, Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023, and Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023. Nevertheless, the legal culture component still requires strengthening because community understanding and awareness of children's rights remain uneven. Therefore, the effectiveness of child protection requires continuous public education, strengthening digital literacy for children and parents, improving coordination among institutions, and increasing the capacity of professional human resources.

This study also has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the findings. The research focuses on the implementation of child protection policies in Blitar City and relies substantially on information obtained from government institutions, schools, child protection actors, and related informants, so the findings may not fully represent the experiences of all children and families in the community. In addition, the study primarily describes the implementation and challenges of existing policies and does not quantitatively measure the long-term effectiveness of each child protection program in reducing violations. Future research could therefore involve a broader range of child and family perspectives, compare child protection implementation

across several regions, and combine qualitative findings with longitudinal or quantitative data on reported cases and service outcomes. Despite these limitations, the findings demonstrate that strengthening child protection in Blitar City requires an integrated approach that combines legal substance, institutional capacity, community legal culture, child participation, and sustainable prevention strategies to narrow the gap between regulations and their implementation in practice.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of child protection in Blitar City has a strong legal basis through Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System, Blitar City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2023 concerning Gender Mainstreaming and Fulfillment of Children's Rights, and Blitar Mayor Regulation Number 20 of 2023 concerning the Implementation of Child-Friendly Cities. These regulations have been implemented through various programs, including the Children's Forum, Child-Friendly Schools, victim assistance services, child protection outreach, and the formation of a Child-Friendly City Task Force involving various regional apparatus organizations.

However, research results indicate that the implementation of child protection policies has not been fully effective. The continued presence of cases of physical violence, sexual violence, bullying, child neglect, and custody conflicts indicates a gap between legal norms (*law in books*) and its implementation in practice (*law in action*). The main obstacles to implementation include low public legal awareness, limited human resources for child advocates, increasing threats to children in the digital space, and suboptimal cross-sector coordination in case prevention and handling efforts.

Based on these findings, improving the effectiveness of child protection in Blitar City requires strengthening legal education for the community, increasing the capacity of human resources within child protection agencies, optimizing inter-agency coordination, strengthening oversight of the digital environment, and increasing the participation of families, schools, and the community in creating a safe and child-friendly environment. These efforts are expected to strengthen the implementation of regional policies and support the realization of a sustainable Child-Friendly City.

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