



Review of the Case of Acid Attack Made by a Husband to his Wife in: Legal Implications and Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence

Ammar Kurniawan

Faculty of Law, Universitas Widya Gama Malang, kurniawanamar29@gmail.com

Mufidatul Ma'sumah

Faculty of Law, Universitas Widya Gama Malang, mufida@widyagama.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The case of domestic violence involving a husband in Central Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi province, who committed an acid attack on his wife, is an incident that reflects the urgency of law enforcement and protection for victims of violence. This research aims to evaluate the legal aspects and social impact of these acts of violence and highlight the protective measures available to victims. This case not only had deep physical and psychological effects on the victim but also challenged the effectiveness of the justice system in handling similar cases. By examining how Indonesian law addresses gender-based violence, as well as assessing the implementation of victim protection policies, this research provides insight into how law enforcement can be improved to prevent and respond to domestic violence more effectively. In addition, this study also identifies an urgent need for reform in victim support and protection systems to make them more responsive to situations of violence. It is expected that the findings from this research can become a reference for policymakers and related institutions in designing better strategies to protect victims and reduce incidents of domestic violence in the future.

Keywords: Acid Attack, Domestic Violence, Victim Protection, Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence is a deep and complex social problem that impacts many aspects of personal and social life.¹ Cases of this kind of violence often involve serious human rights violations and demand comprehensive attention and treatment from various parties.² In Central Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi province, a case of domestic violence has come to the public's widespread attention when a man made an acid attack on his wife.³ This case not only raises anxiety and concern in the community but also tests the resilience and effectiveness of the legal system, as well as the protection of victims of domestic violence.⁴

¹ S. Rahayu, "Dating Violence: A Study on the Experiences of Young Women," *Jurnal Psikologi* 44, no. 1 (2017): 1–12.

² Farouq Umar, "Review of Islamic Law and Law Number 23 of 2004 Concerning the Coercion of Sexual Relations between Husband and Wife Case Study in Bundeh Village, Sreseh District, Sampang Regency" (IAIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, 2013).

³ Hamidah Abdurrachman, "Legal Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence in District Court Decisions as an Implementation of Victims' Rights," *Jurnal Hukum*, 2009.

⁴ Umar, "Review of Islamic Law and Law Number 23 of 2004 Concerning the Coercion of Sexual Relations between Husband and Wife Case Study in Bundeh Village, Sreseh District, Sampang Regency."

Domestic violence (DV) is a global issue that transcends geographical, cultural, and socio-economic boundaries.⁵ The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately one in three women worldwide has experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.⁶ In Indonesia, data from Komnas Perempuan shows that cases of DV remain high, with various forms of violence reported each year.⁷ This violence not only destroys individual lives but also undermines the social and economic fabric of communities.⁸

The acid attack case in Central Mamuju highlights two key issues that need to be investigated in depth:⁹ First, how the law handles these kinds of serious violations, and second, how effective the victim protection system is in providing the necessary support and protection. Indonesian law has established various regulations and policies to deal with gender-based violence,¹⁰ Including Law Number 23 of 2004 concerning the Elimination of Domestic Violence.¹¹ However, implementation and enforcement often encounter significant challenges, including a lack of support for victims, complicated legal procedures, and inadequate rehabilitation facilities.¹²

In addition to legal aspects, the protection of domestic violence victims includes various support services such as medical, psychological, and legal protection services.¹³ This case of acid attack underscores the urgent need for an evaluation of existing protection systems and the identification of areas that require improvement.¹⁴ This study aims to explore the legal implications of the case, assess the effectiveness of the available protections, and provide recommendations for future improvements to the legal system and victim protection.¹⁵

⁵ Dwi Ika Putri, "Victimological Study of Domestic Violence Crimes" Makassar: (2009).

⁶ Komnas Perempuan, *Annual Records of Violence Against Women* (Jakarta, 2022).

⁷ World Health Organization, "Violence against Women," 2021, n.d.

⁸ Abdurrachman, "Legal Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence in District Court Decisions as an Implementation of Victims' Rights."

⁹ S. Soekanto, S., & Mamudji, *Normative Legal Research: A Brief Overview* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2013).

¹⁰ Rahayu, "Dating Violence: A Study on the Experiences of Young Women."

¹¹ Z Ali, "Domestic Violence (DV) in the Perspective of Islamic Law and Positive Law," *Jurnal Al-Adalah*, 12(1), 2015, 45–58.

¹² Putri, "Victimological Study of Domestic Violence Crimes."

¹³ S. Arinanto, *Child Protection Law* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2017).

¹⁴ M. H. Asy'ari, "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Violence in the Household," *Jurnal Pembaharuan Hukum* 3, no. 2 (2016): 225–36.

¹⁵ Komnas Perempuan, *Annual Records of Violence Against Women*.



Acid violence, in particular, is an extremely cruel and devastating form of violence.¹⁶ These attacks are often carried out with the intent to maim, disfigure, or permanently scar the victim.¹⁷ The physical effects of acid attacks can be severe, causing deep burns, blindness, and lifelong disabilities.¹⁸ In addition, victims suffer profound psychological trauma, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).¹⁹

This acid attack case in Central Mamuju is a stark example of how domestic violence can escalate into horrific criminal acts.²⁰ It highlights the need for more effective prevention measures, stronger law enforcement, and more comprehensive support for victims.²¹ This research hopes to make a meaningful contribution to those efforts.²²

METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. Descriptive research aims to explain, describe, and map facts based on a certain perspective or frame of mind.²³ This type of research is descriptive qualitative research because this research emphasizes meaning and process, so that the data produced is in the form of descriptions rather than numbers in the form of written or oral words from observable informants. Therefore, in this study, an in-depth analysis was carried out to describe the initial analysis of the violence case. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with the victim, the victim's family, law enforcement officials, social workers, and representatives from non-governmental organizations involved in handling DV cases. In addition, data was also collected through document studies, including police reports, court files, medical records, and reports from related institutions.²⁴

¹⁶ M. Fakhri, *Gender Analysis and Social Transformation* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2012).

¹⁷ N. Hidayati, "Effectiveness of the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (UU PKDRT) in Handling Cases of Violence Against Wives.," *Jurnal Hukum Keluarga Islam* 2, no. 1 (2018): 77–94.

¹⁸ K. Nasution, "Legal Protection for Women Victims of Domestic Violence," *Jurnal Penelitian Hukum De Jure* 19, no. 1 (2019): 1–14.

¹⁹ Abdurrachman, "Legal Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence in District Court Decisions as an Implementation of Victims' Rights."

²⁰ Mardani, *Civil Procedure Law of Religious Courts* (Jakarta: Sinar Grafika, 2016).

²¹ I Wahyuni, "Gender-Based Violence: An Analysis of the Causes and Impacts," *Jurnal Sosiologi* 20, no. 2 (2015): 123–36.

²² Hidayati, "Effectiveness of the Law on the Elimination of Domestic Violence (UU PKDRT) in Handling Cases of Violence Against Wives."

²³ United Nations., "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)," 1979.

²⁴ Ishaq, *Metode Penelitian Hukum*, 1st ed. (Bandung: CV. Alfabeta, 2017).

Data analysis was carried out qualitatively using content analysis and thematic analysis techniques. Content analysis was used to identify patterns and trends in textual data, while thematic analysis was used to identify the main themes that emerged from the data. The data was analyzed carefully and systematically to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.²⁵

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The case of domestic violence involving a man in Central Mamuju District, West Sulawesi Province, who carried out an acid attack on his wife is a manifestation of the complex problems in the legal and social systems related to gender-based violence in Indonesia.²⁶ An in-depth analysis of this case reveals various aspects that need more attention, ranging from the law enforcement process to the effectiveness of victim protection.²⁷

A. Non-optimal Law Enforcement

The law enforcement process in this case presented a series of significant challenges.²⁸ Although the perpetrator was arrested and charged under Law No. 23/2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence, the case's journey through the justice system was not easy.²⁹ Some of the issues that arose include:³⁰

1. **Slowness of the Trial Process:** Delays in the trial process are a common problem in the Indonesian justice system.³¹ This can be caused by a variety of factors, such as a lack of resources, high workloads on judges and prosecutors, or lawyers' tactics to slow down the process. In domestic violence cases, these delays can exacerbate the suffering of victims, who may feel ignored or unsupported by the legal system.³²
2. **Difficulties in Evidence Collection:** Domestic violence often takes place behind closed doors, which makes gathering evidence difficult. Victims may be afraid or reluctant to report the incident, or there may be no eyewitnesses willing to testify.³³ In the case of acid attacks, forensic evidence is particularly important, but the collection and analysis of such evidence requires specialized expertise and adequate resources.³⁴

²⁵ Irwansyah, *Penelitian Hukum: Metode Pilihan & Praktik Penulisan Artikel*, 1st ed. (Yogyakarta: Mirra Buana Media, 2020).

²⁶ S. E. Merry, *Gender Violence: A Cultural Perspective* (Blackwell Publishing, 2009).

²⁷ Putri, "Victimological Study of Domestic Violence Crimes."

²⁸ E. Stark, *Coercive Control: How Men Entrap Women in Personal Life* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁹ M. P. Johnson, *A Typology of Domestic Violence: Intimate Terrorism, Violent Resistance, and Situational Couple Violence* (Northeastern University Press, 2008).

³⁰ Umar, "Review of Islamic Law and Law Number 23 of 2004 Concerning the Coercion of Sexual Relations between Husband and Wife Case Study in Bunde Village, Sreseh District, Sampang Regency."

³¹ L. Breines, W., & Gordon, "The New Scholarship on Family Violence. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society" 8, no. 3 (1983): 490–531.

³² S. L. Miller, *Victims as Offenders: The Paradox of Women's Violence in Relationships* (Rutgers University Press, 2005).

³³ R. P. Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy* (Free Press, 1979).

³⁴ A. Klein, *Practical Implications of Current Domestic Violence Research: For Law Enforcement, Prosecutors,*

3. **Inappropriate Punishment:** One of the main criticisms of domestic violence law enforcement in Indonesia is that the sentences imposed are often not commensurate with the severity of the violence committed.³⁵ This can be due to a variety of factors, including a lack of understanding of the impact of gender-based violence on judges and prosecutors, or the presence of gender bias in the justice system.³⁶ In the case of acid attacks, light sentences can send the wrong message to society that this kind of violence is not taken seriously.³⁷

B. Inadequate Victim Protection

In addition to problems in law enforcement, this case also highlights shortcomings in Indonesia's domestic violence victim protection system.³⁸ While there are various support services available to victims, such as medical, psychological, and legal services, access to these services is often limited or inadequate. Some of the issues that arise include:³⁹

1. **Limited Medical and Psychological Services:** Acid attack burns can cause severe physical and psychological damage. Victims need intensive medical care and long-term rehabilitation to overcome the physical impact of the attack.⁴⁰ In addition, they also need psychological support to overcome trauma and rebuild their lives.⁴¹ However, available medical and psychological services are often limited or unaffordable for many victims.⁴²
2. **Lack of Access to Legal Services:** Victims of domestic violence often face difficulties in accessing effective legal services to protect their rights. They may not have the resources to hire a lawyer, or may not know how to file a lawsuit or police report. In addition, they may face discrimination or stigmatization from law enforcement officers or court staff.⁴³

and Judges (National Institute of Justice, 2009).

³⁵ M. (Eds.) Yllo, K., & Bograd, *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse* (Sage Publications, 1988).

³⁶ L. E. Walker, *The Battered Woman* (Harper & Row, 1979).

³⁷ C. G. Buzawa, E. S., & Buzawa, *Domestic Violence: The Law and Practice* (Sage Publications, 2003).

³⁸ E. W. Gondolf, *Batterer Intervention Systems: Issues, Models, and Recommendations for Policy and Practice* (Sage Publications, 1998).

³⁹ Asy'ari, "Legal Protection for Victims of Sexual Violence in the Household."

⁴⁰ J. Ptacek, *Battered Women in the Courtroom: The Power of Judicial Responses* (Northeastern University Press, 1999).

⁴¹ J. G. Bancroft, L., & Silverman, *The Batterer as Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics* (Sage Publications, 2002).

⁴² Ptacek, *Battered Women in the Courtroom: The Power of Judicial Responses*.

⁴³ Bancroft, L., & Silverman, *The Batterer as Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics*.

3. **Poorly Coordinated Social Support:** Social support from family, friends, and the local community can be an important source of strength for victims of domestic violence.⁴⁴ However, this support is often uncoordinated or inadequate.⁴⁵ Victims may feel embarrassed or afraid to seek help from others, or may not know where to turn for support. In addition, they may face social isolation or rejection from the local community.⁴⁶

C. Social and Cultural Implications

The acid attack case in Mamuju Tengah also reflects broader social and cultural issues related to violence against women in Indonesia. Some implications to consider include:⁴⁷

1. **Unequal Gender Norms:** Domestic violence is often driven by unequal gender norms that place women in a lower position than men. These norms may justify or tolerate violence against women, or may make women feel ashamed or afraid to report the incident.⁴⁸
2. **Lack of Public Awareness:** Many people in Indonesia do not realize how widespread and serious the problem of domestic violence is. This lack of public awareness can hinder domestic violence prevention and response efforts or can make victims feel ignored or unsupported.⁴⁹
3. **Stigma and Discrimination:** Victims of domestic violence often face stigma and discrimination from the local community.⁵⁰ They may be labeled as "bad women" or "deserving of violence," or may be isolated from their family and friends. This stigma and discrimination can make it even harder for victims to recover from their trauma and rebuild their lives.⁵¹

⁴⁴ Buzawa, E. S., & Buzawa, *Domestic Violence: The Law and Practice*.

⁴⁵ M. Pence, E., & Paymar, *Education Groups for Men Who Batter: The Duluth Model* (Springer Publishing Company, 1993).

⁴⁶ Pence, E., & Paymar.

⁴⁷ Abdurrachman, "Legal Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence in District Court Decisions as an Implementation of Victims' Rights."

⁴⁸ Gondolf, *Batterer Intervention Systems: Issues, Models, and Recommendations for Policy and Practice*.

⁴⁹ Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy*.

⁵⁰ Klein, *Practical Implications of Current Domestic Violence Research: For Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, and Judges*.

⁵¹ Walker, *The Battered Woman*.

D. Strategies to Improve Law Enforcement and Victim Protection

To address the issues identified, a comprehensive strategy involving multiple parties and approaches is required. Some of the recommended strategies include:⁵²

1. **Justice System Reform:** The justice system needs to be reformed to speed up the trial process, improve the quality of evidence collection, and ensure that sentences are appropriate to the severity of the violence committed. These reforms should include training for law enforcement officers on gender sensitivity and domestic violence.⁵³
2. **Improved Support Services:** Support services for victims of domestic violence need to be improved and better coordinated.⁵⁴ This includes improving access to medical, psychological, and legal services, as well as developing programs to help victims rebuild their lives.⁵⁵
3. **Public Education and Awareness:** Public education and awareness programs need to be designed to change harmful attitudes and behaviors and promote gender equality and respect for human rights. These programs should target different groups in society, including men and women, children and adults, as well as law enforcement officers and court staff.⁵⁶
4. **Community Involvement:** The local community needs to be involved in domestic violence prevention and response efforts. This includes the formation of community support groups, increased reporting of violence cases, and the promotion of positive social norms.⁵⁷

CONCLUSION

The acid attack case committed by a husband in Central Mamuju Regency highlights serious challenges in addressing domestic violence in Indonesia. This incident reveals weaknesses in the legal system and victim protection mechanisms, including slow legal processes, inadequate coordination among government agencies and NGOs, and limited medical and psychological support services.

⁵² Putri, "Victimological Study of Domestic Violence Crimes."

⁵³ Dobash, R. E., & Dobash, *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy*.

⁵⁴ Miller, *Victims as Offenders: The Paradox of Women's Violence in Relationships*.

⁵⁵ Yllo, K., & Bograd, *Feminist Perspectives on Wife Abuse*.

⁵⁶ Breines, W., & Gordon, "The New Scholarship on Family Violence. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*."

⁵⁷ Bancroft, L., & Silverman, *The Batterer as Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics*.



Fundamental reforms are urgently needed, such as expediting legal procedures, improving the quality and integration of victim support services, and enhancing public education to reduce stigma and raise awareness of victims' rights. Continuous monitoring and evaluation are also essential to ensure the effectiveness of protection policies and programs.

Further research employing both qualitative and quantitative methods-including in-depth interviews with victims, perpetrators, law enforcement officers, and service providers-is necessary to deepen understanding and develop more targeted solutions. Through these measures, the domestic violence response system can become more responsive, effective, and capable of fostering a safer and fairer environment for all members of society.

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