

**Criminal Acts of Sexual Harassment in the City of Makassar from a Criminological Perspective**

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***Abstract:** This study aims to examine the factors contributing to the occurrence of sexual harassment crimes in Makassar City and to analyze the efforts undertaken for their prevention and control. The research employs an empirical approach, with the research location at the South Sulawesi Regional Police (Polda Sulsel). The types and sources of data consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary data, which were collected through interviews and documentation. The collected data were subsequently analyzed using qualitative analysis. The findings indicate that the factors contributing to sexual harassment crimes in Makassar City include environmental factors, peer association factors, and economic factors. Preventive and control measures implemented by the South Sulawesi Regional Police involve firm law enforcement accompanied by public education and legal literacy programs related to sexual harassment, as well as legal awareness campaigns addressing its forms, impacts, and legal consequences. In terms of countermeasures, efforts include the provision of legal protection, medical assistance, and social rehabilitation for victims of sexual harassment. Based on these findings, this study recommends that law enforcement officers be provided with gender- and victim-sensitive training to ensure professional, empathetic, and fair handling of sexual harassment cases without blaming or marginalizing victims. Furthermore, the police are encouraged to develop more accessible reporting mechanisms, such as dedicated hotlines or mobile-based applications, to enable victims to report incidents safely while ensuring confidentiality.*

**Keywords:** *Criminological, Criminal Act, Sexual Harassment*

**A. INTRODUCTION**

Sexual harassment is a complex and serious social problem because it affects human dignity, personal security, and social justice. This phenomenon can occur in various social settings, including educational environments, public spaces, and formal institutions. Nevertheless, the rate of reporting sexual harassment cases tends to be low, particularly in societies still influenced by patriarchal cultural norms and social stigma against victims. Numerous studies indicate that the low level of disclosure of sexual harassment cases is often shaped by social norms that pressure victims into silence, feelings of shame, fear of stigma, and concerns about not being believed by law enforcement authorities or their social environment. Previous studies show that cultural and social factors have a significant influence on victims' decisions to report sexual harassment. Research conducted by Ullman (2010) and Jewkes et al. (2015) emphasizes that victim-blaming perceptions within society, as well as social norms that regard sexual issues as private taboos, constitute major barriers in the reporting process. In the context of Indonesian

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society, research conducted by the National Commission on Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) also shows that sexual harassment is often not reported because victims are concerned about social repercussions, family pressure, and the limited assurance of legal protection that is favorable to victims.[1]

From a normative perspective, the protection of human dignity and honor is also in line with the values of Islamic law, which strictly prohibit any form of conduct that degrades or humiliates others. This is as affirmed in the word of Allah SWT: “*O you who believe! Let not one group ridicule another group, for it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let women ridicule other women, for it may be that the latter are better than the former. Do not defame one another, nor call each other by offensive nicknames...*” (Qur’an, Surah Al-Hujurat: 11). This verse emphasizes the importance of preserving the dignity, self-respect, and integrity of every individual, and prohibits all forms of behavior that may undermine human honor. In the context of sexual harassment, this principle holds substantive relevance, as such acts essentially constitute violations of the victim’s dignity and integrity, both physically and psychologically.

From a criminological perspective, sexual harassment cannot be separated from unequal power relations between the perpetrator and the victim. This imbalance of power may stem from differences in age, social position, economic status, authority, as well as the physical and psychological conditions of the victim. Many cases of sexual harassment occur without direct physical violence, instead taking the form of psychological coercion, manipulation, implicit threats, or abuse of trust. Research by Finkelhor (2009) reveals that sexual harassment often occurs within relationships close to the victim, which further reduces the likelihood of reporting. Victims of sexual harassment are not limited to any particular age group. Children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly are all potentially at risk of becoming victims. Research by Pereda et al. (2014) indicates that vulnerable groups such as children, persons with disabilities, and the elderly face a higher risk of experiencing sexual harassment due to physical and psychological limitations as well as dependence on others..[2] In many cases, accusations made by victims particularly the elderly and individuals with mental impairments are often doubted or even dismissed as hallucinations or signs of mental instability, thereby further reinforcing structural injustice against victims.

From a criminological perspective, the concept of the offender is not always understood in a singular manner as it is in criminal law. Criminology views offenders based on persistent (habitual) as well as situational patterns of behavior. As proposed by Sutherland, an individual may be categorized as a criminal when the criminal acts committed constitute part of a repeated and enduring pattern of behavior.[3] Conversely, situational actions do not necessarily reflect an individual’s criminal character. This understanding is important in determining strategies for control, rehabilitation, and prevention of sexual harassment offenses so that they are not solely oriented toward punishment, but also toward broader social interventions. A number of criminological studies also emphasize that sexual harassment is a social phenomenon closely linked to social structures, cultural values, and weak social control. Studies by Heise (1998) and the World Health Organization (2013) show that environmental factors, peer associations, and economic pressures can contribute to an increased risk of violence and sexual harassment.

These factors create criminogenic conditions that facilitate the occurrence of criminal acts, particularly in urban areas with complex social dynamics such as the City of Makassar. The impact of sexual harassment is not only experienced by victims at the individual level, but also has far-reaching effects on families and the broader social environment. Research indicates that victims of sexual harassment are at risk of developing serious psychological disorders, such as depression, anxiety disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and even suicidal tendencies. In addition, victims' families often face social and psychological burdens due to stigma and limited access to recovery and support services. A lack of knowledge and information at the family and community levels frequently becomes an obstacle in the post-harassment recovery process for victims.[4]

In the context of higher education, the increasing number of sexual harassment cases has prompted the state to strengthen regulations on prevention and response mechanisms. These policies reflect an awareness that sexual harassment is a structural problem requiring a comprehensive approach, not only through law enforcement, but also through prevention, education, and changes in institutional culture. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of such policies largely depends on their implementation in practice and on synergy among law enforcement agencies, educational institutions, and society. Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that sexual harassment is a criminological phenomenon influenced by various social, cultural, and structural factors. Therefore, in-depth empirical studies are needed to understand the causal factors as well as the prevention and control efforts undertaken by law enforcement authorities.

## **B. METHOD**

This study is an empirical legal research conducted at the South Sulawesi Regional Police (Polda Sulsel), focusing on criminal acts of sexual harassment in the City of Makassar. The data sources in this study consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the field through interviews with competent parties, particularly police officers handling sexual harassment cases. Secondary data were collected from statutory regulations, scholarly books, legal and criminology journals, as well as previous studies relevant to the object of research. Meanwhile, tertiary data were derived from legal dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other supporting documents. Data collection techniques included interviews and documentation to obtain comprehensive and accurate information. The collected data were then analyzed qualitatively by examining, categorizing, and interpreting the data based on the research problems, in order to achieve an in-depth understanding of the causal factors as well as the prevention and control efforts related to criminal acts of sexual harassment in the City of Makassar.

## **C. DISCUSSION**

### **1. Factors Contributing to the Occurrence of Sexual Harassment Crimes in the City of Makassar**

In recent years, attention to the issue of sexual harassment has increased significantly, accompanied by various prevention and enforcement efforts undertaken by the government,

institutions, and society. However, many challenges remain in addressing this problem, including a lack of awareness and low rates of case reporting.

| NO            | Tahun | Pencabulan | pelecehan seksual anak di bawah umur |
|---------------|-------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1.            | 2021  | 238        | 206                                  |
| 2.            | 2022  | 73         | 78                                   |
| 3.            | 2023  | 306        | 262                                  |
| 4.            | 2024  | 266        | 353                                  |
| <b>Jumlah</b> |       | <b>883</b> | <b>899</b>                           |

**The Number of Sexual Harassment Cases Over the Last Four Years**

*Sumber: ditreskrim bagian operasi kepolisian (ops) polda sulsel 19 mei 2025*

From the table above, it can be seen that sexual harassment cases in 2021 reached 464 cases. In 2022, the number of sexual harassment cases declined to 159 cases. However, in 2023, sexual harassment cases increased sharply to 486 cases, and in 2024 the number rose drastically to 564 cases. Therefore, it can be understood that 2024 recorded the highest number of sexual harassment cases in the City of Makassar.

Furthermore, the author also identified two types of sexual harassment cases that have been dominant over the past four years, namely indecent acts and sexual harassment against minors. Cases of indecent acts and sexual harassment involving children are among the most alarming forms of violence in society. Children, as a vulnerable group, should receive maximum protection from their surrounding environment, including the family, schools, and state institutions. However, reality shows that sexual violence against children continues to occur at a high frequency and results in very serious physical, psychological, and social consequences.

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**Data on Dominant Sexual Harassment Cases Over the Last Four Years**

There is a consistent and concerning trend regarding sexual harassment cases in Makassar. Although the number of cases fluctuates, overall it continues to show high figures from year to year. Based on the table presented, it can be concluded that the most dominant forms of sexual

harassment are indecent acts and sexual abuse of minors. These two types of offenses occupy the top positions in terms of the number of reports received by the South Sulawesi Regional Police (Polda Sulsel).

In light of this reality, it is important to further explore the factors that cause sexual harassment to occur continuously. An understanding of these causes will help formulate more targeted and effective preventive measures.

The author has conducted an interview with the Head of Sub-Directorate 4 of the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation, namely IPDA Mahayuddin Lau, S.E., S.H., M.H. According to his explanation, most reports of sexual harassment cases are submitted by the victims themselves, particularly women who experience verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment. According to him, the factors contributing to the occurrence of sexual harassment include:

### **1. Environmental Factors**

Sexual harassment often occurs as a result of environmental influences that do not support the creation of a safe atmosphere, particularly for women and children. For example, cases of indecent acts against minors are frequently linked to unsafe family environments and a lack of supervision from parents or guardians. Children who grow up in families experiencing conflict, violence, or neglect are more vulnerable to becoming victims because they do not receive adequate protection.[5] In addition, the lack of education regarding bodily boundaries and personal rights prevents children from realizing that they are experiencing sexual harassment and understanding how to protect themselves.

Poor surrounding environmental conditions also contribute to the occurrence of sexual harassment. Today, it is often observed that many children fall into negative peer associations, leading them astray and encouraging them to engage in behaviors beyond acceptable limits. This can also be driven by pressure or influence from peers in their immediate environment. Therefore, caution in social interactions is essential, including the ability to choose a healthy environment and positive friends or relatives.

Unhealthy or high-risk social environments can serve as conducive factors for children and adolescents to engage in deviant behavior. These societal factors can be divided into two categories: first, general social vulnerability, and second, high-risk areas characterized by disturbances to public security and order. Poor social conditions such as slum settlements, the loss of safe play spaces for children, indifference toward acts of exploitation, low societal valuation of children, the growing emphasis on wage-based economic values, weak legal frameworks, and the absence of stable social control mechanisms can trigger an increase in cases of sexual violence against children.

The prevalence of unintended pregnancies, which occur in almost every community setting according to informants, reflects unhealthy social environments. Early marriage, which has long existed and continues to persist within society, is another related issue. According to community accounts, early marriage does not occur solely due to economic factors, but is more often driven by promiscuous behavior leading to pregnancy outside of marriage. Factors contributing to early marriage among adolescents include sexual behavior

and unplanned pregnancy, the desire to marry, economic pressure, and low levels of parental education. Early marriage has become a concern for policymakers and marriage program planners, particularly within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as it poses significant risks to marital stability. Pregnancy at a young age carries risks related to psychological immaturity, lack of preparedness for marital life, and inadequate responsibility in parenting.

## **2. Socio-Cultural Factors**

The tendency to adopt increasingly permissive patterns of social interaction is considered a major factor contributing to the occurrence of sexual harassment, given that many cases originate from social relationships. This is evident from the majority of case chronologies. This view is further supported by the admissions of several perpetrators, who stated that, in general, the patterns of interaction among their peers were largely similar to the behaviors they themselves engaged in.[4] Norms and rules are no longer regarded as something to be feared, as increasingly permissive social interactions have become a prevailing current that seemingly draws all parties along in the same direction. Moreover, social media is also considered by officials to be a factor contributing to the rise in cases of sexual violence on campuses, as such platforms often shape and normalize patterns of interaction that originate from behaviors displayed through digital media.

In everyday life, relationships between adults and children are often formed within a pattern of domination, commonly referred to as power relations. This is rooted in the prevailing perception that children are the property or entitlement of parents or other adults. It cannot be denied that such conditions have resulted in many children becoming victims of sexual violence (sexual abuse) and neglect. Even when children live under the same roof as their parents or guardians, there remains a significant risk of them experiencing abuse and neglect. This reality is reflected in media reports that expose cases of violence against children perpetrated by individuals who have blood relations with the victims and reside in the same household.

## **3. Individual Factors**

Sexual harassment committed by individuals often occurs in a covert manner, beginning with behaviors that may appear trivial, such as sexually suggestive comments, disturbing stares, or unwanted physical contact. Perpetrators typically exploit emotional closeness, power imbalances, or the victim's personal circumstances to carry out their actions. In many cases, offenders feel superior and believe they will not face punishment, especially when the victim is in a weaker position. Fear, shame, and threats often discourage victims from reporting. When the surrounding environment is unresponsive or even engages in victim-blaming, sexual harassment continues and inflicts long-term psychological harm on the victim.[6] Internal factors are factors that exist within the individual. These factors are examined specifically in relation to the individual and aspects connected to sexual crime. First, psychological factors or abnormal mental conditions may drive a person to commit criminal acts. Second, biological factors may also influence the occurrence of sexual crimes. Third, moral factors play a crucial role in determining the emergence of criminal behavior.

Morality is often regarded as a filter that restrains deviant conduct; acts such as rape are frequently associated with extremely low moral standards on the part of the perpetrator. Fourth, motives of revenge and unresolved past trauma can also contribute to the commission of sexual crimes.

#### **4. The Influence of Social Media**

The widespread availability of images and videos on the internet that are inappropriate for adolescents has become one of the contributing factors to sexual harassment. Exposure to pornographic photos or videos can arouse curiosity and stimulate sexual urges among teenagers, which may then be expressed through acts of sexual harassment, including harassment directed toward their female peers. [4]

#### **5. Lack of Understanding of Religious Values**

A lack of understanding of religious values can lead individuals to commit sexual harassment, as it is often associated with insufficient empathy and moral awareness regarding the rights of others. This deficiency in moral and ethical grounding may encourage individuals to engage in acts of sexual harassment. According to the informant, the factors described above are the underlying causes of the high incidence of sexual harassment. He also stated that the lack of public understanding and awareness regarding the various forms of sexual harassment contributes to its prevalence, as many acts occur without perpetrators realizing that their behavior constitutes sexual harassment.

The factors contributing to the occurrence of sexual harassment in general, according to the National Commission on Violence against Women and Children (Komnas Perempuan), are as follows: [7]

1. Power imbalance, Power imbalance is a primary factor underlying many cases of sexual harassment. In unequal relationships such as between supervisors and subordinates, lecturers and students, or adults and children perpetrators often exploit their dominant positions to control or coerce victims. This power may be structural in nature (position, social status, age) or symbolic (influence, charisma, or fame), creating conditions in which victims feel it is difficult or even impossible to refuse, resist, or report the abuse. Fear of consequences such as job loss, poor academic evaluation, intimidation, or damage to reputation often leads victims to remain silent. Moreover, legal systems and societal cultures that tend to blame victims further reinforce the perpetrator's position and deepen the victim's trauma. In such situations, power not only becomes a means to commit harassment but also serves as a shield protecting perpetrators from accountability.
2. Patriarchal Culture In the context of sexual harassment, victims who are predominantly women are often blamed or not believed. As a result, many cases go unreported because victims fear stigma, shame, or retaliation. From the perpetrator's internal perspective, patriarchal culture is not seen as a problem but rather as a form of support. This culture reinforces a sense of superiority and power, leading perpetrators to believe that when they commit sexual harassment, they will not face punishment.

3. Limited Sexual Education and Literacy The lack of proper sexual literacy and education regarding sexuality, gender equality, and personal boundaries is one of the main causes of sexual harassment. Many individuals do not understand what constitutes sexual harassment, such as sexually suggestive comments, non-consensual touching, or gestures that make others feel uncomfortable. This situation arises because sexual education in many contexts is still considered taboo, limited mainly to biological aspects, and rarely addresses issues of consent, respect, and healthy relationships. This lack of knowledge not only leads perpetrators to perceive their actions as normal or harmless, but also causes victims to feel confused and uncertain about whether they have actually been harassed. Moreover, some segments of society continue to view harassment as a form of “flirting” or “compliment,” reflecting a low level of awareness about the importance of consent and bodily autonomy. Insufficient education also results in a lack of empathy and courage to support victims or report incidents. Therefore, preventing sexual harassment requires comprehensive efforts to enhance sexual literacy and character education, starting from families and schools and extending to the media, in order to cultivate a culture of mutual respect and understanding of interpersonal boundaries.

4. Weak Legal Protection Weak legal protection has been one of the main factors allowing sexual harassment to persist and recur. When the legal system fails to firmly protect victims or impose proportionate sanctions on perpetrators, it creates a sense of security for offenders to act arbitrarily without fear of consequences. Many victims are reluctant to report incidents due to lengthy, complicated legal procedures that often do not favor them. In some cases, victims are even blamed, humiliated, or not believed by law enforcement officials. Furthermore, the lack of victim-friendly complaint mechanisms and insufficient training for law enforcement officers in handling cases of sexual violence render legal protection ineffective. Existing laws also sometimes fail to comprehensively regulate non-physical forms of sexual harassment that nonetheless cause significant psychological and emotional harm. This injustice fosters fear, erodes trust in the legal system, and allows perpetrators to feel immune from the law. Therefore, comprehensive legal reform is essential, including strengthening legislation, enhancing the capacity of law enforcement authorities, and establishing reporting and protection systems that prioritize victims, so that sexual harassment can be prevented and addressed in a fair and effective manner.

Furthermore, several motives of perpetrators identified by the author through interviews conducted with investigators of Sub-Directorate 4 of the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation, namely BRIPDA Rismayanti Rikman, are as follows: 1) Considering their actions as not a serious issue, merely “joking,” or failing to view the victim as an equal individual. 2) Believing that aggressive sexual behavior is a form of masculinity or dominance. 3) Imitating what is seen in films or pornography without understanding that such portrayals do not reflect healthy reality. 4) Being influenced by a social environment that tolerates such behavior, thereby reducing fear of risk or social consequences. 5) Psychological problems in

which perpetrators are unable to control impulses and feelings of power, leading them to vent sexual desires. Therefore, it is important to highlight how the South Sulawesi Regional Police respond to this phenomenon, both in terms of prevention and law enforcement measures.

## **2. Efforts to Prevent and Counter Sexual Abuse Crimes by the Regional Police of South Sulawesi**

Sexual harassment crimes constitute a form of offense against human dignity and human rights with serious consequences, affecting not only victims physically and psychologically, but also public trust in law enforcement institutions. In the context of the police institution, which fundamentally bears the responsibility to protect, serve, and safeguard the community, such crimes pose significant challenges to institutional credibility and accountability.[8] According to the results of an interview conducted by the author with an investigator from Sub-Directorate 4 of the Directorate of General Criminal Investigation of the South Sulawesi Regional Police, namely BRIPDA Amelia Padma Widya Cakti, the main prevention and control efforts carried out by the regional police are as follows:

- a. Preventive efforts undertaken by the regional police are carried out through a community-based approach. One of the main measures is providing counseling and socialization programs to the public, particularly to children, parents, and teachers. This education aims to raise awareness of the dangers of sexual harassment, how to recognize signs of indecent acts, and the importance of maintaining bodily boundaries and personal privacy from an early age. In addition to educational initiatives, the police routinely conduct patrols and supervision in areas considered vulnerable, such as public spaces, boarding houses, internet cafés, and other secluded locations, to prevent opportunities for sexual crimes against children. In handling cases, the police provide child-friendly reporting services so that victims feel safe and heard when submitting reports. Cooperation with other institutions such as schools, child protection agencies, and community organizations is also a crucial component in building a stronger protection system. Furthermore, the police take firm action against perpetrators of sexual crimes against children through swift and fair legal processes, with the aim of creating a deterrent effect and ensuring real protection for children from acts of sexual abuse.
- b. Socio-Cultural Prevention Efforts by the Regional Police The police play a strategic role in preventing permissive social interactions that may trigger sexual harassment. When left uncontrolled, such interactions can create opportunities for behaviors that violate social norms and legal standards, including non-committal relationships, drug abuse, and sexual harassment. To address this, the police implement a range of preventive measures that are both educational and repressive in nature. One key initiative is the provision of counseling and socialization programs in schools, universities, and youth communities, focusing on the dangers of permissive social behavior and the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries in social interactions. Programs such as “Police Go to School” and

“Legal Education Outreach” aim to foster legal awareness and moral responsibility among young people. The police also collaborate with community leaders, educators, and youth organizations to create a positive environment free from deviant behavior. In addition, routine patrols in high-risk locations such as nightlife venues, mixed-gender boarding houses, and public spaces serve as direct supervision to mitigate the risks associated with permissive social interactions. Firm legal action against perpetrators of sexual harassment is also an integral part of long-term prevention strategies. Through this integrated approach, the police actively contribute to creating a safe environment free from sexual harassment. Efforts to prevent catcalling are also undertaken through education and training for the public on rights and protections against sexual harassment, thereby enhancing community awareness and capacity to recognize and respond to such behavior. The police further provide support and assistance to victims of sexual harassment to facilitate recovery and the pursuit of justice, while handling cases in a professional and sensitive manner to ensure fairness for victims. Through these measures, the police help individuals strengthen awareness and skills to prevent and address sexual harassment effectively.

The countermeasures carried out by the regional police are:[9]

- a. Efforts by the Regional Police in Handling Cases of Child Molestation The first step taken is to secure the victim from potential threats or further trauma. The police collaborate with child psychologists and social workers to provide psychological support to the victim. Examinations of the victim are conducted with extreme care, using child-friendly spaces and accompanied by experts competent in handling child trauma. The investigation process is carried out thoroughly by collecting various physical evidence through medical examinations (*visum et repertum*) at hospitals, documentation at the crime scene, and gathering other pieces of evidence. Witness interviews, especially those involving children, are conducted following special protocols that consider their psychological condition.
- b. Investigators also coordinate with various parties, such as hospitals, for the necessary medical examinations. The police establish inter-agency coordination with institutions such as the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), civil society organizations engaged in child protection, and rehabilitation centers. This coordination is essential to ensure comprehensive handling, covering legal aspects as well as the psychological recovery of the victim. After the investigation process is complete and evidence has been collected, the police submit the case files to the public prosecutor’s office for prosecution. During the trial, the victim receives special protection measures, such as closed hearings, the use of curtains or darkened glass to protect their identity, and special accompaniment while giving testimony.

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In addition to reactive handling, the police also carry out preventive efforts through socialization and education programs for communities, schools, and local organizations on the prevention of sexual violence against children. These programs include raising awareness of the signs of sexual abuse, how to report cases, and the importance of creating a safe environment for children. The police also conduct patrols and supervision in areas prone to crimes against children. The entire handling process is carried out with an emphasis on the principles of restorative justice, where the focus is not only on punishing the perpetrator but also on the recovery of the victim and preventing the recurrence of similar incidents in the future.

Efforts by the regional police to address cases of promiscuous behavior include the establishment of special units focused on victim protection, particularly for children and women. Handling is carried out with a sensitive and professional approach to ensure that victims feel safe to report. The police promptly conduct investigations, collect evidence, and secure perpetrators for subsequent legal processes. In addition, the police collaborate with social and medical institutions to provide psychological support and protection for victims. They also actively conduct socialization and educational programs for the community regarding the prevention of sexual harassment and the importance of reporting cases to create a safe and violence-free environment. Addressing catcalling is a complex challenge for the police because this behavior is often perceived as a “normal” social practice, even though it constitutes verbal sexual harassment that can cause trauma and discomfort for victims, especially women. Preventive measures taken by the police include routine patrols in areas where catcalling frequently occurs, such as bus terminals, train stations, markets, or main streets. The police also collaborate with local security units and community leaders to create a safer environment.

Socialization and educational programs aimed at raising public awareness of the negative impacts of catcalling and the importance of respecting women in public spaces are also part of these preventive efforts. The police have developed specialized programs to increase gender awareness among personnel, ensuring that cases involving women are handled with greater sensitivity and empathy. Training on handling sexual harassment cases, including catcalling, is provided to police officers to improve the quality of services offered to victims. As the frontline in law enforcement, regional police play a strategic role in creating an environment free from sexual harassment crimes. Through various preventive measures such as public education, increased legal awareness, and the establishment of integrated units for victims—the police continue to demonstrate their commitment to providing maximum protection for all segments of society.

## **D. CONCLUSION**

Sexual harassment crimes in Makassar are a criminological phenomenon influenced by various structural and individual factors. The main factors driving the occurrence of sexual harassment include weak social control, low levels of sexual education and awareness, the influence of the social environment, abuse of power or social position by perpetrators, and economic inequalities that increase victim vulnerability. These factors indicate that sexual harassment is

not merely an individual act but is closely related to the surrounding social and cultural conditions. Law enforcement in Makassar still faces multiple challenges, particularly the low reporting rate by victims due to feelings of shame, fear, and lack of trust in law enforcement officers, as well as suboptimal implementation of existing legal provisions. This situation underscores the need for an approach to tackling sexual harassment that is not only repressive but also preventive and oriented toward victim protection. Based on these findings, this study recommends that law enforcement officers receive training sensitive to sexual harassment issues to enhance professionalism, empathy, and victim-centered perspectives in case handling. In addition, the police should develop accessible and secure reporting systems, such as dedicated hotlines or digital-based applications, to ensure confidentiality and provide a sense of safety for victims when reporting sexual harassment crimes. This approach is expected to improve the effectiveness of law enforcement while strengthening preventive efforts against sexual harassment in Makassar.

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