

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST PIMPS IN UNDERCOVER PROSTITUTION THROUGH "PLUS" MESSAGE PARLORS**

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### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to analyze law enforcement efforts against pimps involved in clandestine prostitution in massage parlors within the jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru, to identify the obstacles hindering such enforcement, and to explore strategies to overcome these challenges. The research employs a sociological legal method. The findings indicate that law enforcement efforts in this context have not been fully effective. Although the police and related agencies have undertaken enforcement actions, prostitution under the cover of massage parlors continues to thrive. These establishments often offer hidden sexual services. Operators or pimps typically disguise these activities using coded language with regular clients or through closed digital communication networks. This demonstrates that pimps have developed more sophisticated and discreet operational systems that are difficult for law enforcement to detect directly. Several obstacles hinder effective law enforcement: First, massage parlors often continue operating covertly after being raided, simply by changing their business name, location, or service format. Second, the absence of consistent and routine monitoring by both law enforcement and regulatory agencies allows these operations to resume freely. Third, the lack of legal education and awareness programs at the community level contributes to public ignorance, making people less likely to participate in prevention or report prostitution-related activities. To overcome these challenges, several efforts are necessary. First, there must be strengthened administrative oversight and improved business licensing verification systems. Second, a joint task force comprising multiple government agencies should be established to conduct regular inspections and supervision of locations suspected of facilitating clandestine prostitution. Third, law enforcement and local governments should initiate community-based legal education programs, particularly in areas vulnerable to or near suspected prostitution sites.

**Keywords :** Law Enforcement, Clandestine Prostitution, Massage Parlors

## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of undercover prostitution operating through massage parlors, commonly known as "plus massage parlors," in Pekanbaru City has become a focal point for both the community and law enforcement. Behind the facade of providing reflection and body care services, many massage parlors in this city actually serve as a front for prostitution, involving pimps as managers or intermediaries between female commercial sex workers (CSWs) and clients. This activity clearly violates laws and social norms, leading to the degradation of societal morals and an increased potential for other crimes. Therefore, the enforcement of laws against pimps in this covert prostitution practice is imperative to maintain public order and moral values within the legal jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City (Polresta Pekanbaru).

In undercover prostitution, pimps, venue owners, and sex workers typically use specific codes, booking systems, or "plus-plus" services to disguise their sexual activities. This makes such practices difficult for law enforcement and the general public to directly detect. Undercover prostitution often involves other legal violations, such as abuse of business licenses, exploitation of women, and in certain cases, can even be related to human trafficking.

Undercover prostitution in massage parlors is often difficult to dismantle because perpetrators use sophisticated methods and closed systems. Transactions are not conducted openly but through specific codes and private communication networks between pimps and clients. The police frequently face challenges in gathering sufficient evidence to incriminate pimps and business owners, especially since CSWs are often unwilling to testify openly due to shame, economic pressure, or even threats from the criminal network.

A pimp is an individual who profits from the exploitation of another person's body. They are part of an organized prostitution network structure and have the potential to evolve into other criminal acts such as human trafficking, child exploitation, or even narcotics crimes. Therefore, pimps cannot be seen as single perpetrators but as part of a broader and more complex criminal enterprise. Handling them requires firmness, meticulousness, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

The law cannot stand on its own; it always involves people and their behavior. The law also cannot stand on its own without law enforcers. Law enforcers are not only required to be professional and adept at applying legal norms but also confront individuals or groups suspected of committing crimes (Hius, Saputra, & Nasution, 2014).

The practice of prostitution is one form of social crime that continues to evolve although it has long been prohibited in the Indonesian legal system. Along with societal dynamics and changing times, the forms and *modi operandi* of prostitution have become increasingly complex and covert. One widespread form now is prostitution camouflaged within massage services, known to the public as "plus massage parlors." Behind the guise of legally operating traditional massage businesses or spas, the systematic and organized buying and selling of sexual services persist, with pimps as the central figures controlling these illegal activities.

Telecommunication technology has led humanity to a new civilization with new social structures and value systems. This means society is developing towards a new, globally structured society. The system of values in a society changes from being local-particular to global-universal. This will ultimately impact the shift in values, norms, morals, and decency (Wahid & Labib, 2005). The impact of this shift is seen in the development and advancement of science and technology, leading to a convergence between the two.

Particularly within the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru, the phenomenon of undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" has become a tangible social and legal problem. Many massage parlors are administratively registered as fitness or therapy service businesses, but in practice, they facilitate prostitution activities organized by pimps. The presence of pimps in this context is crucial because they recruit the women, offer services to

clients, and gain economic benefits from the transactions. This situation not only damages the social and moral fabric of society but also challenges law enforcement officials to act decisively within the existing legal framework.

A person who facilitates others in committing indecent acts and makes it a livelihood or habit is called a pimp. Article 506 of the Criminal Code (KUHP) states, "Whoever, as a pimp, profits from the prostitution of women, shall be punished with a maximum of 3 (three) months imprisonment." The explanation of this article states that a man or woman whose life appears to be funded by a prostitute living with them, who helps find customers in prostitution and receives a share of the proceeds (Soesilo, 1986). The pimp benefits from such acts, making it a profession that yields income. Article 296 of the KUHP explains, "Whoever, as a livelihood or habit, intentionally facilitates or makes easier indecent acts with others shall be punished with imprisonment for a maximum of one year and four months." However, in reality, many people still exhibit deviant behavior, and the presence of increasingly sophisticated technology leads to many individuals engaging in online prostitution in a very neat and systematic manner. In the practice of law enforcement against pimps operating behind "plus massage parlors," both juridical and non-juridical obstacles are often encountered.

Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2024 concerning the Second Amendment to Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions, Article 27 paragraph (1) of Law 1/2024 states that every person intentionally and unlawfully disseminates, displays, distributes, transmits, and/or makes accessible Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents containing content that violates morality for public knowledge.

The legal provisions contained in Article 27 paragraph (1) of Law Number 1 of 2024 state that every person is prohibited from distributing, transmitting, and/or making accessible electronic information and/or electronic documents containing immoral content. Violation of this provision implies the application of criminal sanctions as regulated in Article 45 paragraph (1) of the same Law, namely imprisonment for a maximum of 6 (six) years and/or a fine of up to Rp1,000,000,000.00 (one billion rupiah). Furthermore, Law Number 1 of 2024 also regulates the state's obligation to take preventive measures against the dissemination and use of electronic information and/or electronic documents containing prohibited content. In this context, the government is authorized to terminate access and/or order Electronic System Organizers (PSE) to terminate access to information and/or electronic documents containing unlawful content.

From the regulatory side, the provisions used, such as Article 296 of the Criminal Code (KUHP), which regulates criminal acts related to facilitating or connecting others to commit indecent acts and making it a livelihood or habit, carry a maximum imprisonment of one year and four months or a maximum fine of fifteen thousand rupiah. Article 506 of the Criminal Code (KUHP) is considered insufficient to provide a deterrent effect due to its relatively light penalties and multi-interpretive application. Meanwhile, massage parlors operating such undercover prostitution often exploit legal loopholes and administrative protection as a shield to avoid criminal charges. On the other hand, law enforcement agencies like the police also face a dilemma between taking firm action or maintaining local social and economic stability, especially if the perpetrators have certain power relations or networks of influence. In the new KUHP, the punishment for pimps is heavier, as explained in Article 420 of the New KUHP, "Every person who connects or facilitates others in committing indecent acts shall be punished with imprisonment for a maximum of 2 (two) years."

From some of the rules in the KUHP and the New KUHP, it can be seen that prostitution and pimping remain subject to sanctions as described above. If the act of prostitution is committed against a minor, the criminal sanction is heavier compared to an adult, but the act of prostitution committed by a pimp remains prohibited in the KUHP. A prostitute or a woman engaging in prostitution is a woman who sells herself to men, receiving payment. However, in addition, many women or girls have consensual sexual relations with men outside of marriage,

without receiving any payment. These women, although not prostitutes or engaging in prostitution, can also spread diseases in society (Soedjono, 1982).

Law enforcement against undercover prostitution in "plus massage parlors" should consider the principle of *Das Sollen*, which means there is a moral and legal obligation to eradicate this illegal practice and protect human rights, especially the rights of women and children who often become victims in the prostitution system. However, in reality, there is often a gap between what ought to be done (firm law enforcement) and the reality on the ground, where existing regulations are not effective enough to fully handle online and undercover prostitution.

The modus of prostitution through massage parlors poses a serious challenge to law enforcement because this activity is often protected by formal legality in the form of a business license. However, behind the massage services, prostitution practices are carried out covertly. This requires law enforcers to work extra hard in uncovering and proving these hidden criminal elements. In addition, the practice of intermediaries (pimps) who bridge the relationship between clients and sex workers further complicates the legal process, as they are often not directly involved in sexual activity but take a share of the profits.

Law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution at "plus massage parlors," particularly in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru, is crucial. The phenomenon of undercover prostitution occurring in "plus massage parlors" in the jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru is an example of how social criminal practices adapt to changing times and exploit loopholes in existing regulations. This prostitution, hidden behind traditional massage or spa services, is often difficult for law enforcement officials to detect due to the business legality used to cover up these illegal activities. However, in reality, the services they offer involve prostitution activities controlled by pimps. This phenomenon reflects the tension between what appears administratively legal and the hidden social reality, which is increasingly difficult for existing laws to reach.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research is a sociological legal study focusing on the aforementioned topic. The author is interested in discussing this subject in a thesis titled "Law Enforcement Against Pimps in Undercover Prostitution Through 'Plus' Massage Parlors in the Legal Jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City." Sociological legal research aims to understand how law operates within society. Therefore, it is hoped that the researcher will be able to reveal the effectiveness of legal application in society and identify unwritten laws that are prevalent within the community.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Law Enforcement Against Pimps in Undercover Prostitution Through "Plus" Massage Parlors in the Legal Jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City**

Prostitution remains a serious social issue in many cities across Indonesia, including Pekanbaru. One common tactic used by perpetrators to disguise this practice is through "plus massage parlors," which legally operate as massage or relaxation service providers but, in practice, offer sexual services. This practice typically involves **pimps** as intermediaries between clients and commercial sex workers. In this context, pimps play a central role in arranging transactions, setting prices, and managing service schedules. Law enforcement against the role of pimps in undercover prostitution presents a unique challenge for law enforcement agencies, particularly Polresta Pekanbaru.

Law enforcement against pimps is governed by various legal provisions, including the Criminal Code (KUHP), specifically Articles 296 and 506. Article 296 of the KUHP states that anyone whose livelihood or habit is to arrange or facilitate indecent acts by others can be

sentenced to a maximum of one year and four months in prison or a maximum fine of fourteen thousand rupiah. Meanwhile, Article 506 states that anyone who profits from the prostitution of women can be sentenced to one year in detention. Although the threat of punishment is relatively light, these articles remain the basis for legal proceedings against pimps.

In Pekanbaru City, the presence of "plus massage parlors" often draws public attention due to suspicions of being a covert location for prostitution. Police investigations and raids frequently confirm the existence of immoral practices occurring in these establishments. Nevertheless, the law enforcement process against pimps does not always proceed smoothly. One major obstacle is the difficulty in collecting sufficient strong evidence to legally incriminate pimps. Typically, pimps are not directly involved in sexual transactions but merely act as facilitators or managers of the premises, requiring special investigative techniques and often involving undercover operations by law enforcement.

The role of pimps in this practice is highly strategic. They not only manage sex workers but also determine prices, facilitate communication with clients, and arrange service locations and times. In many exposed cases, pimps are also responsible for operational security, including bribing rogue officials or other parties to facilitate their practices. This indicates that pimps are not just passive perpetrators but key players in the modern, undercover prostitution system.

Effective law enforcement must also be accompanied by social and rehabilitative approaches. Sex workers involved in this practice are often victims of poverty, domestic violence, or early sexual exploitation. Therefore, relevant agencies must be active in providing psychological support, skills training, and tangible economic empowerment programs. Only with such a comprehensive approach can undercover prostitution be suppressed and pimps effectively eradicated.

On the other hand, the community also plays a vital role in law enforcement. High demand for sexual services at "plus massage parlors" is a major driving factor for the continuation of this practice. Therefore, efforts to educate on morality, strengthen religious values, and increase public awareness of the dangers of prostitution must continue to be promoted. Educational institutions, community leaders, and religious figures must be actively involved in social campaigns to reduce the demand for undercover prostitution services.

The prevalent practice of undercover prostitution, disguised as massage or spa businesses, poses a particular challenge to law enforcement, especially within the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru. Amid government efforts to maintain social norms and public order, this phenomenon is becoming increasingly complex because perpetrators often operate covertly, exploiting legal loopholes and weak supervision of business licenses. In this regard, law enforcement officials have a vital role in uncovering and prosecuting the pimps who are the main actors in this practice.

The phenomenon of undercover prostitution disguised as massage parlors or spas is a form of moral crime that is evolving in a complex manner in big cities, including Pekanbaru. Behind the legal appearance of a massage service business, many are found to harbor hidden prostitution practices driven by pimps. Law enforcement agencies bear a great responsibility in cracking down on this crime, both from a criminal law perspective and in terms of protecting victims of sexual exploitation. Law enforcement in the jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru has involved several parties, including the Police and the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP).

Based on the author's observations in the field, law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in the jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru has not been running well. Although police and related agencies have carried out several enforcement efforts, field facts show that prostitution practices disguised as massage parlors are still rampant. In practice, they secretly offer sexual services. The managers or pimps usually disguise these prostitution activities through certain codes to regular customers, or through

closed digital communication networks. This indicates that pimps have developed a more organized operational system that is difficult for law enforcement officials to detect directly.

In the author's opinion, many massage parlors still operate late into the night with suspicious activities but have not been touched by law enforcement. It is also not uncommon to find cases where businesses that have previously been raided reopen quickly, often under a new name or management but continuing the same practices. This indicates a weak deterrent effect and a lack of continuous post-enforcement supervision.

From the substantive law enforcement side, police in the Judicial Unit have indeed carried out a number of operations, but the legal process against pimps is often hampered by a lack of evidence and transaction secrecy. Pimps rarely leave physical evidence or documentation, making it difficult to legally incriminate them without willing victim witnesses. On the other hand, apprehended sex workers are usually only processed administratively and then released, without rehabilitative support or further guidance.

Given these conditions, law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in Pekanbaru requires comprehensive reform, both in terms of regulation, enforcement, and social approach. Law enforcement agencies need to enhance digital investigation capabilities, strengthen inter-agency cooperation, and regularly conduct consistent supervision and legal action. Local governments must also tighten control over business licenses and permanently close establishments proven to misuse their permits.

Law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru still faces various structural and cultural obstacles. On the one hand, law enforcement officials like the Judicial Unit have conducted a number of operations and arrests of pimps and sex workers. In some cases, enforcement was carried out with strong evidence and has reached the prosecution stage in court. However, on the other hand, many massage parlors continue to operate with new *modi*, changing business names, locations, or promotion methods. In practice, pimps today not only recruit directly but also utilize social media, instant messaging applications, and closed online networks. This, of course, makes it difficult for officials to conduct conventional investigations. In addition, weak inter-agency coordination exacerbates the situation. Massage parlors that have been warned or sealed by Satpol PP often reopen due to a lack of follow-up supervision or because business owners have connections with rogue officials.

Another factor found is the lack of a strong social approach towards sex workers. Many of them return to prostitution after being arrested and released, as they lack skills or economic support. This indicates that repressive law enforcement alone is not enough to break the chain of undercover prostitution.

Ideal law enforcement against pimps should not only rely on raids and arrests but also involve preventive measures such as socialization, guidance for legal massage service businesses, and providing alternative economic programs for women vulnerable to being trapped in this practice. In addition, it is necessary to reform the supervision system for service business licenses and enhance the integrity of officials so that there are no more loopholes for compromise in the law enforcement process. By strengthening synergy among the community, law enforcement agencies, and social institutions, and implementing a more humane and sustainable approach, law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution in Pekanbaru is expected to bring tangible change. This involves not only prosecuting perpetrators but also preventing the re-emergence of such practices to maintain social dignity and public safety.

## **B. Obstacles in Law Enforcement Against Pimps in Undercover Prostitution Through "Plus" Massage Parlors in the Legal Jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City**

Law enforcement against the practice of undercover prostitution operating under the guise of "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City still

faces various complex obstacles. This prostitution practice is carried out covertly, using methods that are difficult to prove legally because they are private and hidden. Although Indonesia normatively has laws prohibiting prostitution, its implementation at the local level, particularly against pimps, is not always effective. In this context, pimps act as facilitators, managers, or intermediaries between commercial sex workers and clients, and it is precisely this role that often escapes legal repercussions.

One of the main obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in the Pekanbaru Police Resort City area is the difficulty of gathering strong evidence. Undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" is often conducted secretly and not openly. Sexual activities are frequently disguised as massage or relaxation services, requiring law enforcement officials to have concrete proof that a prostitution transaction has occurred at the establishment. Without a confession from the victim or being caught red-handed during the act, legal proceedings are difficult to pursue. This aligns with the principle of criminal law, *nullum delictum sine poena praevia lege poenali*, which states that no act can be punished without a law explicitly regulating it and sufficient evidence (Moeljatno, 2009).

Additionally, weak oversight from relevant agencies contributes to these obstacles. Many "plus massage parlors" operate illegally or violate business licenses. However, supervision from licensing agencies, health departments, and the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP) is often reactive rather than preventive. When a massage parlor is found to be engaging in prostitution, officials typically only act after a public report. Meanwhile, the function of supervision should be carried out regularly and proactively to prevent legal violations from the outset. This weak oversight allows pimps to continue their operations discreetly.

Furthermore, the existence of these prostitution practices is also tied to socio-economic issues within the community. Many women involved in undercover prostitution are driven by economic hardship, limited job opportunities, and low education levels. Pimps often exploit these conditions to recruit vulnerable women. In many cases, women working in "plus massage parlors" do not realize they are being exploited by pimps for economic gain, making them reluctant to report. Low legal awareness and economic dependence on pimps lead victims to be unwilling to cooperate with law enforcement officials (Eddyono, 2016).

Cultural and societal norms also hinder law enforcement. In some segments of society, prostitution is viewed as a moral issue considered taboo to discuss openly. This makes the community reluctant to report or intervene, even if they know about undercover prostitution practices around them. This secrecy makes it difficult for officials to gather information from the surrounding environment, allowing pimps to remain untouched by the law. In some cases, the practice is even considered "normal" as long as it doesn't disturb public order, leading to a permissive attitude towards "plus massage parlor" activities.

From the legal aspect itself, the absence of explicit regulations prohibiting massage parlors that serve as fronts for prostitution further complicates legal proceedings. Although the Criminal Code (KUHP) regulates indecent acts and sexual exploitation, these articles are often considered insufficient to incriminate pimps in the context of undercover prostitution. For example, Article 296 of the KUHP states that "whoever, as a livelihood or habit, intentionally facilitates or makes easier indecent acts with others, shall be punished with imprisonment for a maximum of one year and four months or a fine of up to thirteen thousand five hundred rupiah." However, the implementation of this article still requires complex proof because it must be demonstrated that there was intent and profit from such indecent activities.

Moreover, structural obstacles within law enforcement agencies cannot be ignored. Poor coordination between police and relevant agencies often leads to ineffective enforcement. In some cases, raids are carried out by only one party, without involving a multidisciplinary approach that should be conducted in a coordinated manner. A lack of specific training and

understanding in handling undercover prostitution cases also leaves law enforcement officials without proper strategies for investigation and enforcement.

It is also not uncommon for these undercover prostitution practices to be protected by rogue officials who have vested interests or receive benefits from such activities. Allegations of bribery or deliberate inaction by law enforcement officials make pimps feel safe and protected, allowing these illegal practices to continue. This phenomenon reflects weak integrity in law enforcement and poses a serious obstacle to achieving comprehensive legal justice. Law enforcement officials should uphold the principles of integrity and professionalism as stipulated in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police.

Solutions to these various obstacles cannot be solely repressive; they must be accompanied by preventive and rehabilitative approaches. Local governments need to formulate specific regulations that strictly govern massage parlor activities and supervise business permits. Additionally, increased legal education and economic empowerment for vulnerable groups must also be part of a comprehensive effort to eradicate undercover prostitution. On the other hand, law enforcement officials need to be equipped with training and capacity building to professionally and effectively handle pimp cases. Thus, law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution in the legal jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City cannot be carried out partially. Synergy between the community, government, and law enforcement agencies is needed to overcome the existing structural, cultural, and legal obstacles. Effective law enforcement must be based on transparency, accountability, and a focus on victims, so that undercover prostitution practices do not continue to spread and undermine legal values and societal morals.

Law enforcement against the practice of undercover prostitution operating through "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City faces various complex obstacles. Although this activity contradicts legal and social norms, in reality, it continues to operate covertly and even in an organized manner. Based on interviews with several police officials authorized to handle these cases, it became clear that these obstacles are not only technical but also involve social, legal, and even cultural aspects of the local community.

According to Kompol Bery Juana Putra, SIK, MH, as the Head of Criminal Investigation Unit of Polresta Pekanbaru, and based on the author's observations in the field, the obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru are as follows: First, "plus massage parlors" continue to operate covertly even after raids, merely changing their business names, locations, or service systems. Second, the lack of routine and continuous supervision from law enforcement officials and relevant agencies allows perpetrators to freely resume their operations. Third, the minimal outreach programs or legal education at the community level also mean that the public lacks sufficient understanding to participate in preventing or reporting prostitution activities.

In the author's opinion, obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution do not only stem from weaknesses in the legal system and law enforcement agencies but are also caused by the involvement of cunning perpetrators who circumvent the law, as well as a community attitude that tends to be permissive or passive. Therefore, to thoroughly address this issue, a comprehensive approach is needed: firm and integrated law enforcement, strict supervision of business practices that can be misused, and active community involvement in reporting and social monitoring.



### C. Efforts to Overcome Obstacles in Law Enforcement Against Pimps in Undercover Prostitution Through "Plus" Massage Parlors in the Legal Jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City

Efforts to overcome obstacles in law enforcement against pimps operating undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Pekanbaru Police Resort City present a complex challenge requiring a multi-sectoral approach. These obstacles do not only stem from the law enforcement side but also from socio-economic aspects of society and a still weak oversight system.

The practice of undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru is a long-standing social phenomenon that continues to evolve in increasingly disguised forms. Pimps carry out this practice using various *modi operandi*, such as camouflaging prostitution activities within massage, spa, or health therapy services. Although Indonesian law prohibits indecent acts and sexual exploitation, obstacles in law enforcement against pimps remain a serious problem. Therefore, concrete and continuous efforts are needed to overcome these obstacles so that law enforcement operates optimally and provides a deterrent effect.

One strategic effort that can be undertaken is strengthening coordination among law enforcement agencies and relevant departments. Good coordination among stakeholders will result in more structured and comprehensive law enforcement operations, from enforcement to rehabilitation for victims of prostitution. Handling pimps cannot be done sectorally but must involve a sustainable multidisciplinary approach. In this regard, law enforcement officials need to form a joint team specifically tasked with handling cases of undercover prostitution involving pimps as key perpetrators (Rizki H. and Fathonah, 2014).

Furthermore, increasing capacity and training for law enforcement officials is also an important aspect. Handling undercover prostitution cases requires special expertise in investigation, evidence collection, and interviewing techniques for victims or witnesses who are reluctant to speak due to psychological pressure. This training should also include an understanding of how to implement a victim-centered approach so that exploited sex workers do not feel afraid or intimidated when questioned. This will help officials dismantle pimp networks behind "plus massage parlor" operations (Gunadi, 2016).

Next, the local government needs to tighten supervision of business licenses for massage parlors and similar establishments. One reason for the difficulty in prosecuting pimps is that their businesses hold official licenses but are used for illegal activities. Therefore, relevant agencies must regularly conduct inspections and evaluations of suspicious business activities. The government also needs to revise local regulations governing massage services, spas, and similar businesses to include strict and explicit provisions prohibiting undercover prostitution practices. Regional regulations should stipulate administrative sanctions, including revocation of business licenses, if prostitution practices are proven.

On the other hand, the community must also be actively involved through legal outreach programs and increased social awareness. People living around "plus massage parlor" business locations often know about suspicious practices but are reluctant to report due to fear or considering it commonplace. Through an educational approach, the community can be encouraged to bravely report if they are aware of activities leading to legal violations. Local governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can initiate citizen forums or public campaigns to convey the importance of community participation in eradicating undercover prostitution.

It is also important to provide protection and assistance to victims of sexual exploitation who are part of pimp operations. Many women involved in prostitution are forced into it or are trapped in pimp networks. The state has an obligation to provide social rehabilitation and alternative livelihoods for them. Therefore, the Social Affairs Office and women's protection

agencies must provide shelters, job training, and legal aid for victims. This way, victims are not merely repatriated or released but are also empowered to return to a more dignified life.

Besides legal and social approaches, upholding integrity within law enforcement agencies cannot be overlooked. Allegations of rogue officials protecting undercover prostitution practices must be taken seriously. There needs to be a strict internal oversight system, including the application of severe sanctions for police members or other officials involved in the illegal protection of "plus massage parlors" that violate the law. Commitment to the principles of professionalism, accountability, and transparency is fundamental to fostering public trust in the law enforcement process.

Technological approaches can also be utilized to overcome law enforcement obstacles. Officials can leverage technology-based surveillance, such as CCTV, online reporting systems from the community, and social media monitoring, to detect prostitution activities disguised through online platforms or covert promotions. Digital technology can help officials gather initial information before conducting further direct investigations.

Success in overcoming law enforcement obstacles against pimps in undercover prostitution cannot be separated from the courage and political commitment of the local government. Regional heads and leaders of law enforcement agencies must demonstrate a firm and uncompromising stance against illegal practices involving sexual exploitation. Bureaucratic reform efforts, improvement of regional regulations, and active involvement of all community elements are concrete steps that must be implemented consistently. Through these various efforts, it is hoped that obstacles in law enforcement against pimps will no longer hinder the upholding of justice and the protection of prostitution victims. Effective law enforcement not only prosecutes perpetrators but also effectively breaks the chain of exploitation and empowers victims to be free from the clutches of this inhumane practice.

Undercover prostitution practices through "plus massage parlors" pose a serious challenge to law enforcement in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru. The complexity of these hidden and organized practices makes it difficult for officials to carry out optimal proof, investigation, and enforcement. Therefore, systematic and directed efforts are needed to overcome the various obstacles faced. Interviews with police officials, Satpol PP, and relevant parties directly involved in the law enforcement process revealed several strategies that have been and will be implemented to strengthen the effectiveness of action against pimps behind these prostitution practices.

Based on the author's observations in the field, efforts to overcome obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus massage parlors" in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru are as follows: First, there is a need for strengthening administrative oversight and business licensing verification systems. Second, the formation of an integrated, inter-agency team is required to regularly conduct inspections and supervision of areas prone to undercover prostitution. Third, law enforcement officials, together with the local government, need to initiate community-based legal education programs, especially in vulnerable areas or near prostitution locations.

Regarding the issues of hidden operations and changes in business identity, strengthening administrative oversight and business licensing verification systems is necessary. Local governments, through relevant agencies along with Satpol PP and police, need to implement a digital-based business tracking system capable of monitoring every change in the name, location, and ownership of massage parlor businesses. In addition, the application of strict sanctions, such as permanent revocation of business licenses and criminal prosecution of business owners proven to misuse their licenses, needs to be intensified. The legal approach should not stop at momentary raids but must be accompanied by concrete legal follow-up.

To address the lack of routine and continuous supervision, an integrated, inter-agency team needs to be formed to regularly conduct inspections and supervision of areas prone to

undercover prostitution. This team can consist of elements from Polresta Pekanbaru, Satpol PP, relevant agencies, and social figures with social authority. Supervision should not only be carried out when there are reports or public pressure but should be scheduled regularly and be unannounced (random inspection) to prevent perpetrators from erasing their tracks. Furthermore, it is important to provide regular funding and training to supervisory officers so that they can detect and act on covert practices professionally and ethically.

Regarding the lack of legal outreach and education at the community level, law enforcement officials, together with the local government, need to initiate community-based legal education programs, especially in vulnerable areas or near prostitution locations. This education should not only explain the legal aspects of prostitution and pimping but also provide understanding about community participation in reporting, the importance of maintaining environmental morality, and the social dangers of prostitution. Forms of education can include citizen seminars, outreach in places of worship, local media broadcasts, and the involvement of community organizations and religious leaders. The goal is to build collective legal awareness so that the community can become a strategic partner in efforts to eradicate undercover prostitution.

In the author's opinion, efforts to overcome obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution in Pekanbaru are still sporadic and not sustainable. Although joint operations are sometimes carried out, a deterrent effect is not created because law enforcement has not addressed the root causes, such as weak supervision of business licenses and the lack of social rehabilitation for sex workers. On the other hand, there is a phenomenon of "normalization" of prostitution practices in urban communities, where such practices are tolerated as long as they do not disturb the surrounding environment. This indicates that a repressive approach alone is not enough; it must be accompanied by preventive and cultural approaches. Therefore, efforts to overcome these obstacles must be comprehensive and integrated. Local governments need to revitalize the business licensing system, tighten supervision of places that have the potential to be misused, and enhance synergy among law enforcement officials so that legal actions run effectively. On the other hand, legal outreach, skills training programs, and alternative economic empowerment for former sex workers are also long-term solutions that must be considered. Thus, efforts to eradicate undercover prostitution will not just move the problem but truly address its root causes.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus" massage parlors in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru is not yet functioning effectively. Although police and relevant agencies have made several efforts to crack down, facts on the ground show that prostitution practices disguised as massage parlors are still widespread. In practice, they offer sexual services covertly. The managers or pimps typically camouflage these prostitution activities through certain codes to regular customers, or via closed digital communication networks. This indicates that pimps have developed a more organized operational system that is harder for law enforcement officials to detect directly.

Obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus" massage parlors in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru are: First, "plus" massage parlors continue to operate covertly even after raids, simply by changing business names, locations, or service systems. Second, the lack of routine and continuous oversight from law enforcement officials and relevant agencies allows perpetrators to freely resume their operations. Third, the minimal legal outreach or education programs at the community level also mean the public lacks sufficient understanding to participate in preventing or reporting prostitution activities.

Efforts to overcome obstacles in law enforcement against pimps in undercover prostitution through "plus" massage parlors in the legal jurisdiction of Polresta Pekanbaru are:

First, there is a need for strengthening administrative oversight and business licensing verification systems. Second, the formation of an integrated, cross-agency team is required to regularly conduct inspections and supervise locations prone to undercover prostitution practices. Third, law enforcement officials, together with the local government, need to initiate community-based legal education programs, especially in vulnerable areas or near prostitution sites.

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