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Topic: *Strengthening Legal Frameworks for Combating Human Trafficking and Enhancing Protection of Women and Children*

Protection of Women as Victims of Exploitation in Online Gambling Crimes

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Abstract. *Advances in information technology, in addition to bringing positive impacts, also have negative ones on society. One such impact is the development of modus operandi for crimes in the current digital era, or in other words, providing a foundation for the creation of cybercrime. This paper aims to analyze the legal effectiveness of eradicating online gambling crimes within the jurisdiction of the Central Java Regional Police. The research method used is sociological legal. Based on the analysis, it is clear that law enforcement cannot be carried out due to the lack of public reports accompanied by evidence. This results in ineffective eradication of online gambling crimes, including within the Central Java Regional Police. The ineffectiveness of law enforcement in eradicating online gambling cases has resulted in the increasing exploitation of women in the online gambling vortex, both as women as household members, through the increasing burden of debt that wives must bear due to online gambling, and the use of women as vehicles for spreading online gambling networks in the community. Therefore, it is necessary to improve facilities and infrastructure for digital-based law enforcement at various levels of the police institution to prevent and eradicate online gambling.*

Keywords: *Exploitation; Gambling; Online; Women.*

1. Introduction

Online gambling is categorized as a cybercrime because it uses computers and the internet as a medium to commit the crime. Gambling fundamentally violates religious norms, morality, and the Pancasila moral code, and can endanger the survival of society, the nation, and the state. Gambling violates Indonesia's social and cultural norms.¹

¹Dewi Bunga, "Online Gambling Formulation Policy in Indonesian Law", *VYAVAHARA DUTA*, Volume XIV, No. 1, 2019, pp. 21-22

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Gambling is addictive because players always hope to win. If they win, they try their luck again, but if they lose, they gamble again, hoping to win again the next time. As a result, online gamblers try to find money by any means necessary to use as gambling capital, including committing crimes such as theft, fraud, and so on. Referring to the development of online gambling, TechAddiction reveals the following facts: TechAddiction has provided a number of interesting facts on internet casinos, as well as selected online gambling statistics:²

- a. *“Pathological Gambling” was officially recognized as a clinical disorder in 1980 when it was first included in the DSM-III.*
- b. *Although most people are able to gamble responsibly, it is estimated that 3% of the population struggles with pathological gambling.*
- c. *The first online casino launched in August of 1996 (InterCasino, based in Antigua). Eighteen games were available at the time. There are now thousands of internet gambling websites and new online gambling businesses appear every day.*
- d. *Most online gambling websites are not affiliated with land-based casinos. This is widely thought to be because traditional casinos did not want to get involved with a business model that would take away from traditional sources of revenue. This policy appears to be changing as traditional casinos are now developing their own online gambling websites.*
- e. *There are no official product safety standards and regulations for online casinos. Players who choose to wager at online gambling websites essentially do so at their own risk.*
- f. *Playing on “free” internet gambling websites is a common activity for teenagers and young adults.*
- g. *Research suggests that young adults are most likely to engage in online gambling.*
- h. *The first internet Bingo site went online in 1998.*
- i. *The first online poker site (PlanetPoker) also started in 1998.*
- j. *The number of online poker websites dramatically increased in 2003 when the World Series of Poker became a popular television program.*

². Loc, cit.

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k. Total revenues from online casinos are difficult to pinpoint but have been estimated at \$12 billion in 2005 and 15.2 billion in 2006. In 2010, revenues were 29.3 billion.

l. One in five online gamblers may be pathological gamblers m. Approximately 4% of teenagers have a gambling problem.

Cybercrime, particularly online gambling, requires law enforcement to prevent and eradicate it from becoming increasingly prevalent. Conceptually, law enforcement is an activity aimed at harmonizing the relationships between values expressed in good and embodied principles. It is also a form of action as a series of final-stage value interpretations, in order to create, maintain, and sustain peace in social life.³ Law enforcement is carried out and implemented by law enforcement officers. The implementation of law in society depends not only on public legal awareness but also largely on law enforcement officers.⁴

The rise of Judol has now had a tragic impact where the victims are women. The facts prove it, when a woman with the initials HH (35) burned her husband, Mario Agustinus Wendo, alive. The incident allegedly occurred because HH was annoyed that Mario was addicted to online gambling. Reported by detikBali, Thursday (10/31/2024), the incident occurred in Kalabahi Tengah Village, Teluk Mutiara District, Alor, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), Tuesday (10/29) at around 07.40 WITA. (Suadnyana, 2024: 10/31/2024). Previously, there was an incident where a Policewoman (Polwan) burned her husband, as reported by kompas.com, on 06/13/2024. The incident occurred at the Mojokerto Police Dormitory complex, East Java on Saturday (6/8/2024). The incident happened to Briptu RDW (28), a police officer assigned to the Jombang Police, while the perpetrator was Briptu FN (28), a policewoman (polwan) assigned to the Mojokerto City Police (Wiryo, 2024: 13/06.). The above facts prove that generally women are victims of household disharmony where their husbands are the perpetrators of Judol. The triggers can be caused by social and economic factors when the husband and wife have difficulty meeting household needs, the husband's loss in gambling which triggers arguments, domestic violence (KDRT) which leads to divorce. On the other hand, the existence of Judol results in excessive exploitation of women's bodies. They are positioned as subjects and objects in the commodification of Judol advertisements regardless of the perception of existentialist feminist theory where women's sexuality is constructed to adapt to market tastes.⁵

³Soerjono Soekanto, Factors Influencing Law Enforcement, PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, Jakarta, 2014, p. 5.

⁴Santoyo, Law Enforcement in Indonesia, Journal of Law, Legal Studies Program, Faculty of Law, General Soedirman University, Purwokerto, Volume 8, Number 3, 2008.

⁵Yosi Parma, "Online Gambling and Women: The Bargaining Power of the Quran and Advertising," Journal of Religion Education Accounting and Law, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2025, pp. 269-270.

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Law enforcement efforts against cybercrime in Indonesia are carried out by the police, because these crimes are related to national security and order issues. The police are the front line in anticipating various security threats and enforcing the law in Indonesia. This is in accordance with Article 13 letter b of Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police, which states, "The main duty of the Indonesian National Police is to enforce the law." In its development, the eradication of online gambling in the city of Semarang has not been optimal. The Head of Public Relations of the Central Java Regional Police, Senior Commissioner of Police Satake Bayu Setianto, revealed that "throughout 2023, 221 cases of online gambling crimes were uncovered by the police force." Central Java Regional Police and regional police, with the number of suspects reaching 52. Online gambling cases are mostly carried out by purchasing gambling deposits from online gambling operators, with the balance to participate in various games ranging from hundreds of thousands to tens of millions of rupiah.⁶ Based on various explanations, it's clear that online gambling, a criminal offense with evolving modus operandi, is becoming increasingly prevalent in society. However, law enforcement by authorities remains hampered by a lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure.⁷ Then there are the high unemployment rate in a region, population density, social pressure, and numerous needs. These factors drive people to resort to various means to meet their needs, including those that violate legal provisions), learned behavioral factors or differential associations (online gambling requires interaction and communication, making it easier to learn), and facilities and infrastructure factors (online gambling can be done anywhere and anytime using only a mobile phone or laptop). Sutherland and Cressey firmly state that crime or deviant behavior occurs due to learning factors through interaction with others in intimate personal groups. Anyone who is interested will learn how to play online gambling and become addicted. This illustrates that online gambling requires interaction and communication in committing crimes, making it easier for perpetrators to commit crimes. Technological developments are a significant factor in the level of crime, including gambling. In this modern, digital era, gambling crimes can now be committed using the internet. This encourages people to commit online gambling crimes, because online gambling can be done anywhere using only a mobile phone or laptop. This factor is an advantage for perpetrators of online gambling crimes to deceive the police, so that more and more people are interested in carrying out these actions.⁸ The various complexities in the efforts to eradicate online gambling have ultimately not touched on the efforts of the

⁶Results of personal interviews with Head of Public Relations of the Central Java Regional Police, Police Commissioner Satake Bayu Setianto on May 12 2024.

⁷Ira Alia Maerani, *Criminal Law and the Death Penalty*, UNISSULA PRESS, Semarang, 2018, p. xvi.

⁸Maskun, *Cyber Crime: An Introduction*, Kencana, Jakarta 2013, p. 46.

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government and law enforcement to protect women who are economically exploited from online gambling perpetrators who are judol players who are also members of their families.

2. Research methods

The type of research used in this study is descriptive analytical legal research. Descriptive analytical legal research is a method that serves to describe or illustrate the object being studied through collected data or samples as they are without conducting analysis or drawing general conclusions.⁹

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Economic Exploitation of Women in Households Due to Online Gambling

The destruction of household harmony due to gambling has become a dominant factor causing family disharmony. This phenomenon not only impacts the economic aspect but also causes psychological trauma, communication breakdowns, and a deep crisis of trust between husband and wife. The pattern of individual involvement in online gambling begins with curiosity or simply for entertainment, which then develops into compulsive gambling addiction, as explained by Blaszczynski & Nower in their Pathways Model of Problem Gambling theory. Gambling addiction arises from the interaction of emotional distress, impulsive urges, and the availability of access to games. In the social context of Pontianak, easy access via smartphones and massive promotion on social media reinforce this condition.

This phenomenon not only causes economic losses but also creates psychological stress, reduced communication, and a crisis of trust between couples. Most informants admitted that online gambling initially served as entertainment or an escape from financial problems, but later developed into an addiction that was difficult to control. One case of online gambling that impacted household harmony occurred in Pontianak City. Informant FI (Female, 38 years old, Affected Wife) said her husband frequently lied about how his money was spent. After FI discovered evidence of transfers to online gambling sites, the domestic conflict escalated. "I reported it to the neighborhood association (RT) because my husband started to be rude when asked about money. Now we live separately," she said. This case demonstrates the potential for online gambling to lead to domestic violence and family neglect.¹⁰

⁹Sugiono, Quantitative, Qualitative and R&D Research Methods, Alfabeta, Bandung, 2009, p. 29.

¹⁰Poltak Mulyanto Nadeak and Adi Nur Rohman, "The Impact of Online Gambling on Husband and Wife Harmony in Households in Pontianak City", Journal Evidence of Law, Vol. 4, No. 3, 2025, p. 1804.

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In addition to impacting economic exploitation and violence against women as wives, online gambling networks also frequently exploit women to spread their online gambling networks throughout society. A woman named Kartika Anggun (21) was arrested by police for endorsing online gambling (judol). The Semarang, Central Java resident received millions of rupiah from the endorsement. This case was uncovered during a police cyber patrol. Police discovered the perpetrator's Instagram account, @kfrynnn, endorsing online gambling sites. The perpetrator used Instagram to endorse online gambling sites, posting stories twice a day since January 2024. Through his Instagram account, which has 4,057 followers, the perpetrator received a fee of IDR 7 million. The money was for posts from January 2024 to December 2024. The perpetrator was charged under Article 303 of the Criminal Code concerning Gambling. He faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.¹¹

1) Factors Contributing to the Emergence of Online Gambling Crimes Today

The turnover of online gambling money in one month reaches 300 million to 9 billion, while advertising for one type of online gambling can reach 2 billion.¹² Talking about gambling in Grobogan Regency, almost all levels of society condemn the existence of gambling which is considered a crime, violation or other criminal acts such as murder, prostitution, theft, all of which have received strong criticism from the community, uniquely gambling still occurs and is carried out by almost all levels of society, an example that is easily seen is gambling carried out by the lower middle class such as: pedicab drivers, drivers, porters, the unemployed also participate in enlivening gambling in Grobogan Regency.¹³ The reasons that often arise for lower middle class people taking part in gambling are:¹⁴

a. They, especially the lower classes and the poor, feel uncertain about their future, and are not certain that with the results of their reasonable efforts they can obtain balanced results, so one way to achieve emotional balance is by speculating, playing for luck and gambling;

¹¹KumparanNews, "A Woman in Semarang Arrested by Police for Endorsing Judol, Paid Rp 7 Million"<https://kumparan.com/kumparannews/wanita-di-semarang-ditangkap-polisi-karena-mengendorse-judol-dibayar-rp-7-juta-248WyzuEPdN/full>, accessed on June 12, 2026.

¹²Fanani, 2019, 5 Years Untouched, Online Gambling with a Turnover of Billions Rolled Up <https://news.detik.com/berita-jawa-timur/d-4459126/5-tahuntak-tersentuh-judi-online-beromzet-miliaran-digulung>, accessed on August 22, 2024.

¹³ Interview with AKP Agung Joko Haryono, Head of the Criminal Investigation Unit of the Grobogan Police, September 12, 2024.

¹⁴Loc, cit.

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- b. They feel they do not get protection and security from the authorities, the government in their efforts to maintain their daily lives, so they certainly carry out many speculative and gambling actions, which can then develop into deviant behavior due to forced circumstances that are not repeated or mild deviant behavior (primary deviation);
- c. The gambling behavior pattern is then used as a tool to solve the difficulties of everyday life, so the gambling pattern develops into real deviant behavior and is often carried out and has quite serious consequences and disturbs other people (secondary deviation).

According to a community leader in Grobogan Regency¹⁵ told the author, gamblers in general, they put false hopes to double their money, minimal salaries, uncertain living conditions, encourage the lower classes to fantasize about profits with high hopes, by buying lottery, cap jie kie, togel. Coupled with apathy and ignorance of how they should improve the standard of living of their families and themselves in the economic crisis, all of that encourages them to risk part of their own income by gambling, the atmosphere of tension full of hope while waiting for the results of the cap jie kie numbers, and togel, every day and at certain hours provides a little variety and a spark of hope of excitement in the daily depressive situation and it seems that various gambling patterns such as cap jie kie and togel can provide stimulation to cultivate a sliver of hope in times of economic deprivation and uncertain feelings. The result is the emergence of behavioral patterns in the Grobogan community that can be considered abnormal, namely, looking for codes and numbers from shamans, asking crazy people who like to wander the streets, looking for "inspiration" in graves or sacred places, and also believing in predictions.¹⁶

2) Effectiveness of Eradicating Online Gambling Crimes

Gambling is generally difficult to address, requiring a long time and significant costs. Furthermore, several factors contribute to the difficulty of completely eradicating gambling. The Grobogan Police's internal obstacles to addressing gambling are identified, including those within the police force itself:

- a. The regulations regarding gambling contained in the Criminal Code itself, namely those concerning the granting of permits for gambling by the Government, are no longer appropriate to current societal conditions;

¹⁵Loc, cit.

¹⁶Loc, cit.

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- b. The limited number of police officers compared to the number of Indonesian National Police officers in the Grobogan Police Department is certainly less in handling gambling. The Grobogan Police Department can only conduct raids and arrest gambling according to the number of police officers available and ready to be deployed, the limited facilities and infrastructure within the Police Department, this is an obstacle in handling gambling, especially online gambling that uses more sophisticated technology, so the Police only conduct raids if the facilities and infrastructure are still adequate or sufficient to accommodate the gamblers who are caught in the raid;
- c. Further education for the Police, it cannot be denied that most of the Police today are only educated from the State Police school or most are only high school graduates, even though in handling gambling, Police who are experienced in this field are needed, especially in terms of ITE;
- d. Incomplete proof with the increasing number of gambling models, especially those using technology (online), makes this gambling very difficult to prove, here POLRI members must have expertise in ITE;
- e. Organized gambling: First and foremost, organized crime is highly dependent on the environment, which is why gambling can thrive so easily. The more an environment is neglected and far from law enforcement, the easier it is for various forms of organized crime to take hold. This is where online gambling develops, as organized gambling also has support from the community or from communities that are less concerned about environmental order.
- f. The absence of evidence at the time of the arrest at the scene of the incident can also be an obstacle for the Grobogan Police to overcome the crime of gambling because by not finding the evidence, those who are suspected of having gambled and have been arrested, cannot be examined for the purposes of the investigation and must be released within a maximum period of 1x24 hours thus, the investigation of the gambling case is declared closed because there is no initial evidence, the absence of evidence at the scene of the crime can occur because of leaked information by the community itself to the perpetrators that the Police will conduct a raid at the place where they play, so that the evidence is first removed by them, and even if the Police come to arrest them, they will be free because there is no evidence that they gambled. This of course can cause gambling cases to be stopped immediately so that the perpetrators cannot be arrested and punished. To prevent this from happening, the police should be more active in their actions, meaning that after receiving a report of gambling, the police should arrive at the scene as soon as possible and then arrest the suspects after conducting surveillance for a while

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so that the suspects do not have time to get rid of the evidence that could land them in detention;

g. The existence of backing of gambling by certain individuals. Gambling in Indonesia has become a serious national social problem. The Indonesian National Police, as the core force for maintaining public order and security, has done much to eradicate gambling and has succeeded in arresting major bookies. However, this success will be lost if cases of backing by certain individuals who abuse their authority are not immediately dealt with firmly and, if necessary, publicized so that the public knows that the Police are impartial in enforcing the law. The existence of backing of gambling crimes, in this case, is not just a lie. The Grobogan Police consistently encounter these backing individuals in every operation they carry out. It is not uncommon for these backers to be so bold as to resist police officers during raids because they often feel beyond the reach of the law. The actions of these backers are intolerable and must be dealt with immediately to uphold the law.

Addressing the issue of backing is actually a very serious problem, because backing in the world of crime will also be a serious obstacle in crime prevention efforts itself. Crime backers can be categorized as perpetrators of the crime themselves, not just as accomplices to the crime. In the case of gambling, backers can be equated with bookies who in the Criminal Code can be threatened with imprisonment of more than 5 (five) years. This reference comes from the statement of an Indonesian legal expert who stated that even if the act committed by a person is not an act of settlement, but if the cooperation with the perpetrator of the act is very close, then the person's actions can be categorized as a perpetrator of the crime, not as an accomplice to the crime.¹⁷ To overcome this problem of backing, both the Chief of Police and the Commander of the Indonesian National Armed Forces should be able to provide a firm ultimatum to individuals who abuse their authority to back crimes, including gambling crimes, so that the Police as law enforcement officers and the core force for fostering public order and security no longer encounter obstacles in preventing and overcoming gambling practices in society. In the author's opinion, gambling is essentially a social disease, so the cure must come from the community. Without community support, efforts to combat this criminal activity will be futile. Police operations are often ineffective because the planned operations are suspected to have been leaked beforehand. With these leaked plans, gamblers often leave the premises before the police arrive.

On the other hand, police officers are limited and there is no dedicated unit to handle gambling. This is a significant challenge for the police themselves, placing a heavy burden on the ranks of

¹⁷Moeljatno, Principles of Criminal Law, Rinika Cipta Karya, 2002, p. 25.

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the police force. However, these obstacles arise from within the police force itself, whether acknowledged or not. The reality is that certain individuals are involved. How can this social ill be eradicated if certain police officers are backing it up, and some are even acting as bookies?

Apart from that, according to AKP Eko Bambang Nurtjahyo, other external obstacles include:¹⁸

- a. Until now, in the Grobogan Police, there is still gambling that is difficult to monitor so it is difficult to make arrests, for example, online gambling;
- b. Lack of funds and infrastructure from the police themselves means that sometimes the information obtained by the police is slower than the perpetrator;
- c. This form of gambling is clandestine or secretive;
- d. The perpetrators of gambling are always moving around/not settled and information from fellow gamblers is that they use sophisticated tools such as cell phones and so on and the tools used for gambling are other tools such as sticks, cigarettes;
- e. There are some members of the public who are still closed and not willing to help inform the police, in the context of investigations and inquiries by keeping quiet or claiming not to know anything, this happens because the public does not feel disturbed and does not want to get into trouble from the perpetrator;
- f. Members of the public do not want to be witnesses in criminal cases and do not want to be bothered;
- g. Most people do not consider gambling to be a criminal offense;
- h. Among some people, there is still a view that gambling is a legacy from their ancestors, gambling is a culture and not a violation of the law;
- i. There are police officers who provide leaked information regarding when and what time the raid operation will be carried out by the police;
- j. There are officers who accept peace money offered by perpetrators who are caught;
- k. Often the perpetrators remove or damage the evidence used during the operation.

¹⁸Results of an interview with A as an online gambling perpetrator on May 12, 2024.

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In the author's opinion, criminal law enforcement for combating gambling has experienced quite interesting dynamics, because gambling is often considered normal and legal, but on the other hand, this activity has a very negative impact and is very threatening to social order. The increasing modus operandi of this increasingly high gambling crime can be seen from the proliferation of gambling types, for example, lottery, tail gambling, white coupon gambling, especially with the increasing development of technology which also shapes the development of gambling, such as gambling using technology, namely the internet or SMS, online games, Singapore gambling, watching football matches together or observing a football match on the internet by placing bets.

4. Conclusion

Law enforcement cannot be carried out due to the lack of public reports accompanied by evidence. This has resulted in ineffective eradication of online gambling crimes, including within the Central Java Regional Police. Ineffective law enforcement in eradicating online gambling cases has resulted in the increasing exploitation of women in the online gambling cycle, both as women as household members, through the increasing debt burden that wives must bear due to online gambling, and the use of women as vehicles for spreading online gambling networks in the community. Therefore, there is a need to improve facilities and infrastructure for digital-based law enforcement at various levels of the police institution to prevent and eradicate online gambling.

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