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## Article Title

### The Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Regarding the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The persistent criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops poses a significant challenge to the criminal justice system in Indonesia. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of law enforcement against this offence in Makassar City and comprehensively identify and analyze the factors that influence it. The method employed is empirical legal research conducted in Makassar City, involving primary data collection through administering questionnaires to 25 respondents and in-depth interviews with key informants, supplemented by secondary data from a documentary study. Data analysis integrates descriptive quantitative and interpretive qualitative approaches guided by the theoretical framework of legal effectiveness. The primary results of the study convergently indicate that the effectiveness of law enforcement regarding the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City is generally assessed as less effective, as reflected in the majority perception of respondents and qualitative indicators such as the persistence of perpetrators and the weak deterrent effect of criminal sanctions. Factor analysis identifies several significant determinants contributing to this condition, including limited preventive capacity within the legal structure, low public legal awareness and caution in second-hand goods transactions, the presence of substantial operational constraints in the investigation process, and the dynamics of cooperation between perpetrators of theft and receivers which strengthen criminal resilience. It is concluded that the low effectiveness of law enforcement is the result of the complex interaction of these structural, cultural, operational, and criminal environment factors.*

**Keywords:** *Determining Factors; Laptop Theft; Law Enforcement Effectiveness; Receiving Stolen Goods.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Contemporary societal dynamics, significantly influenced by the currents of globalization and accelerated technological advancement, concomitantly shape the evolution of criminal patterns (Setiawan, 2024). This phenomenon not only gives rise to new forms of criminal offences but also increases the complexity of existing modus operandi, necessitating serious attention and proactive response from the state through its criminal justice system. This challenge encompasses the entire spectrum (Kurniadi, 2022), from formulating criminal law policy and enacting both substantive and procedural criminal legislation (Busthami, 2022), to implementing law enforcement by the apparatus and managing an effective correctional system (Saputra et al., 2022). Failure to anticipate and respond to this changing criminal landscape has implications for public safety and order erosion (Hambali, 2020).

Within the broad spectrum of criminal activity, offenses against property consistently occupy a significant position in crime statistics, causing material loss and social unrest (Aulia et al., 2024). Among its various forms, the criminal offense of receiving stolen goods, as juridically defined in Pasal 480 of the Penal Code, possesses distinctive characteristics and plays a strategic role within the criminal ecosystem. Receiving stolen goods is essentially a facilitative offence (facilitation delict), wherein the act of receiving, buying, selling, renting, exchanging, or profiting from the property known or reasonably suspected to originate from a crime facilitates and even

encourages the perpetuation of predicate offences such as theft or embezzlement directly (Rudiyanto et al., 2023). This nexus becomes particularly apparent in cases involving high-value, easily marketable items like electronic devices, notably laptops, which are frequently targeted for theft and subsequently distributed through networks of receivers of stolen goods (Kelana & Seregig, 2025).

The presence of receivers of stolen goods establishes an illicit market mechanism enabling primary perpetrators to swiftly and with relative impunity convert the proceeds of their crimes into financial gain without directly confronting the risks associated with selling to end consumers (Kholil, 2018). This symbiotic interaction between thieves and receivers perpetuates the crime cycle and fundamentally undermines prevailing social norms and legal principles (Siregar et al., 2021). Consequently, efforts to eradicate offenses against property are inextricably linked to seriously addressing the chain of receiving stolen goods (Siregar et al., 2024). Tackling this offense entails dismantling a critical supporting infrastructure for the persistence of various forms of property crime.

In confronting the reality of evolving crime, including the offense of receiving stolen goods, law enforcement holds a pivotal role as the vanguard in maintaining social order and delivering justice (Lestiyana & Sudarti, 2020). Effective law enforcement is not merely construed as the application of penal sanctions alone; it is a systemic process encompassing the substantive quality of legislation, the professionalism and integrity of law enforcement officials, and the support of adequate judicial infrastructure. Efforts to realize the rule of law demand consistency in the application of rules, synchronization among regulations, and the relevance of the law to the values and dynamics present within society, ensuring that law genuinely functions as a just and responsive instrument of social engineering (Rochman et al., 2020).

In the context of Makassar City, an urban entity evolving into a metropolitan centre, rapid socioeconomic dynamics often parallel increased security challenges, including the prevalence of laptop theft cases (Soplantila, 2024). The high incidence of such thefts logically indicates significant activity related to receiving stolen goods serving as a distribution channel for the proceeds of these crimes, as stipulated under Pasal 480 of the Penal Code. This phenomenon suggests that although a formal legal framework is in place, the implementation of law enforcement on the ground encounters distinct challenges, warranting further investigation to ascertain its effectiveness in combating the practice of receiving stolen laptops within the jurisdiction of Makassar City.

Several previous studies have addressed aspects related to the criminal offense of receiving stolen goods, albeit with differing foci and scopes. For instance, Kurniadi (2022) centred his analysis on the legal framework governing and the

general countermeasures against this offence in Indonesia. Meanwhile, [Rosadi \(2023\)](#) examined the application of the principle of culpability (*mens rea*) within Pasal 480 of the Penal Code and judicial considerations regarding the criminal liability of receivers of stolen goods, through a case study analysis of decisions from the Waingapu District Court. Furthermore, [Presdianto \(2024\)](#) analyzed the causal factors and preventive measures pertaining specifically to receiving stolen motor vehicles. Distinctly differing from these studies, the focus on the effectiveness of law enforcement, specifically within a local context and concerning a particular type of object, such as laptops, as envisaged in this research, appears relatively unexplored.

The discrepancy between the legal norm (*das sollen*), which mandates the eradication of receiving stolen goods, and the empirical reality (*das sein*), wherein this practice—particularly concerning laptops—persists in Makassar City, coupled with the apparent absence of specific studies on the effectiveness of its law enforcement as identified through the literature review, underpins the urgency of this research. Specifically, this research is directed towards analyzing and assessing the effectiveness of law enforcement measures undertaken by the relevant authorities against the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City. Furthermore, this study endeavours to comprehensively identify and analyze the conducive and obstructive factors that significantly influence the effectiveness of law enforcement in this specific offence within the city.

## **METHOD**

This study is classified as empirical legal research, a methodological approach predicated upon the primary objective of examining and analyzing the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offence of receiving stolen laptops as it manifests in practice (*das sein*), as well as identifying the concrete factors influencing it. The empirical approach enables the research to extend beyond mere normative legal analysis (*das sollen*) to engage with the empirical reality of legal application directly ([Qamar & Rezah, 2020](#)). Primary and secondary data collection was conducted with a specific focus on the jurisdiction of Makassar City, serving as the relevant locus for addressing the research problem.

The data sources for this study comprised both primary and secondary data ([Sampara & Husen, 2016](#)). Primary data, sourced directly from firsthand accounts in the field, were collected through in-depth interviews conducted with key informants considered to possess substantial capacity and knowledge regarding the subject matter and through questionnaires to selected respondent groups. A total of 25 respondents participated, comprising Law Enforcement Officials (five individuals each from the Police, Prosecution, and Judiciary [Judges]), Legal Practitioners (five Advocates), and

five community members, ensuring a comprehensive range of perspectives. Secondary data were derived through documentary study and literature review, encompassing primary legal materials such as the Penal Code, secondary legal materials including textbooks and articles from academic journals, and pertinent supporting documents obtained from relevant institutions dealing directly with the issue of law enforcement concerning receiving stolen goods.

The subsequent phase involved data analysis following the comprehensive collection of both primary and secondary data. The data originating from questionnaires, transcripts of in-depth interviews, and the documentary and literature review results were subjected to systematic analysis utilizing the predetermined theoretical framework of legal effectiveness that served as the study's theoretical foundation. The application of this framework aimed to address and provide structured answers to the previously formulated research questions. Quantitative data, primarily derived from the questionnaires, were subsequently processed and presented descriptively in tabulation, accompanied by a narrative explanation. Notwithstanding the presentation of quantitative data, the in-depth analysis and interpretation of the overall findings employed qualitative analysis methods to discern the meaning, context, and dynamics of the factors influencing the effectiveness of law enforcement (Irwansyah, 2020). Finally, conclusions were formulated using a deductive reasoning approach, inferring specific findings about the effectiveness of law enforcement against the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City from the general theoretical framework and principles previously outlined.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. The Level of Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Against the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City**

The assessment of the level of effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City relies not solely on normative interpretations but crucially incorporates field data reflecting the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders and the empirical reality of law enforcement itself. An initial indicator regarding the level of effectiveness was obtained through descriptive quantitative analysis of questionnaire data collected from 25 representative respondents. The primary findings presented in Table 1 significantly indicate a predominant perception that law enforcement against this offence within the city remains less effective, a view held by 14 respondents (56%). This assessment is further reinforced by 3 respondents (12%) who explicitly rated it as ineffective. Only a minority, specifically 8 respondents (32%), held a positive perception, assessing it as effective.

**Table 1. Respondent Perceptions Regarding the Level of Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Against the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City**

No.	Level of Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage
1	Effective	8	32%
2	Less Effective	14	56%
3	Ineffective	3	12%
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Primary Data, 2025.*

While quantitative data offer a general overview of perceptions, a profound understanding of the dynamics of law enforcement effectiveness necessitates a qualitative analysis of the perspectives articulated by key actors within the criminal justice system. This qualitative data, sourced through in-depth interviews, provides crucial context and substance to the statistical figures. Notably, although some respondents assessed law enforcement as effective, the aggregate assessment of less effective and ineffective (68%) indicates fundamental issues most stakeholders perceive. Consequently, these quantitative figures serve as a point of departure for further qualitative exploration into the specific manifestations and indicators of this perceived lack of effectiveness in day-to-day practice.

Qualitative analysis of statements from informants within the Makassar Metropolitan Resort Police and the Makassar District Prosecutor's Office provides insight into the law enforcement efforts undertaken and their limitations in achieving optimal outcomes. Hospiah<sup>1</sup> and Irfan<sup>2</sup> articulated that there is a procedural commitment to conduct preliminary investigations, investigations, and prosecutions based on evidence and applicable legal provisions, including the imposition of criminal sanctions intended to achieve a deterrent effect. However, both institutions openly acknowledged that the intended outcome of these processes—namely, the cessation or significant reduction of the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops—has not been fully realized. Despite the legal process being conducted according to regulations, the admission regarding the continued emergence of new perpetrators or recidivists implicitly corroborates the quantitative assessment, indicating less effective law enforcement from the officials' perspective, particularly concerning prevention and deterrence (Husen et al., 2020).

<sup>1</sup>Interview with Resky Hospiah, Investigator, Makassar Metropolitan Resort Police, on March 5, 2025.

<sup>2</sup>Interview with Muhammad Irfan, Head of the General Crimes Sub-section, Makassar District Prosecutor's Office, on March 6, 2025.



Similar perspectives corroborating the indication of less effective law enforcement also emanated from the judiciary and legal practitioners. The statement by Dewi<sup>3</sup> highlighted a recurring phenomenon wherein criminal judgments rendered against perpetrators of receiving stolen goods appear insufficient to deter the emergence of other individuals involved in similar cases. It is frequently attributed to the potent economic motive; the perceived financial gains from such activities outweigh the imposed sanctions' risks or severity. This view was echoed by Ahmad<sup>4</sup>, who added observations regarding the *modus operandi* of perpetrators, who sometimes even dare to market the proceeds of crime relatively openly via social media platforms, indicating minimal fear of legal repercussions. This phenomenon, he argued, directly contributes to the conclusion that current law enforcement is rendered less effective due to its failure to provide an adequate deterrent effect in the face of powerful economic incentives.

Based on a synthesis of the quantitative findings and qualitative analysis derived from primary and secondary data and referencing the theoretical framework of legal effectiveness adopted for this research, it can be concluded that the level of effectiveness of law enforcement against the criminal offence of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City generally falls within the category of less effective. This assessment is predicated upon several key, mutually reinforcing indicators. *Firstly*, the perception held by most respondents from diverse backgrounds reflects this view. *Secondly*, law enforcement officials acknowledge the difficulties in curbing case recurrence despite adherence to established legal procedures. *Thirdly*, the persistence of perpetrators and the emergence of new ones indicate the weak deterrent effect of the applied criminal sanctions. *Finally*, the potent economic motive continues to drive perpetrators to engage in this criminal activity.

## **B. Analysis of Legal Structure and Public Legal Culture Factors**

Referencing the theoretical framework of legal effectiveness by Soekanto (2016), which typically identifies elements of legal substance, legal structure, public legal culture, and legal facilities as key variables (Zainuddin, 2022), this empirical research reveals the particular significance of the legal structure factor and the factor of public legal culture within the context of addressing the criminal offence of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City. This sub-section will delve into these two factors in depth, integrating quantitative findings reflecting respondent perceptions and qualitative analysis derived from key informant statements, as mandated by the applied empirical legal research design.

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<sup>3</sup>Interview with Sofi Rahma Dewi, Judge, Makassar District Court, on February 27, 2025.

<sup>4</sup>Interview with Ahmad, Advocate, Peradi Makassar Branch, on February 25, 2025.

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Analysis of the legal structure factor—which, in this context, encompasses the entire institutional framework of Law Enforcement (Police, Prosecution, and Courts), the quality and performance of its apparatus, and the prevailing procedural mechanisms—indicates a Significant Influence on the effectiveness of law enforcement in cases of receiving stolen laptops. The primary findings from Table 2 clearly illustrate this perception, with 13 respondents (52%) stating that the legal structure factor exerts a significant influence on law enforcement effectiveness. This finding signifies that respondents generally perceive the functioning of the system and its apparatus as a crucial element. Beyond merely executing a post-incident repressive function, this legal structure is expected to operate optimally throughout the law enforcement cycle (Qamar, 2021).

**Table 2. Respondent Perceptions Regarding the Influence of the Legal Structure Factor on the Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Against the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City**

No.	Influence of Legal Structure	Frequency	Percentage
1	Significant Influence	13	52%
2	Limited Influence	7	28%
3	No Influence	5	20%
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data, 2025.

Further investigation through qualitative analysis of key informant interviews provides a more specific understanding of the aspects of the legal structure most prominently highlighted in receiving stolen laptops, namely the capability and implementation of the preventive function. Awaluddin<sup>5</sup> emphasized that the Effectiveness in addressing receiving stolen goods is highly contingent upon the capacity of the legal structure, particularly the Police, to proactively prevent the occurrence of predicate offenses, specifically laptop theft. Logically, successful prevention of the source crime automatically disrupts the chain leading to the offense of receiving stolen goods. This perspective was reinforced by the statement of Hidayat<sup>6</sup>, who affirmed that the Police, through units such as Bhabinkamtibmas (Community Police Officers), continuously undertake preventive efforts within the community to mitigate security disturbances, including theft, with full awareness of the close connection between perpetrators of theft and receiving networks. Consequently, the Effectiveness of the legal structure in this context is measured by the number of receiving stolen goods cases resolved and significantly by the success of the preventive functions targeting its source crimes executed by the apparatus as part of that structure.

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<sup>5</sup>Interview with Awaluddin, Advocate, Peradi Makassar Branch, on February 25, 2025.

<sup>6</sup>Interview with Bambang Hidayat, Investigator, Makassar Metropolitan Resort Police, on March 5, 2025.



Congruent with the legal structure factor, public legal awareness or public legal culture was also identified as an equally important determinant influencing the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City. The perceived significance of this factor is reflected in the data presented in Table 3, where 14 respondents (56%) asserted that the factor of public legal awareness influences law enforcement effectiveness. As revealed through interviews, the social context underpinning this finding is the high market demand for laptops, concurrent with rapid technological development. Critically, this situation fosters a conducive environment for the circulation of proceeds of crime if not counterbalanced by an adequate level of public legal awareness within the community.

**Table 3. Respondent Perceptions Regarding the Influence of the Public Legal Awareness Factor on the Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Against the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City**

No.	Influence of Legal Structure	Frequency	Percentage
1	Significant Influence	14	56%
2	Limited Influence	7	28%
3	No Influence	4	16%
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Primary Data, 2025.*

Further qualitative analysis elucidates how this aspect of public legal culture operates in practice. The statement from Hospiah underscored the necessity of active public participation in prevention efforts, which is only feasible if underpinned by sufficient legal awareness and compliance. It relates to the public exercising caution and refraining from being easily tempted to purchase laptops at very low prices, particularly from sources or sellers of unclear credibility, given the high potential that such goods originate from criminal acts. This assertion was corroborated by the practical experiences shared by Irma<sup>7</sup>, who observed that numerous community members, whether due to ignorance or the temptation of low prices, ultimately become unknowingly involved in transactions involving proceeds of crime, placing them at risk of being implicated in receiving stolen goods cases. This phenomenon demonstrates that the level of public legal awareness, manifested in daily consumption behaviour and transactional practices, can directly facilitate or impede the practice of receiving stolen goods and consequently significantly impact the workload and success rate of law enforcement officials.

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<sup>7</sup>Interview with Irma, Manager, Althaf Komputer Store, Makassar, on February 27, 2025.

In synthesis, these two factors—legal structure and public legal culture—exert distinctive yet interrelated influences on the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City. The optimal performance of the legal structure, particularly in executing its preventive function to suppress source crimes (theft), constitutes an important prerequisite. However, such structural efforts can have their effectiveness eroded when confronted with a permissive or insufficiently vigilant public legal culture, often fueled by perceived need and the allure of low prices for illegal goods. Achieving a comprehensive enhancement of law enforcement effectiveness demands interventions targeting both domains simultaneously: strengthening preventive and repressive capacities within the legal structure and increasing legal literacy and awareness among the public to foster more critical and responsible engagement in transactions.

### **C. Operational Constraints in the Law Enforcement Process**

Complementing the analysis of the legal structure and public legal culture factors, a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City also necessitates an in-depth investigation into the operational constraints tangibly encountered by Law Enforcement Officials during the execution of their duties in the field. The existence of these practical impediments is not merely an assumption but has been empirically confirmed through the perceptions of the research respondents. The primary findings from Table 4 reveal the significance of this issue, with 15 respondents (60%) asserting that the law enforcement process in these cases encounters many obstacles. This figure, significantly surpassing those who indicated few obstacles (28%) or no obstacles (12%), underscores that operational difficulties constitute a tangible phenomenon broadly perceived by various stakeholders within Makassar’s criminal justice system. This quantitative finding provides a strong justification for conducting further qualitative exploration to dissect the nature and mechanisms of these constraints.

**Table 4. Respondent Perceptions Regarding Constraints in the Law Enforcement Process for the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City**

No.	Level of Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
1	Many Obstacles	15	60%
2	Few Obstacles	7	28%
3	No Obstacles	3	12%
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Primary Data, 2025.*

One fundamental operational constraint that consistently emerged from the qualitative analysis of police investigator accounts is the reactive nature of case initiation, which relies heavily on reporting the predicate offense. As elucidated by Muslimin<sup>8</sup>, the initial step in enforcing the law against receiving stolen goods frequently only becomes feasible after a victim of the criminal offense of laptop theft files a report. This dependence on victim reporting entails several problematic implications: the legal process cannot commence if the victim fails to report (whether due to ignorance, reluctance, or other reasons), case handling is consequently delayed pending such a report, and officials tend to adopt a reactive stance rather than proactively detecting receiving networks independently. This limitation in initiating processes proactively constitutes a significant initial barrier to effectively combating the practice of receiving stolen goods.

A more complex operational constraint arises during the investigation phase, stemming from the intrinsic relationship between the offense of receiving stolen goods and its source crime (theft). Both Muslimin and Hidayat highlighted a time-consuming and resource-intensive procedural requirement: namely, the obligation first to identify, and often thoroughly investigate, the theft case before being able to target the receiver of stolen goods effectively. This process involves a multi-layered sequence of investigative steps: receiving the theft report, searching for and identifying the perpetrator of the theft, interrogating this individual to ascertain where the stolen goods were transferred, and only then tracking and gathering evidence to apprehend or prosecute the receiver of stolen goods under Pasal 480 of the Penal Code. This lengthy and intricate sequential chain not only delays the handling of the receiving stolen goods case itself but also increases the likelihood that the physical evidence (the laptop) may have changed hands multiple times or even been altered and provides a more significant opportunity for the receiver of stolen goods to erase traces.

Furthermore, the processes of identification and tracking in the modern context also present distinct challenges, as indicated by Hidayat (and alluded to in the context surrounding Table 4). Efforts to track the whereabouts of stolen laptops and identify receivers of stolen goods are confronted by the dynamics of the second-hand goods market (including online marketplaces and social media platforms), which are often rapid and afford a degree of anonymity. Serial number tracking, proving ownership, tracing digital transactions, and unravelling diverse modus operandi (for instance, receivers disguised as service shops or engaging in seemingly ordinary buy-sell transactions) necessitate competent technical and non-technical investigative capabilities. Resource limitations regarding personnel

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<sup>8</sup>Interview with Ikhnatul Muslimin, Investigator, Makassar Metropolitan Resort Police, on March 5, 2025.

with specific expertise and adequate supporting technological tools can constitute a tangible barrier when addressing the complexities of tracking and evidence gathering in the digital era, which hinders law enforcement efforts against receivers of stolen goods.

Cumulatively, the various operational constraints outlined above—ranging from the dependence on victim reporting and the reactive nature of case handling, through the necessity of complex and resource-intensive sequential investigations, to the technical difficulties in tracking and identification amidst diverse modus operandi—contribute significantly to the often slow and suboptimal nature of the law enforcement process regarding the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops. These practical obstacles at the field level are a tangible manifestation of the legal structure's challenges in performing its functions. Consequently, these operational constraints logically serve as an important explanatory factor behind the overall assessment, indicating that law enforcement effectiveness is generally deemed less effective. Mapping and achieving an in-depth understanding of these operational constraints becomes crucial for formulating future law enforcement improvement strategies.

#### **D. Dynamics of the Criminal Environment: Patterns of Inter-perpetrator Cooperation**

Complementing the analysis of the legal structure and public legal culture factors, a holistic understanding of the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City also necessitates an exploration of the dynamics within the criminal environment itself, particularly the interaction patterns among perpetrators. The findings of this research strongly indicate that the offense of receiving stolen goods seldom exists as a standalone entity; rather, it is closely intertwined with its predicate offense through a network of relationships among perpetrators. The primary findings from Table 5 provide significant initial confirmation of this perception; an aggregate result reaching 84%—where 12 respondents (48%) stated a connection exists, and 9 respondents (36%) indicated a limited connection—demonstrates widespread acknowledgement among stakeholders regarding the existence of connectivity between perpetrators of theft and receivers of stolen laptops. The prevalence of this perception underscores the importance of unravelling and understanding the nature and implications of these inter-perpetrator relationship patterns as a crucial factor shaping the law enforcement landscape.

**Table 5. Respondent Perceptions Regarding Constraints in the Law Enforcement Process for the Criminal Offense of Receiving Stolen Laptops in Makassar City**

No.	Nature of Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
1	Connection Exists	12	48%
2	Limited Connection	9	36%
3	No Connection	4	16%
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data, 2025.

Qualitative analysis of key informant accounts provides a richer depiction of the motivations and mechanisms driving the formation of a symbiotic relationship between perpetrators of theft and receivers of stolen goods. As articulated by Fadli<sup>9</sup>, one primary driver is the difficulty or reluctance that perpetrators of theft face in selling the proceeds of crime directly to end consumers, owing to the higher risk of apprehension or limited market access. This situation urgently requires the thief to swiftly convert the stolen goods (laptops) into financial gain through safer and more efficient channels. Conversely, receivers of stolen goods emerge to fulfil this need, providing a readily available ‘market’ for stolen items while extracting a profit margin from the subsequent resale. Consequently, this relationship is founded upon rational calculation and complementary economic needs, benefiting both parties within the illicit ecosystem (Hajairin, 2020).

Furthermore, the form of this inter-perpetrator relationship is not invariably formal or structured, akin to a criminal organization, but frequently operates through networks of acquaintance and primarily functional transactions. The statement from Fitriani<sup>10</sup> highlighted that even if direct cooperation may not always occur, mutual acquaintance between perpetrators of theft and receivers of stolen goods is a common phenomenon. Perpetrators of theft, driven by the need to sell, will actively seek individuals (receivers) who are known or recommended as having the capacity to purchase proceeds of crime. The fact that apprehended thieves can frequently disclose the receiver’s identity, as observed by Fadli, serves as empirical evidence of the existing linkage and mutual knowledge between them, irrespective of the level of formal cooperation. This spectrum of relationships, ranging from mere acquaintance to closer cooperation, equally facilitates the flow of stolen goods.

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Muhammad Fadli, Investigator, Makassar Metropolitan Resort Police, on March 5, 2025.

<sup>10</sup>Interview with A. Nur Fitriani, Head of the Civil and State Administrative Law Sub-section, Makassar District Prosecutor’s Office, on March 6, 2025.

These patterns of inter-perpetrator cooperation directly give rise to significant negative implications for the Law Enforcement process and contribute to its reduced effectiveness. *Firstly*, these networks enable the rapid disposal or offloading of physical evidence (the stolen laptop) from the perpetrator of theft to the receiver, potentially through several layers of receivers, thereby hindering the efforts of authorities to track and seize this crucial evidence. *Secondly*, the flow of goods through these networks can obscure the chain of ownership and complicate proving that the goods originated from a specific crime when the receiving stolen goods case is processed in court. *Thirdly*, handling cases involving inter-perpetrator networks is inherently more complex and demands more excellent investigative resources compared to dealing with individual perpetrators, thus adding to the burden of the operational constraints identified in the previous sub-section.

In synthesis, the dynamics of the criminal environment, characterized by the presence of functional relationships and cooperation between perpetrators of theft and receivers of stolen laptops in Makassar City, function as a crucial determining factor in shaping the landscape of law enforcement effectiveness. These interaction patterns are not merely sociological characteristics of crime but actively contribute to the resilience of receiving stolen goods by providing an efficient and often difficult-to-dismantle illicit market mechanism. The challenges these inter-perpetrator networks pose add a layer of complexity atop the previously discussed factors of legal structure, public legal culture, and operational constraints. Therefore, an effective Law Enforcement strategy cannot solely focus on individual enforcement actions; it must also incorporate approaches capable of disrupting or severing these networks of cooperation as an integral part of the efforts to combat the criminal offense of receiving stolen goods more comprehensively and sustainably.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the results and discussion elaborated herein, it can be concluded that the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City is generally assessed as suboptimal. This conclusion is predicated upon the convergence of empirical findings derived from the perceptions of most research respondents and through the qualitative analysis of key informant accounts. The primary manifestations of this lack of effectiveness include the persistence of the practice of receiving stolen goods, the continued emergence of new perpetrators and recidivists, and the relatively weak deterrent effect generated by the criminal sanctions applied to offenders.

This low level of law enforcement effectiveness results from the complex interaction among various determining factors identified in this study. From



institutional and social perspectives, the legal structure and public legal culture factors demonstrate a significant influence. While performing its repressive functions, the legal structure is not considered fully optimal in implementing effective preventive strategies to disrupt the chain of predicate crime (theft), which serves as the upstream source of supply for stolen goods. Concurrently, the public legal culture factor—characterized by high market demand for laptops coupled with still low levels of legal awareness, vigilance, and compliance among segments of the public when engaging in transactions (particularly involving cheap items from unclear sources)—indirectly contributes to creating a permissive environment, thereby facilitating the persistence of the criminal offense of receiving stolen goods.

Furthermore, the analysis also unveiled other hindering factors that are operational and directly related to the criminal environment. The law enforcement process in the field is confronted by tangible operational constraints, including the dependence on victim reporting for case initiation, the investigative complexity arising from its sequential nature due to the necessity of first unravelling the predicate theft offense, and technical difficulties encountered in tracking evidence and perpetrator identification amidst diverse *modus operandi* and the utilization of technology. Additionally, the dynamics of the criminal environment, characterized by the presence of functional relationship patterns or even cooperation between perpetrators of theft and receivers of stolen goods, further complicate eradication efforts, creating a more resilient network for the circulation of illegal goods that is difficult for Law Enforcement Officials to penetrate.

Overall, the effectiveness of law enforcement concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops in Makassar City reflects the multifaceted interaction between the capacity and strategy of the legal structure, the level of public participation and legal awareness, the operational challenges faced by officials in the field, and the characteristics of the criminal environment, including inter-perpetrator networks. Understanding the complexity of this interaction of factors is the key to identifying the root causes of the suboptimal enforcement of this specific criminal offense.

Based on that conclusions, it is recommended that Law Enforcement Agencies (Police, Prosecution, and Courts) continuously evaluate and enhance their Law Enforcement strategies concerning the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops. These enhancement efforts should not solely focus on repressive aspects but also significantly strengthen preventive strategies to suppress the criminal offense of laptop theft, the primary source of stolen goods. It includes optimizing the role of Bhabinkamtibmas (Community Police Officers) and implementing effective security awareness programs. Furthermore, enhanced inter-functional coordination (among preliminary investigation, investigation, and prosecution units) is necessary for effectively handling cases involving the theft-receiving chain. Developing technical

capabilities for officials, including digital forensics and modern tracking techniques, is also essential to overcome operational constraints in uncovering increasingly diverse *modus operandi*, particularly online transactions.

It is further recommended that law enforcement agencies develop investigative approaches that target individual perpetrators and map and dismantle potential cooperation networks between thieves and receivers, which have been identified as a significant complicating factor. From the perspective of prosecution and adjudication, consistency is required in the application of criminal sanctions against receivers of stolen goods, commensurate with their degree of culpability and the impact of their actions, to maximize the potential deterrent effect as mandated by the purposes of punishment. Appropriately publicizing successful enforcement actions against receiving stolen goods cases to the public may also be considered part of a general deterrence strategy.

Recommendations are also directed towards sellers and owners/entrepreneurs of computer stores. It is strongly advised that they enhance their principle of due diligence in receiving or purchasing used laptops for resale. Implementing internal procedures for verifying seller identity and demanding proof of legal ownership for such electronic goods can significantly reduce the risk of being involved in transactions concerning proceeds of crime. Business actors are also encouraged to establish proactive communication and cooperation with police authorities should they encounter suspicious indications or offers involving goods and provide education to their staff regarding the legal risks associated with receiving stolen goods.

Finally, to the general public, particularly prospective laptop buyers, it is recommended to consistently heighten vigilance and adopt a critical attitude when conducting transactions. The public is urged not to be easily tempted by offers for used laptops priced significantly below market standard, mainly if originating from individual sellers of unclear credibility or via anonymous online platforms. Efforts should always be made to check the seller's identity, request original proof of ownership, and conduct transactions in a safe place. An understanding of the legal consequences of being involved in the criminal offense of receiving stolen goods, even inadvertently due to negligence (as per the 'should reasonably suspect' element within Pasal 480 of the Penal Code), needs continuous dissemination. Furthermore, victims of laptop theft are also urged to promptly report the incident to the police authorities to enable the law enforcement process to commence immediately. Ultimately, enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement against the criminal offense of receiving stolen laptops requires the shared participation and responsibility of all elements of society.

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