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**THE ROLE OF THE NORTH SUMATRA PROVINCIAL PUBLIC ORDER  
AGENCY IN REGULATING STREET CHILDREN (CASE STUDY IN KAMPUNG  
LALANG ON THE BORDER OF MEDAN CITY AND DELI SERDANG  
REGENCY)**



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**Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the role of the North Sumatra Provincial Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP) in controlling street children in the Kampung Lalang area, on the border between Medan City and Deli Serdang Regency, and to identify the obstacles encountered in its implementation. The research method used a qualitative approach with interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The research informants consisted of Satpol PP officials, relevant social agencies, and street children who were the objects of control. The results showed that the role of Satpol PP had been carried out based on Biddle's (1986) role theory, which includes normative, functional, coordinative, social expectation, and rehabilitative roles. Although the normative and coordinative roles were carried out quite well, the implementation of the rehabilitative and social roles was not optimal due to limited resources and weak cross-sector coordination. Internal obstacles included limited personnel, facilities, and budget, while external obstacles included family economic factors, low educational awareness, and a lack of guidance facilities. This study recommends strengthening the institutional capacity of Satpol PP, inter-agency synergy, and a child protection-based approach to enforcement.

**Keywords:** Satpol PP, Street Children, Enforcement, Role Theory

## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of street children is one of the complex and multidimensional social issues in Indonesia. Street children are not merely individuals who engage in activities in public spaces such as busking, begging, or small-scale trading, but also symbols of the weak social protection system, economic inequality, and the state's failure to fulfill children's basic rights. Their presence on the streets is often considered a disturbance to public order, but on the other hand, they are victims of unfair socio-economic conditions.

In North Sumatra Province, particularly in the Kampung Lalang area, on the border between Medan City and Deli Serdang Regency, the phenomenon of street children has become increasingly prominent. This area is a major transit point with high economic activity and community mobility. Observations show that there are an average of 15 to 20 street children every day, ranging in age from 7 to 15 years old. Their activities include busking, selling small items, begging, and cleaning car windows at intersections. These activities not only endanger their safety but also cause social unrest and disturb the comfort of road users.

The issue of street children cannot be separated from various structural factors. Family economic factors are the main cause. Many low-income families use their children as part of their survival strategy. Educational factors also play a major role; poor access to adequate education leads children to choose activities that generate quick money rather than continuing their schooling. Family disharmony, such as conflict, divorce, and neglect, also drives children out of their homes. UNICEF (2012) emphasizes that children from dysfunctional families are more vulnerable to becoming street children and experiencing exploitation.

In addition, suboptimal public policies and social interventions cause this phenomenon to continue. The government's enforcement efforts are often temporary and do not address the root causes. However, in accordance with Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection, the state is obliged to provide protection and ensure the welfare of children in all situations, including for children on the streets. In this context, the approach used should not be solely repressive, but must be oriented towards protection and empowerment.

The Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP), as a regional apparatus, has an important responsibility in maintaining public order and enforcing Regional Regulations (Perda). Based on Government Regulation Number 16 of 2018 concerning the Civil Service Police Unit, this institution is tasked with enforcing Perda, maintaining public order and community peace, and providing protection to the community. However, in practice, the role of Satpol PP is often perceived negatively by the community due to its perceived harsh approach to enforcement, especially towards vulnerable groups such as street children. In fact, Satpol PP has great potential as a government social agent that not only enforces order but also educates the community through persuasive and preventive measures.

On the other hand, the handling of street children cannot be carried out by Satpol PP alone. Cross-sector coordination with the Social Services Agency, child protection agencies, and community organizations is needed. This collaboration is important so that every enforcement action is followed by continuous guidance and rehabilitation. However, in reality, this coordination is still weak and has not been systematically integrated.

This issue is the background for this study, which focuses on analyzing the role of the North Sumatra Provincial Public Order Agency (Satpol PP) in controlling street children in Kampung Lalang, as well as identifying the obstacles encountered in its implementation.

This study is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the Satpol PP can function effectively, humanely, and in accordance with child protection principles in maintaining public order in urban border areas.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Role Theory**

Role theory is one of the classic approaches in sociology and public administration that explains how individuals or institutions carry out their social functions and responsibilities in accordance with social norms and expectations. According to Bruce J. Biddle (1986), a role is a set of normative expectations regarding the behavior of a person or institution based on their social position. He divides roles into several components, namely:

1. Role Expectation: what society expects of a social position;
2. Role Performance: how the role is carried out in practice;
3. Role Conflict: the clash between two or more roles; and
4. Role Ambiguity: when the boundaries of responsibility are unclear.

In the context of public organizations, role theory explains how government institutions such as Satpol PP are expected to carry out their social order functions in a normative, functional, coordinative, social, and rehabilitative manner. This theory is the main framework in this study because it describes the relationship between society's expectations of Satpol PP and the reality of its implementation in the field.

### **Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP)**

Satpol PP is a regional apparatus established based on Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government and Government Regulation Number 16 of 2018 concerning the Civil Service Police Unit. This institution has the main task of enforcing regional regulations (Perda) and maintaining public order and community peace. In its implementation, Satpol PP also plays a role in providing protection to the community through measured preventive, persuasive, and repressive actions.

In the context of handling street children, Satpol PP plays an important role in controlling activities that are considered to disturb public order. However, such enforcement must be carried out in a humane manner and based on child protection, in accordance with the mandate of Law Number 35 of 2014 concerning Child Protection. An overly repressive approach not only contradicts the principles of human rights but can also worsen the psychological condition of children.

### **Street Children and Social Issues**

According to the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs (2005), street children are children who spend most of their time on the streets or in public places working or earning a living. Meanwhile, UNICEF (2012) classifies street children into three categories: children on the street, children of the street, and children from families of the street. The causes of street children include poverty, low education, family dysfunction, and weak social protection systems.

The lives of street children have a broad impact on social welfare and public order. They are vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and loss of their basic rights to education and health. Therefore, the approach to street children should not be limited to enforcement, but should also include guidance, rehabilitation, and social reintegration.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to understand social phenomena in depth based on the realities experienced by the research subjects. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with officials from the North Sumatra Provincial Satpol PP, the Social Service Agency, community leaders, and street children who were the targets of the crackdown. In addition, direct observations were conducted in the Kampung Lalang area and documentary data was collected from relevant agencies.

The research was conducted from July to September 2025 at the North Sumatra Provincial Satpol PP Office, Jalan Kapten Muslim No. 80, Medan Helvetia District. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was obtained through source and method triangulation techniques.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Role of Satpol PP in Controlling Street Children

The role of Satpol PP of North Sumatra Province in controlling street children is analyzed based on Bruce J. Biddle's (1986) role theory, which includes normative, functional, social expectation, coordinative, and rehabilitative roles.

#### a. Normative Role

The normative role is manifested through enforcement based on laws and regulations such as Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, Government Regulation Number 16 of 2018 concerning Satpol PP, and North Sumatra Provincial Regulation Number 5 of 2004 concerning Public Order. Satpol PP conducts raids and routine patrols in the Kampung Lalang area with an emphasis on orderly and professional law enforcement.

#### b. Functional Role

The Satpol PP functions as an enforcer of local regulations and a guardian of public order. It carries out its duties in coordination with the Social Services Agency to transfer street children to shelters or rehabilitation centers. However, the limited availability of rehabilitation facilities often means that enforcement is only temporary.

#### c. The Role of Social Expectations

The community expects Satpol PP to create a safe and orderly environment without neglecting humanity. However, some members of the community consider Satpol PP's actions to be repressive. This shows a gap between social expectations and actions in the field.

#### d. The Coordinative Role

Satpol PP has coordinated with relevant agencies such as the Social Service, the Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Agency, and the police. This coordination is carried out to ensure that the children who are caught receive further guidance. However, cross-sector coordination has not been optimal due to the lack of an integrated system between agencies.

#### e. Rehabilitative Role

This role aims to help street children recover through guidance and social reintegration. In practice, Satpol PP focuses more on control than guidance, so the rehabilitative role

has not been maximized. Many children return to the streets after being guided due to a lack of follow-up from social agencies.

### **Obstacles in Controlling Street Children**

#### **a. Internal Obstacles**

The main obstacle stems from the limited number of Satpol PP personnel, which is not proportional to the size of the working area. Infrastructure such as operational vehicles, shelters, and guidance facilities are still limited. In addition, minimal budget support also hinders the effectiveness of task implementation.

#### **b. External Constraints**

Weak family economic factors, low educational awareness, and a culture that is permissive towards street children pose their own challenges. Some parents even exploit their children to earn money on the streets. Weak coordination between agencies also slows down follow-up actions for children who have been disciplined.

In general, Satpol PP has been carrying out its role, but it still faces various structural and social obstacles. The complexity of the street children issue requires an approach that not only regulates but also nurtures, educates, and protects.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of research on the role of the North Sumatra Provincial Satpol PP in controlling street children in Kampung Lalang, on the border between Medan City and Deli Serdang Regency, the following conclusions can be drawn:

#### **1. The role of Satpol PP in controlling street children**

The role of the North Sumatra Provincial Satpol PP has been carried out in accordance with Biddle's role theory, which includes normative, functional, social expectation, coordinative, and rehabilitative roles. In general, the normative, functional, and coordinative roles have been carried out quite well because the Satpol PP carries out control based on legal regulations, performs technical functions in the field, and coordinates with related agencies such as the Social Service and DP3A. However, the social expectation and rehabilitative roles are still not optimal. This is evident from the unfulfilled expectations of street children to receive continuous guidance, as well as the weak effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, which often cause children to return to the streets. Thus, it can be concluded that the role of Satpol PP in regulating street children has been carried out well in certain aspects, but overall, it is still not optimal.

#### **2. Constraints in the implementation of the role of Satpol PP**

In enforcing regulations on street children, Satpol PP faces various internal and external constraints. Internal constraints include limited personnel, infrastructure, and inadequate budgetary support. Meanwhile, external constraints include the economic factors of street children's families, low awareness among children and parents of the importance of education and guidance, a lack of guidance and rehabilitation facilities, suboptimal cross-sector coordination, and a culture that is still permissive towards the existence of street children. The complexity of these constraints means that control efforts are often only temporary and have not been able to solve the root of the problem.

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