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Article Title

The Role of the PKK of Medan City to Preventing Domestic Violence in Perspective of Law Number 23 of 2004

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ABSTRACT

The high incidence of domestic violence in Medan City indicates a gap between the legal protection framework and the implementation of prevention at the grassroots level. This study aims to analyze the form and implementation of the role of the Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team in domestic violence prevention according to Law Number 23 of 2004 and to identify the determining factors that influence its effectiveness. This empirical legal research utilizes a qualitative approach with a case study design focusing on the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with key informants and document studies and analyzed using an interactive analysis model. The findings indicate that the role of Family Welfare Empowerment is paradoxical: while aligned with the preventive spirit of Law Number 23 of 2004, its implementation in the field tends to be based on the maintenance of social harmony rather than the protection of victims' juridical rights. The effectiveness of this role is determined by a dialectic between its social capital and grassroots network as primary supporting factors, which confront the hegemony of patriarchal culture, limitations in authority, and the complexity of victims' dilemmas as dominant hindering factors. It is concluded that Family Welfare Empowerment is a vital yet limited preventive partner whose potential can only be optimized through systemic policy support to strengthen its cadres' legal and intervention capacities.

Keywords: *Community-Based Organization; Domestic Violence; Family Law; Family Welfare Empowerment; Prevention.*

INTRODUCTION

The integrity and resilience of the family constitute a fundamental pillar within Indonesia's social and legal structures, ideally aimed at fostering a harmonious, prosperous, and violence-free environment (Nosita & Zuhdi, 2022). This aspiration is manifested in various legal instruments, including Law Number 1 of 1974 and the Compilation of Islamic Law, which both seek to establish a *sakinah, mawaddah, and warahmah* (tranquil, loving, and merciful) household (Gadjong, 2023). Nevertheless, the social reality often presents a troubling paradox, wherein the domestic sphere, which should be the safest sanctuary, transforms into an arena of violence. The problem of domestic violence persists as a critical issue that erodes the foundations of family resilience and poses a significant challenge to law enforcement in Indonesia.

This alarming phenomenon is confirmed explicitly in Medan City, North Sumatra Province, which has demonstrated an upward trend in domestic violence cases in recent years. A report from the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA) of the Medan Metropolitan Police's Criminal Investigation Unit documented a significant surge from 277 cases in 2022 to 733 cases throughout 2023 (Siahaan, 2023). Although a discrepancy exists in the absolute figures compared to data from the Simfoni-PPA (2024)—which recorded 171 cases in 2023 and 178 in 2024—both sources consistently indicate an escalation that demands serious attention. These figures represent a social emergency quantitatively, signifying a persistent lack of collective awareness regarding the importance of building healthy and egalitarian family relationships while also suggesting the potential ineffectiveness of current prevention strategies.

In the national legal context, Indonesia possesses a comprehensive juridical instrument through Law Number 23 of 2004. The enactment of this law marks a paradigm shift, transitioning the perspective on domestic violence from a private matter to a public crime requiring state intervention. As stipulated in Article 1, point 1 of Law Number 23 of 2004, domestic violence is defined as any act that results in physical, psychological, or sexual suffering or household neglect. The primary objective of this regulation is not merely repressive, aimed at punishing perpetrators, but also emphasizes preventive and protective aspects to safeguard victims and sustainably preserve household harmony. This ethos aligns with the values articulated in Article 116 of the Compilation of Islamic Law concerning grounds for divorce that intersect with acts of domestic violence.

Although a legal framework is in place, various studies and field practices indicate that the response to domestic violence often concentrates on post-factum measures or actions taken after the violence has occurred, primarily involving law enforcement agencies such as the police and courts. Conversely, research on the effectiveness of proactive, community-based prevention strategies remains relatively limited. This gap represents a crucial juncture, highlighting the need to examine the role of non-state actors at the grassroots level who can potentially serve as the vanguard of preventive efforts. A thorough analysis is required to understand how the preventive mandate within Law Number 23 of 2004 is interpreted and implemented by community-based institutions with direct access and social legitimacy.

In response to this gap, the present research focuses on the Family Welfare Empowerment movement, a community organization structurally and functionally embedded in the lives of citizens, extending down to the *dasawisma* (ten-household cell) level. The existence of Family Welfare Empowerment as an initiative developed “by, for, and from the community” positions it as a strategic entity (Asliani & Lubis, 2021). It holds a unique position to influence the internal and external family dynamics that, according to Luhulima (2007), are the two primary elements triggering domestic violence. Through its programs, governed by the Regulation of Minister of Internal Affairs Number 36 of 2020—particularly those under Working Group 1 (Pokja 1) concerning the internalization of Pancasila and family development—Family Welfare Empowerment theoretically possesses the capacity to conduct education, socialization, and early intervention before violence erupts.

Therefore, this research has two primary objectives. *First*, we will analyze the form and implementation of the role of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team in preventing domestic violence from the perspective of Law Number 23 of 2004. *Second*, to identify the supporting and impeding factors that influence the effectiveness of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment in executing its domestic violence prevention programs at the community level. The novelty of this research

lies in its approach, which examines Family Welfare Empowerment not merely as a social entity but as an informal legal subject executing the preventive mandate of a statute. The findings are expected to provide a theoretical contribution to socio-legal studies on law implementation by non-state actors and offer evidence-based policy recommendations for the Medan City Government and other stakeholders to optimize more effective and humane prevention strategies.

METHOD

To comprehensively investigate the research problem, this study employs an empirical legal research design, which emphasizes the analysis of the interaction between juridical instruments and social realities in the field (Bungin, 2013). This research adopts a qualitative approach, deemed most relevant for understanding complex phenomena such as roles, processes, and social dynamics that cannot be quantitatively measured. To ensure data depth and richness, the research is designed as a case study, enabling an intensive, holistic, and contextual investigation into the specific role of the Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team in Medan City as a single unit of analysis.

The research was conducted in Medan City, with data collection focused on four months from January to April 2025. To achieve the research objectives, this framework relies on two primary data sources: primary and secondary (Qamar & Rezah, 2020). Primary data, the backbone of the empirical findings, were gathered directly from first-hand sources through in-depth interviews with key informants. These informants were purposively selected based on their capacity, experience, and direct involvement in the domestic violence prevention programs run by the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format to maintain depth and flexibility in information gathering.

Secondary data collection was undertaken to supplement and provide a juridical and theoretical context for the primary data. A document study technique was employed to examine primary legal materials, principally Law Number 23 of 2004 and the Regulation of Minister of Internal Affairs Number 36 of 2020. Furthermore, secondary legal materials were reviewed, including the Work Program Plan of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment, various academic literature such as books and scholarly journals, and relevant prior research findings on domestic violence and the role of community organizations.

All primary and secondary collected data were analyzed using a systematic analytical framework. This study adopts the interactive model of qualitative data analysis developed by Miles and Huberman (1992), which views analysis as a flow of cyclical and interactive activities rather than linear. This model comprises three

concurrent streams of activity that occur throughout the research process: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data condensation involves the selection, focusing, and organization of raw data. Data display includes organizing organized information into narrative descriptions and tabular formats to facilitate pattern recognition. Finally, conclusion drawing interprets the meaning derived from the displayed data, with conclusions being tested against the original data to ensure validity (Sampara & Husen, 2016). Applying this systematic research methodology is anticipated that valid and arguable conclusions can be drawn to answer the formulated research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Context and Reality of the Role of Medan City's Family Welfare Empowerment in Domestic Violence Prevention

The endeavor to realize family resilience free from violence is a fundamental legal and social mandate; however, it often confronts an empirical reality to the contrary (Salsabilla et al., 2023). In Medan City, the problem of domestic violence demonstrates an urgency that cannot be overlooked, reflected in quantitative data indicating the persistence of this issue. A report from the Women and Children Protection Unit (PPA) of the Medan Metropolitan Police's Criminal Investigation Unit documented a significant surge from 277 cases in 2022 to 733 cases throughout 2023 (Siahaan, 2023). Although a discrepancy exists in the absolute figures compared to data from the Simfoni-PPA (2024)—which recorded 171 cases in 2023 and 178 in 2024—both data sources converge to underscore the same conclusion: domestic violence remains a real and persistent threat to family integrity in this region. This phenomenon affirms the existence of a gap between the idealism of legal protection and the implementation of prevention at the community level.

Table 1. Domestic Violence Cases by Gender in 2023 and 2024

Year	Male	Female	Total
2023	57	114	171
2024	53	125	178

Source: Secondary Data, 2025.

The Family Welfare Empowerment movement is highly strategic in Indonesia's institutional constellation. As a long-established government partner, its role is juridically legitimized through the Regulation of Minister of Internal Affairs Number 36 of 2020. Numerous studies have confirmed its position as a spearhead for development focused on enhancing family welfare (Mulyati & Suhaety, 2021).

The hierarchical structure of Family Welfare Empowerment, which extends to the smallest community unit—the Dasawisma group—provides it unparalleled social access compared to other formal institutions, an essential modality, as [Asliani and Lubis \(2021\)](#) noted. With such extensive reach, the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team is theoretically in an ideal position to act as an agent of social change and an extension of the state in implementing development mandates, including violence prevention efforts.

The national framework of Family Welfare Empowerment is based on Ten Principal Programs that comprehensively address various aspects of basic human needs, from food and clothing to health and family planning ([Juliana & Wedayanti, 2021](#)). In the context of domestic violence prevention, this role is specifically carried out through programs under the purview of Working Group 1 (Pokja 1). Based on a document study of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment's Work Program Plan, it was found that Pokja 1 is tasked with responsibilities directly related to the internalization of Pancasila values and family character development. Flagship programs such as "Guidance on Parenting Patterns for Children and Adolescents in the Digital Era" (PAAREDI) and its derivative, "Indonesian Families Protect Children from Sexual Violence" (KILAS), are designed as educational instruments to build the foundations of a harmonious and non-violent family.

Table 2. List of Principal Programs of Working Group 1, Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment, 2023 and 2024

No	Type of Activity	Month												OPD
		01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	
1	Guidance on Parenting Patterns for Children and Adolescents in the Digital Era (PAAREDI) through three programs:													National Unity and Politics
	a. Prosperous and Harmonious Indonesian Families	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	b. Healthy Indonesian Families Without Drugs (KRISAN)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	DP3AP MP2KB
	c. Indonesian Families Protect Children from Sexual Violence (KILAS)	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
2	Guidance on the Role of Parents in Applying PAAREDI						X				X			DP3AP MP2KB

No	Type of Activity	Month												OPD
		01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	
3	Counseling on the Prevention of underage marriage, particularly for girls	X	X											Ministry of Religion DP3AP MP2KB
4	Monitoring the Implementation of communal work for cleanliness at sub-district and urban village levels	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Sub-district and Village
5	They conduct Islamic religious study sessions for the members of the Family Welfare Empowerment	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Social Services
6	Guidance for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
7	Guidance for the Empowerment of the Elderly	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	DP3AP MP2KB

Source: Primary Data, 2025.

Although the work program appears structured, in-depth interviews with the management and cadres of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment present a more dynamic reality of implementation. A key finding reveals that the cadres' understanding of domestic violence in the field is more frequently framed in socio-cultural rather than juridical terminology. Terms such as lack of harmony¹, communication misunderstanding², or economic problems³ were predominantly cited as root causes. Consequently, the most prominent role they perform in practice is that of an educator and facilitator of family harmony. This finding is noteworthy when juxtaposed with the perspective of [Mahfudah and Habibah \(2022\)](#), who highlight the ideal role of Family Welfare Empowerment in broadly "advancing education in society." In practice in Medan, regarding the issue of domestic violence, this educational role has undergone a narrowing of meaning, becoming counseling that focuses on maintaining social harmony (a harmony-based approach) rather than on legal education about the individual rights of victims (a rights-based approach).

¹Interview with Elvianty Ar Rahman Pane, Member of Working Group 1 of the Family Welfare Empowerment of Medan City, 10 April 2025.

²Interview with Siti Zulaiha, Community Volunteer of the Family Welfare Empowerment of Medan City, 10 April 2025.

³Interview with Sitti Banina, Secretary of Working Group 1 of the Family Welfare Empowerment of Medan City, 5 February 2025.

Furthermore, the empirical reality in the field indicates that the implementation of the preventive role by Family Welfare Empowerment is constrained by the cadres' understanding of their scope of authority. A synthesis of informant testimonies consistently reveals that their role is strictly understood to be within prevention, not direct case handling. The cadres position themselves as the first "bridge," directing victims to more authorized institutions such as the Regional Technical Implementation Unit for Women and Children Protection (UPTD PPA). However, they do not possess the mandate or capacity for further intervention. This finding corroborates the results of broader research, such as that by [Suharnanik et al. \(2024\)](#), which also identifies the role of Family Welfare Empowerment as a liaison between victims and support agencies. This limitation is reinforced by the volunteer-based nature of the institution, which shapes a reality where their preventive role—despite being supported by a vast structure—functions in practice more as a moral appeal than as a systematic intervention to enforce the law.

B. Juridical-Sociological Analysis: Assessing the Preventive Role of Family Welfare Empowerment from the Perspective of Law Number 23 of 2004

An analysis of the preventive role of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team necessitates a dual reading capable of bridging the formal legal framework with the living social realities within the community. On the one hand, Family Welfare Empowerment's existence and work programs formally manifest a strategic partnership with the government to achieve development goals, including creating family resilience. On the other hand, as revealed by the research findings in the preceding sub-section, the implementation of this role in the field is heavily influenced by socio-cultural interpretations that are not always congruent with the spirit and juridical diction enshrined in Law Number 23 of 2004. Therefore, critically assessing the preventive role of Family Welfare Empowerment entails dissecting the synchronization and dissonance between its operational practices and the ideal mandate outlined by the law.

At a principled level, the Family Welfare Empowerment programs that focus on parenting education, harmony-building, and strengthening family spiritual and mental well-being demonstrate synchronization with the spirit of primary prevention promoted by Law Number 23 of 2004. Efforts to build the foundations of a dialogical and egalitarian family through counseling represent a tangible form of fulfilling the state's obligation to provide communication, information, and education about domestic violence to the broader public. This approach is theoretically consistent with the view expressed by [Wahab \(2010\)](#), who identified internal factors—such as a decline in adaptive capacity among family members—as a primary contributor to violence. In this context, the programs can be viewed

as an intervention aimed at strengthening internal protective factors within the family, thereby proactively mitigating the risk of conflicts that could escalate into violence.

Nevertheless, a more profound analysis reveals a fundamental dissonance between the predominantly “harmony-based” approach in Family Welfare Empowerment’s practice and the “rights-based” approach that forms the philosophical foundation of Law Number 23 of 2004. The finding that cadres predominantly use terminology such as “lack of communication” or “disharmony” indicates a tendency to frame domestic violence as a matter of individual behavior or interpersonal failure. This perspective, as conceptualized by [Yudhianto \(2022\)](#), aligns more closely with a theory of violence as individual action. Conversely, Law Number 23 of 2004 implicitly adopts a structural violence framework, which views domestic violence not merely as a personal conflict but as a manifestation of unequal power relations rooted in social and cultural systems. Consequently, the focus on restoring harmony risks obscuring the violation of a victim’s right to feel safe, as guaranteed under Article 5 of Law Number 23 of 2004, particularly if family integrity is prioritized over individual protection.

Furthermore, when examined from the perspective of the scope of prevention materials, a gap exists between the spectrum of violence recognized by the law and the focus of Family Welfare Empowerment’s counseling in the field. Articles 5 through 9 of Law Number 23 of 2004 comprehensively criminalize four forms of violence: physical, psychological, sexual, and household neglect. Existing programs, such as PAAREDI and KILAS, explicitly and implicitly address the prevention of physical and psychological violence against children and other family members. However, more sensitive issues rooted in gendered power structures, such as sexual violence within marriage and economic neglect as a form of violence, do not appear to be primary topics in the prevention discourse at the grassroots level. This gap indicates that the preventive role of Family Welfare Empowerment does not yet fully encompass the entire definition of domestic violence as mandated by the law, thereby leaving a void in the holistic protection of potential victims.

Finally, a juridical analysis must also recognize the inherent limitations of the authority vested in Family Welfare Empowerment as a community-based institution. The finding that cadres position themselves merely as a “bridge” to formal service institutions is a legally correct understanding. Law Number 23 of 2004 mandates that the obligation to provide protection, assistance, and recovery for victims is the responsibility of law enforcement officials, healthcare professionals, and social workers under the government’s purview, such as the Regional Technical Implementation Unit for Women and Children Protection (UPTD PPA). Family Welfare Empowerment possesses neither the juridical mandate

nor the professional capacity to conduct case management, risk assessments, or provide legal aid. Thus, its preventive role must be situated within a larger ecosystem, where it functions as a strategic state partner in primary prevention and early detection, not as a substitute for the state's fundamental duty to provide protection and recovery as mandated by law.

C. The Dialectics of Effectiveness: An Analysis of Factors Determining the Role of Family Welfare Empowerment

The effectiveness of the preventive role performed by the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team cannot be assessed in binary terms. However, it must be understood as the outcome of a complex dialectic. There is a constant tension between the social capital that constitutes the organization's internal strength and a series of structural and cultural challenges that function as hindering elements. Analyzing the dynamic interaction between these two opposing forces is key to understanding why the role of Family Welfare Empowerment, despite its strategic nature, often fails to yield a significant impact on reducing the incidence of domestic violence. This research identifies several determinant factors that collectively shape the reality of this effectiveness in Medan City.

The primary supporting factor and the most valuable asset for Family Welfare Empowerment is its social legitimacy and grassroots network. Unlike state institutions, which are often perceived as external and formal entities, the cadres are an integral part of the community itself—they are neighbors, relatives, and local figures. This inherent status grants them an “entry permit” into the domestic sphere, which is often closed to outsiders, thereby allowing domestic violence prevention messages to be conveyed in a more informal and personal atmosphere. The organization's network, structured down to the *dasawisma* level, functions as an efficient social infrastructure for information dissemination and the early detection of potential vulnerabilities within families—a strength unparalleled by any other institution.

However, this substantial social capital directly confronts a wall of resistance from the hegemony of patriarchal culture and the deeply entrenched conception of the private sphere. This culture, as highlighted in the analysis by [Ihromi et al. \(2000\)](#), often situates domestic violence as a private family matter that is inappropriate to discuss with outsiders. This view is exacerbated by normalizing domestic disputes, which are considered a natural part of marital dynamics. Consequently, educational efforts by the cadres can be perceived as an act of “interference” that threatens the authority of the head of the household and exposes the family's “shame” (*aib*). This sentiment serves as a primary inhibitor to preventive intervention. This finding also aligns with [Jayanthi \(2009\)](#) identification

of triggers such as economic problems or infidelity, which, within a patriarchal culture, are often treated as implicit justifications for violence rather than as legal violations that must be reported.

A further barrier is structural, relating to the limitations in authority and resources possessed by Family Welfare Empowerment. As previously analyzed, the organization lacks the juridical authority to intervene, impose sanctions, or directly guarantee legal protection for victims. This lack of a formal mandate, while legally appropriate, in practice diminishes their bargaining power and influence when confronted with cases requiring concrete action. Furthermore, the reliance on limited and often unreliable funding allocations from the local government impacts the continuity and scale of programs, creating a risk that well-designed prevention initiatives become unsustainable ceremonial activities with little impact.

Another less important determinant stems from the position and condition of the victims, who are often in a complex dilemma. The finding that cadres have difficulty persuading victims to file a report confirms a widely documented phenomenon. The analysis by [Salsabila and Nurhanifah \(2024\)](#), for instance, highlights how victims often hesitate to report violence due to various situations, including total economic dependency on the perpetrator, emotional bonds, or pressure from the extended family to maintain the integrity of the marriage for the sake of the children. This victim's dilemma becomes a significant impediment to the effectiveness of Family Welfare Empowerment's role as a "bridge," because even when access is provided and information is shared, the victims themselves may not have the courage, willingness, or capacity to cross that bridge toward the formal protection system provided by the state.

Ultimately, this dialectic between strengths and weaknesses yields an analytical conclusion regarding the position of Family Welfare Empowerment within the domestic violence prevention ecosystem. Its main strength lies in its role as an agent for the socialization of values and disseminating information at the most basic level, thanks to its substantial social capital. However, its effectiveness as an agent of intervention capable of genuinely changing behavior and reducing violence rates is constrained by massive cultural barriers, inherent structural limitations, and the complexity of the victims' conditions. This reality affirms that optimizing the role of Family Welfare Empowerment requires more than just relying on the dedication of its cadres; it necessitates systematic policy interventions that can simultaneously strengthen supporting factors and mitigate the existing hindering elements.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results and discussion, it is concluded that the role of the Medan City Family Welfare Empowerment Mobilization Team in preventing domestic violence is both paradoxical and dialectical. Juridically, its role as a government partner aligns with the spirit of primary prevention mandated by Law Number 23 of 2004, with its programs functioning as instruments for socializing the values of a harmonious family. At the implementation level, however, a dissonance occurs wherein this role is often translated through a “harmony-based” approach oriented towards social integrity rather than the “rights-based” approach that constitutes the law’s philosophical foundation. The effectiveness of this role is subsequently determined by a constant dialectic between its substantial social capital—comprising its legitimacy and grassroots network—and a series of significant hindering factors, including the resistance of patriarchal culture, limitations in authority and resources, and the complex dilemmas faced by the victims themselves.

These findings imply that relying on Family Welfare Empowerment as the primary vanguard for domestic violence prevention without structured, systemic support is a policy that will not yield optimal results. Therefore, it is recommended that the Medan City Government, specifically through the Department of Women’s Empowerment, Child Protection, and Community Empowerment (DP3APM), design and implement a targeted capacity-building program for Family Welfare Empowerment cadres. This program should be built on three main pillars. *First*, intensive training on the substance of Law Number 23 of 2004 to transform their understanding of the issue from a purely moral concern to a human rights issue. *Second*, equipping them with basic skills in psychological first aid to enable more empathetic and non-judgmental interaction with victims. *Third*, developing a clear and practical Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the case referral pathway to formal service institutions. This policy intervention is crucial for bridging the gap between field practices and the required standards of legal protection.

Recognizing the limitations of this research, which focuses on a qualitative case study in a single location, there is ample room for future research. Subsequent research could employ a quantitative approach to statistically measure the significance of the impact of Family Welfare Empowerment’s programs on the prevalence or reporting rates of domestic violence in a given region. Additionally, a comparative study of the role of Family Welfare Empowerment in an urban area like Medan City and its role in a rural context would be highly relevant to investigate to identify potential differences in the characteristics of supporting and hindering factors. Continuous academic efforts to dissect the role of community actors, such as Family Welfare Empowerment, will remain essential for formulating more holistic and grounded domestic violence prevention strategies in Indonesia.

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