**POLICY CAPACITY FRAMEWORK IN ACTION: A STUDY OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN INDONESIA**

\*1Syahribulan, 2Nur Fauzi Zaahirah, 3Andi Ahmad Yani

*1Department. of Administrative Science, Universitas Hasanuddin, Makassar, Indonesia*

*2Master of Public Administration, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia*

*3Department. of Administrative Science, Universitas Hasanuddin, Jl. Perintis Kemerdekaan Km 10, Makassar, Indonesia*

\*Correspondent author: syahribulanusunusi@gmail.com

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**Abstract**

Using the policy capacity framework to assess protection effectiveness, this study provides a compelling analysis of the challenges of  violence against women and children response in Makassar City, Indonesia. The study adopted a qualitative approach, including interviews and observations, to examine policy capacities through analytical, operational, and political dimensions. The results highlight a contrast between strong analytical capacity — a developed data system — and significant operational constraints characterized by resource  limitations. This study argues that the solution to these challenges is a multi-stakeholder collaboration. This game-changing program provides informed evidence that the engagement between NGOs and the  private sector dramatically increases the overall policy capacity. The study advocates for a more nuanced and holistic approach to mitigating violence against vulnerable populations, emphasizing the necessity of integrating analytics with collaborative and resource-efficient interventions.

Keywords: *policy capacity, gender-based violence, multi-stakeholder partnership, community-based institution, local governance*

**Introduction**

Gender-based violence (GBV) is widely acknowledged as a significant global issue affecting social, economic, and health domains, and it continues to be persistent (Hess, 2023; Memon, 2020; Cardoso et al., 2016; Buvinic et al., 2013). These ever-present issues take many forms, such as (physical and psychological trauma, sexual assault, and exploitation), continuing the cycle of suffering and inequity that disproportionately impacts women and children globally (Abrahams & Jewkes, 2010; Albutt et al., 2017; Amone-P'olak et al., 2018; Logie et al., 2023).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2020) women are the victims of such violence in staggering numbers, with one in three women experiencing physical or sexual violence and more than 54% of children victimized by some form of violence throughout their lives. This figure is primarily attributed to  Asia, where several million cases of GBV have been documented, and many more cases are only thought to be unreported and illustrate the widespread nature of GBV cuts across all levels of society (WHO, 2020). Particular research indicates that gender-based violence (GBV) is generally formed by sociocultural factors, including patriarchy, economic dependency, and a weak judicial system, which worsen these concerns (Alberto et al., 2021; Pranab et al., 2022).

The rise in violence against women and children signifies socioeconomic and systematic issues in the efficacy of government programs. However, we must acknowledge that existing governance models intended to address public difficulties have demonstrated inadequacy in adjusting to swift changes, resulting in governmental failures to understand complicated issues, implement appropriate actions, and coordinate effective responses (Tamara et al., 2022). These challenges lie in the issue of policy capacity, which determines how governments develop, implement, and evaluate policies (Matzopoulos & Myers, 2014). Hence, studies of Arayankalam & Krishnan (2021) and Guaita-Fernández et al. (2023) underscore that policy capacity is a key element of any governance system influencing the success of policy intervention across institutions.

The study by Howlet (2009) suggests that increasing social problems - like violence against women- indicates the state cannot address root causes, and the government tends to separate the issues from the legal approach. Fundamentally, violence against women constitutes a structural issue. The predominant manifestation of this deficiency occurs when governments encounter difficulties in intersectoral coordination and inadequately integrated initiatives, prevailing shortcomings in their comprehensive policy capacity (Kumari et al., 2024). These problems indicate an excellent necessity for enhanced cross-sectoral and multi-level collaboration among various societal sectors and government authorities to combat structural violence.

To address this issue, policy capacity refers to the government’s capacity to devise and execute policies grounded in its resources, institutional frameworks, and expertise (Edo et al., 2024; Valerio et al.). The efficacy of efforts designed to protect women and children from violence is predominantly contingent upon the policy capacity across all tiers of government. This research utilizes the policy capacities (Howlett, 2015; Wu et al., 2020) to examine the characteristics of policy constraints. Wu et al. (2018) define policy capacity as encompassing analytical capacity (the ability to acquire and utilize data), operational capacity the capacity to execute political actions), and political capacity (the qualitative ability to cultivate support and comprehend stakeholder interactions in the political arena).

Despite its clear relevance for service provision in Indonesia, where local governments have been given upward accountability to provincial and national levels and downward accountability to community-based organizations formed around GBV, research on GBV has seldom emphasized the importance of local policy capacity. National policies become actionable through local government; however, analysis of these programs often suggests that deficiencies in analytical ability, operational implementation, and political will make them weak (Peterman et al. 2022; Davidson et al. 2023; Lauri et al. 2023).

This study addresses the knowledge gaps by applying the concept of policy capacity to the Makasar City government in Indonesia. According to data from the Makassar Municipality Agency of Women and Children Protection (2024), there were 706 cases of violence reported this year, with 78% of victims being women. This data underscores the importance of local government in a decentralized governance ecosystem. However, effectively responding to GBV remains challenging due to financial constraints, issues related to coordination between sections and levels of government, and cultural reluctance regarding policy change.

The research aims to measure Makassar’s government policy capacity by comparing GBV and analyzing protection policies’ design, performance, and persistence. This included identifying strengths and weaknesses while providing practical suggestions for improvement. This study proposed a research question: “How does the policy capacity of the Makassar City government in responding gender-based violence against women and children?”

The subsequent sections will present a literature review that contextualizes the study within the theoretical framework of policy capacity, emphasizing the analytical, operational, and political components outlined by Wu et al. (2018). The research method will outline the qualitative approach to examine factors influencing policy capacity via semi-structured interviews and observation methods. The discussion section will ultimately reconcile findings with the theoretical framework, offering insights into improving local government capacities for effective GBV prevention.

**Literature Review**

*Introduction to Policy Capacity*

Policy capacity is the concept of government and non-governmental organizations' ability to effectively design, implement, and evaluate policies that respond to societal challenges and problems (Wu et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2022; Brenton et al., 2022). Its importance is in creating collaboration among different actors because gender-based violence, which is a transversal issue, will have intersections with others, and there will be a need for a co-creation of solutions from different sectors. Policy capacity is built not simply by throwing money at the problem; instead, multinational partnerships should be based on the importance of coordination around diverse organizations' areas of expertise in responding to gender-based violence prevention. While threatened communities are often included, those who can lend a hand — governments, international organizations, and the private sector can all provide collective approaches to address climate change issues that would be impossible for any individual or organization to do alone.

The proposed structure focuses on creating  mechanisms that improve the effectiveness of interventions and build greater trust and accountability between the stakeholders involved, leading to sustainable solutions to social and economic issues. Involving the community is a great way to collect lived experiences and insights to influence the design of more relevant  and applicable policies. Mechanisms for feedback must also be built in so that communities can voice concerns and contribute. Doing this not only improves the legitimacy of any policy decision-makers but encourages local community members to feel a sense of ownership, encouraging locals to take an  active part in implementing change and seeking equal rights for women.

Howlett (2015) introduces  the concept of policy capacity as an essential framework for understanding how governments can develop and implement policies. He also emphasizes that policy capacity is  multi-dimensional and comprises three interrelated dimensions: analytical, operational, and political. These three approaches to thinking about policy capacity offer a holistic view to evaluate the quality of policy processes and governments’  ability to respond to complex societal challenges. These dimensions offer a structure to comprehend how policy has been authoritative  and actualized.

Analytical capacity refers to policymakers’ ability to collect, analyze, and interpret data to inform decision-making, which is vital for effective policymaking (Wu et al., 2018). Competence in this ability is essential for evidence-based policy-making, as it facilitates the identification of social issues, the prediction of the outcomes, and the evaluation of policy alternatives.

Operational capacity refers to the institutional, human, and financial resources  required to execute a policy counterpart to analytical capacity (Wu et al., 2015). This includes project management skills, coordination  standards, and resource allocation systems. Operational capacity is especially relevant for addressing poverty and  inequality issues (Bhalla & Lapeyre, 1997; Elkins & Feeny2014). Besides, studies on disaster risk preparedness have shown that the implementation of an operational capacity, such as  resource mobilization and infrastructure building, is the key feature of reducing vulnerability to natural disasters and fostering resilient societies (Vidyani & Desiana, 2022; Chatterjee et al., 2015). Krueger et al. (2022) argue that governments necessitate efficient operations to develop and execute their policies coherently. It underscores the interdependence of analytical and operational competencies for data-driven decision-making and execution strategies.

The third essential component is political capability, which implies the ability of governments to establish coalitions, address stakeholders’ concerns, and get political support for projects (Wu et al., 2018). This essential skill is required to navigate political terrain, understand  power relations dynamics, and connect with citizens’ demand for a policy response. Wu et al. (2018) suggest that these political competencies are crucial for obtaining public support for the program and managing potential non-cooperation obstacles.

This particularly applies to sensitive social concerns, such as gender-based violence and child protection, where public support is essential to sustain enduring political commitment (Sørensen & Ansell, 2023; Hadzic & Tavits, 2019). Governments require robust political legitimacy for their policies by collaborating with many stakeholders, including civil society organizations, advocacy groups, and private enterprises (Ambrose et al., 2024).

It is essential to apply that degree of coordination to the next phase of the policy process, indicating the analytical, operational, and political capacities must collaborate to formulate a policy that can be effectively executed. The three interconnected capacities offer a comprehensive strategy for addressing intricate socioeconomic issues and facilitating the effective execution of governmental initiatives

*Policy Capacity and Gender-Based Violence Prevention*

Previous studies demonstrate a strong relationship between policy capacity and the efficacy of gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response systems. Policy capacity enables governmental institutions to formulate, implement, and evaluate policy initiatives to address complex social issues, including gender-based violence prevention programs (Gains & Lowndes, 2017; Khan & Hussain, 2024). A comprehensive policy capacity enables evidence to inform policymakers’ decisions, enhancing the effectiveness of initiatives to reduce gender-based violence in attaining their intended goals (Schleiff et al., 2020). The efficacy of these interventions often relies on the strengths of the underlying research. Despite specific studies examining the effectiveness of GBV prevention strategies (Cahlil et al., 2023; Khan & Hussain, 2024; Gains & Lowndes, 2017), substantial knowledge gaps remain. A significant issue is the quality of data reporting, especially with incidents of gender-based violence that frequently go underreported due to fear of stigma and retaliation, resulting in an underestimation of prevalence (Mazza et al., 1996; Lawry et al., 2011). This underscores the need for a comprehensive policy framework to enable evidence-based decision-making and prioritize the development of the necessary capacity to address GBV and improve survivor protection effectively. This illustrates that policy capacity is crucial for creating a practical legislative framework.

GBV prevention is crucial and faces many challenges, ranging from improving policy capacity to strengthening evidence-based  practice and the need for interventions that work. These components strengthen the capacity of communities to respond to  GBV support survivors and contribute to sustainable behavioral change (Cattaneo et al., 2020). To combat  these norms and behaviors, education and awareness programs are essential to build a safe space (Hilton, 2000). Consequently, education initiatives may not always work the same in some communities due to the lack of willingness or resources; hence, they are  not always implemented consistently (Howard-Grabman et al., 2017). Restructuring this information can shift responsibility to victims and members of the community  as opposed to holding the perpetrator responsible (White & Sienkiewicz). In addition, developing respect may overlook systemic issues such as economic inequality or institutional deficits that lead to the failure of GBV  prevention program implementation (O'Laughlin, 2016; Krishnan et al., 2008).

Further studies are required to conduct comprehensive interventions to solve local resource constraints and  inadequate institutional capabilities. There is a lack of current research to identify the appropriate approach of collaboration amongst government, NGO, private sector, and community-based organizations at the local level, which hinders the process of  creating effective interventions that are tailored to the multifaceted nature of GBV in specific cultural contexts (Faletti et al., 2024; Usmani et al., 2022; Rahayu, 2016). Therefore, this research will contribute to filling the research gaps by examining the collaborative approach from a local perspective to provide valuable insight that best meets local needs and challenges.

**Research Methods**

The research data was collected in Makassar City, the provincial capital of South Sulawesi, Indonesia, which has about 1,5 million (Statistical Bureau of Makassar, 2021). Being the capital of South Sulawesi  province and the economic, educational, and cultural center in Eastern Indonesia, and one of the most significant cities in Indonesia, Makassar deals with more complex social issues, mainly violence against women and children. Makassar City was selected for this research for two main reasons. First, according to the Municipal Makassar Agency of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection (DP3A), cases of violence against women and children have risen in the last five years (DP3A Makassar City, 2023). Second, given Makassar's status as a significant Indonesian city, it can be utilized to study policy capacity challenges in other urban settings.

The research employed a qualitative method, gathering data via interviews and observations from March to August 2024. Consequently, it offers a comprehensive examination of the socio-cultural and institutional dynamics in operation. In this study, informants were selected in a purposive approach and selected persons who have direct knowledge and experience related to the topic. The selection criteria include their roles, involvement, and understanding of the issue being studied, particularly those being engaged in the implementation of the program. Informants were identified based on institutional directories, expert recommendation, and initial scoping interviews.

Seven key informants were intentionally chosen based on their responsibilities and expertise in addressing violence against women and children, comprising four individuals from government institutions, one from community-based groups, and two from survivor advocacy. Semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders were used to provide context and to identify challenges and opportunities.

Thematic analysis is a systematic and collaborative process fundamental to ensuring the  validity and rigor of the study. Data triangulation within the study also supported the trustworthiness of the results. Thematic analysis began with transcribing the interviews verbatim to ensure that the participants’ narratives were captured  fully. Then, the data were systematically coded for themes and patterns  that emerged. The thematic orientation  and some identified themes were discussed in connection with the relevant literature on policy capacity while providing a primarily analytical, operational, and political perspective.

To mitigate potential biases, triangulation was employed by contrasting perspectives from many informants and corroborating findings through cross-referencing. This ensured that findings were not derived from a singular narrative but were corroborated by several lines of evidence. Team conversations were highly beneficial in contrasting the scope of analytical work when new perspectives emerged. Capable of comprehending how this collaborative works policy capacity assists in addressing violence against women and children in Makassar City. The results of this study can enhance city-level policy capability and offer essential recommendations for future policy development and execution.

This work is built on ethical principles that are a cornerstone of its credibility, trustworthiness, and protection of participants. The study process followed very elaborate internal  ethical principles. Participants were  informed about the study’s purpose, intervention, and risks. They would then pose questions, and consent would be received in written and verbal form so that it was clear their participation was  voluntary and information had been provided. This study reduces any potential risk  or discomfort to the subject. Sensitive themes were approached delicately, and participants were informed that withdrawing from the study would not have negative implications.

**Results and Discussion**

The competence with which policies are occupied must ultimately  take place within protective legal and other societal frameworks, e.g., blindness to the abortion issue. Yet the "power of policy capacity" hinges on the government’s understanding of how to tackle social and cultural  problems — particularly those associated with patriarchy. Despite their technical merits, policies often break apart simply because they have insufficient political and social support. This challenge can be met only in a broad societal context, establishing political and community leaders and civil society within  a legal and social system that protects the individual against abuses through greater policy capacity in both the private and public spheres.

Trio of the policy capacity of Makassar City Government dealing with gender-based violence will be examined in this section as follows:

*Analytical Capacity*

The cumulative analytical capacity of government agencies is determined by their performance and conduct within the policy process, which are additionally affected by management culture, organizational structure, political backdrop, and inter-agency relationships. It pertains to an organization’s capacity for gathering, structuring, and analyzing data to generate data-driven insights. This feature enables organizational policy functions to execute their roles, allowing managers to collect and analyze pertinent information.

Analytical skills are necessary to protect victims of abuse, including women and  children, in Makassar City. Several programs have been implemented referring to  the regulation of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Children Protection, which mandates the creation of technical units in the Women and Children Protection at every level of government to the Provincial and District levels, namely *Unit Pelaksana Teknis Daerah Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak* or UPTD PPA. This institution receives and actively encourages case reports from GBV victims, NGOs, and community organizations online or offline. It also provides psychological and health treatment, legal assistance, social rehabilitation, and empowerment.

These initiatives have not resulted in any lowering of violence,  including violence experienced in Makassar, which in 2022 recorded 487 instances and increased 620 cases in 2023. Children do not only get  bullied and get their custody on a study of UPTD PPA, but also sexual violence from their families. Yet, this type of experience will create various forms of emotional and  mental health problems in the longer term — ranging from simple malaise in daily life to severe behavioral disorders. To fill this gap, the Municipal DP3A Agency initiated the development of a community-based organization at the village (*kelurahan)* level that can provide quick protection to victims and contribute to preventing GBV through community leaders’ involvement. This community-based organization, called Community Shelter, has been formed in 70 villages (*kelurahan*) in Makassar since 2016. It provides community0-shelter as close and easily

One of the  active community shelters is in Makassar City's Pattingalloang Village, which has been working collaboratively with DP3A since 2016; it was great for these unreported acts to be an actual response to violence. This approach allows residents to live nearer shelter resources,  with immediate access to intervention, monitoring, and sustainable solutions to community needs. Pattingalloan Shelter has been a compelling example of integrating community engagement with service to  be delivered. That strategy broadens access to services and helps ensure  victims receive assistance as quickly as possible. Moreover, these shelters offer local stakeholders, including community leaders, the chance to establish a more inclusive and practical framework for addressing violence against women and children.

Establishing a community shelter, such as in Pattingaloang Village, has been recognized as a component of the solution to tackling unreported violence cases. Those shelters are designed to involve community members as managers and ensure more extensive participation in the delivery of services. Through the Municipal DP3A Agency and UPTD PPA, the city government quickly responds to violence cases by providing shelter (*Rumah Singgah*) for offenders under Pattingalloan Village, a model village of understanding at the grassroots level. The program focuses on incident monitoring at the ground level and providing faster resolutions to the impacted individuals.

Enhancing the effectiveness of these efforts is a critical capability arising from analytical capacity. A government capable of assessing existing programs, identifying emerging needs, and designing specific interventions requires consistent data collection and sound inter-agency coordination. The Municipal DP3A Agency and the UPTD PPA collaborate with community shelters and other stakeholders to conduct data-informed action. The number of cases handled by the Pattingalloang Shelter (see Table 1) illustrates how those more localized forms of action have been made and made where the community can create programs as a supplement to what the government does to ensure vulnerable group coverage in Makassar City

**Table 1. Number of Violence Case Reports at the Pattingalloan *Shelter* in 2023**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | Type of Hardness | Year 2023 | | |
| **Adults** | Total | Male | Female |
| Domestic Violence | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Violence against women | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Victims of Drugs, Psychotropic and addictive substances | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | 43 | 8 | 35 |
| Total Adult Violence | 72 | 11 | 61 |
| **Children** | Child abuse | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Domestic violence | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Children in conflict with the law | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Children in emergency situations | 43 | 8 | 35 |
| Child marriage | 72 | 11 | 61 |
| Total Child abuse | 24 | 9 | 15 |

Source: Pattingalloan Shelter Annual Record (2023)

Table 1 shows several cases that are managed by distinguishing between types of violence against adults and children: physical violence, psychological abuse, sexual violence, neglect or abandonment, exploitation, and abduction. This categorization refers to the reporting format created by the Municipal DP3A Agency. Cases handled successfully are reflected in evaluation reports supervised by the staff of the Office, which is intended to make shelters accountable for their operations. It shows that the UPTD PPA and the shelters have been collecting and processing data correctly through cooperation with related parties. Pooling this available data allows for a complete assessment of policy options — it is where an organization  such as Pattingalloan Community Shelter displays its ability to analyze all relevant aspects. This aligns with Wu, Ramesh, and Howlett’s (2017) policy capacity perspectives; success is measured with sound data to inform policy decisions.

Informant M verified that the Municipal DP3A Agency, UPTD PPA and the Pattingalloan community-based shelter possess robust analytical capabilities, as stated that:

*“There was also a collaborative  way to collect and process data. Data were collected from various sources, such as community reporting, police records, and hospital and shelter or safe house  records. This encompassed thorough data processing and analysis to identify existing challenges, evaluate the effects of present policies, and establish a foundation for decision-making and future program development. Engaging with stakeholders was crucial for guaranteeing data accuracy and producing targeted analysis to tackle the difficulties we encountered.”*

The Head of UPTD PPA emphasized the necessity of aggregating data from many sources, collaborating with community input to identify concerns, and utilizing police records (surveillance), medical data, and shelter reports to evaluate and influence policies and decision-making. The Pattingalloan Shelter also pointed out the importance of shelters in collecting data at the village level; for this number of unreported cases are comprehensively recorded, accessed, and communicated to the Municipal DP3A Agency and UPTD PPA, thereby systematically making its way as information until it reaches the person in charge. As informant S stated:

*"Each reported case, whether through direct reporting or field identification, was systematically documented, followed by an initial assessment to understand the circumstances. The assessment results were then submitted to the Department of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (DP3A) and the Technical Implementation Unit for Women and Children Protection (UPTD PPA) for further analysis and appropriate follow-up actions."*

Furthermore, the Head of the Women's Protection Division at the Municipal DP3A Agency emphasized the strategic use of data in formulating protection policies and programs.

"*Policy and program formulation was always based on empirical data and  field evidence. With a focus on violence cases and issues  that affect women at large, we undertook a deep dive into trends, patterns, and causative factors. This analytical framework was the basis for setting priorities, allocating resources,  and crafting targeted interventions*.”

Mapping service coverage and analyzing case trends enable the  Municipal DP3A Agency to identify the areas that need more resources to be allocated or where prevention activities should be scaled up. Through this data collaboration  across partners, evidence-based targeted policies and interventions can be designed to increase the effectiveness of the city’s women’s empowerment and children’s protection programs.

This analysis revealed the formidable  analytical capability of Wu et al. (2018), as the government is the “frontline” agent, which connects not only to know problems in society but also to take actions based on empirical data and scientific backgrounds. This resonates with the policy capacity framework that focuses on analytical  capacities related to the evidence-based making of policy decisions and public policy implementation (Vince et al., 2024; Washington, 2022).

*Operational Capacity*

The ability of government institutions to operate  effectively is a key dynamic in implementing effective policy. This requires an adequate distribution of human resources, financial resources, and infrastructure. This capacity is contingent on internal organizational structuring and the dominant political context  that determines the efficacy of policies in practice. Key components  of this system are effective communication channels, streamlined program delivery mechanisms, and sound management of financial assets. Pathways are interdependent and work to ensure that policy is enforced to maximize  the impact on efficiency.

This study shows that the Municipal DP3A Agency and UPTD PPA Makassar City have the ability to operate, which also means they  have an operational dimension to respond to cases. The UPTD PPA also conducted intensive training and competency tests to produce officers who can provide specialization in helping victims. Their unique training allows them to provide lifesaving assistance, legal  aid, court-related mediation, psychological services, and socio-psychological rehabilitation.

According to  informant M, Head of UPTD PPA:

*“Being the call to protect women and children, we trained and mentored our staff and partners to do the job with the required competence. We also stretch the existing budget to provide  victims with safe houses and critical infrastructure. We  are also improving our temporary and permanent work processes for internal and external coordination and service."*

This commitment is also conveyed by Informant SA, a staff from UPTD PPA, whose statement elaborated that regular training and actual facilities support victim assistance adequately. As informant SA states that:

"*As staff at UPTD, we receive regular training to increase our capacity to assist victims. We also have adequate facilities and infrastructure to carry out our duties. Communication and coordination between fields are also well established so that we can provide comprehensive services to victims*."

The services provided by the Municipal DP3A Agency and PPA UPTD respond to emergency needs and empower victims to  break out of a cycle of violence. Through holistic support, especially protection, the institution enhances the ability of victims  to endure their harsh situations and to heal with resilience.

The finding shows that the budget concern is one of  the main challenges related to GBV issues in the operational capacity of the Makassar City government, particularly in terms of anticipating support for community shelters. Community-level interventions, like those carried out in the village of Pattinggaloan, effectively reduce violent cases. However, the social aspect of their work and a tight budget create challenges. Thus, there is a gap and an urgent need for increased funding at all levels, as these financial limitations severely hinder the provision of vital technical and operational support needed for case management at the  local level.

Whereas the Municipal DP3A Agency has funded villages to start  a community settlement, budgets for these institutions are still lacking. There is merely 0.000006% of the overall budget office (IDR 1,710,000 is USD 109 every 3 months), which  only covers basic operational costs which still a huge funding gap in supporting community shelters’ programs. This deficiency has been addressed through various corporate  social responsibility (CSR) programs from private institutions in the Pattingaloang village area.

State-owned enterprises, including the Energy Company of Pertamina and Bank Tabungan Negara (BTN), regularly have funded women empowerment and child protection  programs at community-based women’s shelters. Pattingaloang Community Shelter itself has already been able to establish a community school to provide space for victims of domestic violence to find psychological support and sporting activities that build their confidence through these CSR funds. The school also conducts  training programs, such as parenting and capacity-building initiatives. In addition, Pertamina has also provided cooking equipment to victims to achieve economic independence.

The Pattingaloang Shelter uses an integrated project management method that covers planning, allocation, and management of resources, stakeholder  engagement, and budget tracking. The Pattingaloang is also worried about involving service users in staffing  the shelter. for example, community-driven initiatives of parenting training programs that work to implement  positive caregiving practices (963). This "top to bottom" strategy is one  skill that guarantees straight policymaking lines with clear targets. The shelter collaborates with the Municipal DP3A Agency to resolve cases  and undergo routine policies and procedures. These community-based shelters also have the advantage of accessibility since they are found in villages, where community members can readily access  services. As revealed by the manager of the Pattingalloang Shelter (N) who states that:

“*We are a community-based institution that aims to resolve violence cases quickly and on target following the procedures set out by the DP3A. While budget limitations restrict us, the support of CSR  and community participation in parenting activities also makes them agents in protecting* women and children.”

This was confirmed by the informant NH, the Head of the Division of Women's Protection at the Municipal DP3A Agency,  who stated that all resources from UPT PPA and community-based shelters need to be optimized with the rising number of cases. As informant NH states that:

"*We still encourage optimization in UPTD and shelters as our service units, both human resources, budgets,  infrastructure, and service systems. Stakeholders and communities are also found to play critical roles in becoming involved in ascertaining efficiency and effectiveness in protecting women and  children.*

The benefits of these efforts are evident in the testimony of a survivor of violence who credited the shelter with saving her life. An informant (A), who is a survivor of violence and  received services from the community shelter, revealed that:

“*The shelter helped me. We  [can also] report violence as soon as possible. Legal and psychological  counseling followed immediately. The shelter manager also assisted me in obtaining [small] business capital after  the incident to be economically* *independent.”*

The community-based shelter model represents a critical approach by leaning on the gravity of social capital to strengthen the protection of women and children who are vulnerable to domestic violence. The community shelters play a pivotal role as protective and empowerment  institutions by engaging with the community for early identification and response. This model is a local  solution where citizens provide a system to help those in need in a specific area with limited financial support from the government.

The study’s findings related to operational capacity are connected to  the idea of policy capacity outlined by Wu et al. (2015;2018). Makassar City Government coordination among resources in terms of personnel, budget allocation,  and infrastructure to implement a policy in protecting women and children is required. Such an approach is consistent with the  policy capacity framework. It  links to the research of Vince et al. (2024), focusing on operational capabilities and the need to translate policy objectives  into actionable programs and interventions.

*Political Capacity*

There is a close correlation between political legitimacy and policy capacity, the latter being the  ability of an institution to mobilize and deploy its political resources. According to Wu et al. (2018), political legitimacy is the degree to which  individuals believe government policies or actions are fair and reasonable. Legitimacy, in this sense, manifests whenever policies reflect the values, norms, and laws of  the broader society, garnering increased support and compliance from the population at large. In contrast, in the case of  policies perceived to be illegitimate, significant resistance or even opposition to implementation may occur. Legitimacy is the formal legal information all stakeholders agree on + the social and political acquiescence that makes it  very easy to implement policies.

This is considered a standard balance of policy capacity and legitimacy to form a technical unit of  UPTD PPA. Legally, it is based on Law Number 23 of 2014 regarding the Regional Government and  on the ministry regulation of the Minister of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection’s Regulation Number 4 of 2018 on the guidance for establishing the regional technical implementation unit to protect women and children. These policies demonstrate a strong legal framework and a comprehensive approach to the prevention  of violence against women and children.

At the city of Makassar level, this policy approach  also includes some community-level initiatives, which can be found in the document of The Makassar Medium-Term Development Plan. It also emphasizes the forming of gender working groups, protection of vulnerable populations, and development of child-friendly villages to highlight how these policies are being localized according to  local dynamics. This partnership reinforces public and political will to prevent the violence against women and  children in Makassar. This was  confirmed by the Informant AS stating that:

*"A solid legal basis supports our protection policies and programs. We work using the Domestic Violence Elimination Act, Child  Protection Act, and Human Trafficking Criminal Act. At the regional level,  we also follow regional policies, rules, and regulations about protecting women and children. This legal foundation allows us to  engage and collaborate with various stakeholders.* A *similar legal  ordering facilitates smoother cross-party coordination and collaboration. One such method can be where defined  legal parameters can be imaginatively coordinated with law enforcement agencies and prosecution offices in case-management processes".*

Additionally, it is essential to strengthen the collaboration among various stakeholders addressing GBV issues, including community organizations, academic institutions, private entities, and NGOs. This effort carries greater legitimacy and embodies a range of perspectives. Such a collaborative partnership will enhance political legitimacy and facilitate the effective implementation of programs. Collaboration was enhanced by coordinating with many stakeholders, including law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, correctional facilities, judicial systems, healthcare institutions, and community-based shelters.

UPTD PPA Makassar exemplifies an integrated approach to addressing policy matters by consolidating efforts to settle violent crime incidents. Its collaboration with university-based task teams to combat sexual violence constitutes an innovative strategy for addressing possible issues proactively.

Therefore, by combining policy capacity, policy legitimacy, and inter-organizational collaboration, this interconnected approach provides a strong foundation to address complex social  issues such as violence against women and children. It shows how theoretical  concepts of policy capacity are expressed in actions that happen on the ground in communities, with the potential for interventions to succeed with greater reach and acceptability.

The success of the Pattingaloang community-based initiative shows strong commitment among stakeholders in Makassar City, aimed at assisting women and children. A cooperative strategy for public service delivery via multi-actor collaboration involving governmental bodies, non-governmental institutions, and the business sector.

This cooperation is supported by the partnership of the Pattingaloang community-based shelter, the DP3A Agency, and UPTD PPA, which implement an integrated program to protect women and children  in Makassar. The collaboration also involves private sector stakeholders like Pertamina and BTN Bank and NGOs such as the Legal Aid Institute of Indonesian Women’s Association for Justice (LBH APIK), Pabatta Ummi Foundation, and the Foundation  for Community Empowerment Study (YKPM). Civil society organizations were critical and represented the women’s and children's  protection policies in the cities. Informant N addresses the application of stakeholder  collaboration:

*" We understand that shelters can’t just do things alone. Through active partnerships with relevant government agencies, other community-based shelters, and private institutions, we can offer survivors a spectrum of services, such as legal assistance, counseling, and economic empowerment. This collaborative approach  provides the best protection and support, enable survivors to leave violence and begin their recovery process."*

The success of the collaboration relies on effective communication between the diverse stakeholders despite their varying interests. This multi-faceted approach that is focused on victim protection and community welfare is carried out in Pattingalloang Village. The partnership between the Pattingaloang Shelter and the Municipal Agency DP3A further strengthens advocacy efforts for children’s protection and empowerment at the community level. At the village level, the Pattingalloan community-based shelter has managed to collaborate with non-governmental actors and private sectors such as: Pertamina, BTN Bank, and several NGOs such as the Legal Aid Institute of Indonesian Women Association for Justice (LBH APIK), Pabbata Ummi Foundation (YAPTA-U) or the foundation for Study of Community Empowerment (YKPM). They are civil society-based organizations advocating women and children protection policies in Makassar City. Multi-actor collaboration leads to synergetic efforts between public and private sectors to provide qualitative public services.

The collaboration is between a community-based shelter, the DP3A Agency, and UPTD PPA, which runs an integrated women and children protection program in Makassar City. Although they expressed different interests, communication among government bodies, community shelter managers, private sector players, and NGOs is critical to making things work. This collaboration is about protecting victims and community welfare in Pattingalloan Village. Furthermore, Pattingalloan Shelter collaborates with the Municipal Agency of Women Empowerment and Child Protection to strongly advocate for the empowerment and protection of children at community levels.

The political stakes are pretty high in the successful implementation of Makassar City's DP3A, UPTD PPA, and Pattingalloan Community-based Shelter—which presented similarity with what Wu et al. (2015) refer to as policy capacity theory. (2018). They do so by crystallizing public and political support, exercising cooperation, and conferring political legitimacy. (AS), as the Head of DP3A Agency, explained that his agency already had a solid legal basis to conduct protection programs at national and regional levels, which makes all of this program justifiable and can help to build partnerships with other stakeholders. Such a collaboration will strengthen public and political commitment to safeguard women and children in Makassar. AS stated that:

*"Strong legal frameworks support our protection policies and programs. At the national level, we operate beneath our Domestic Violence Elimination Act, Child Protection Act, and Human Trafficking Criminal  Act. At the same time, we are governed by regional regulations at the regional level that protect  women and children. This is key to our working with a wide range of stakeholders. Many have emphasized a common legal background for better coordination and cooperation. Case management processes, for instance, are done much more efficiently with law  enforcement agencies and prosecution offices because legal parameters are well defined"*

Collaborative initiatives in Makassar are essential for strengthening public and governmental commitments toward GBV prevention. They aim to provide a more cohesive solution for protecting and supporting GBV victims, leveraging the strengths of diverse stakeholders and their joint efforts in a coordinated approach at both institutional and interpersonal levels. This line of thought follows the logic of policy capacity, as Wu et al. (2018), underlined that this encourages political actors, community leaders, and civil society leaders to construct an enabling legal and social environment. This is also related to a study of Kesumaningsih et al. (2023), who emphasize the importance of collaboration between local government and broad stakeholders, such as NGO, the private sector, and mass media, to prevent violence against women in Indonesian urban contexts.

The focus on political capacity is very much  in line with the policy capacity framework. It aligns with the study of Khan & Hussain (2024), which provides evidence about the importance of political capabilities, such as public engagement, as a countermeasure to countering undesirable  policy resistance. In Makassar, it has meant building political capacity by creating robust  legal frameworks and strategic partnerships with NGOs and the private sector. This improves  the government’s capacity to address socio-cultural impediments and bolster the protection doctrine relevant to women and children.

**Conclusion**

This study emphasizes the need  to improve policy for violence against women and children as an issue that must be resolved in the City of Makassar. Applying the three dimensions of the policy capacity framework — analytic, operational, and political — has provided a nuanced analysis of these challenges  and opportunities to strengthen the protective measures.

Our findings highlight a complex structural landscape of the policy capacity of  the Makassar City Government in using social problems, especially those related to GBV. For example, the Municipal DP3A Agency, UPTD PPA, and the Pattingaloang community—based shelter in Makassar City can demonstrate good—quality data with high analytic capacity thanks to these systems to collect and analyze data. Yet their capacity to operate is constrained  by budgets and resources. However, strategic collaborations with the private sector and some non-government organizations have effectively bridged these  gaps, highlighting the critical role of multistakeholder interactions.

On the  other hand, opportunities to maintain and fully defend these initiatives have emerged within a consolidated political capacity, including robust legal frameworks and strong public support. But progress has lagged and been obstructed by ingrained sociocultural boundaries, including patriarchal norms and early marriage practices. That barrier poses  significant challenges for the political enactment.

Accordingly, our findings have implications for understanding policy capacity theoretically by exploring the sociocultural influences, decision-making processes, and stakeholder engagement in formulating policy responses to GBV and child protection.

In addition, we found that traditional models of  policy capacity likely need to be adapted to recognize local social norms and economic inertia that shape the development and delivery of well-meaning proactive responses. We argue that socio-cultural factors should  be central to examining the capacity of states to develop effective policies, and we contend that they reflect conceptual approaches that underlie many policy capacity approaches.

This indicates more complexity, including the importance of multi-factor coalitions and citizen engagement in increasing political  capacity and expansion beyond economic constraints. These valuable insights added to the literature on policy capacity by highlighting the need for locally contextual body adaptations and collaborative responses to address complex social problems.

Despite the critical contributions of the current study, we acknowledge several limitations. The findings may have limited generalizability to other cultural and economic contexts  due to the geographic focus on Makassar City. However, the dependence on qualitative data from key stakeholders interviewed may introduce bias and may not reflect the broader  range of views in the community. Furthermore, our focus on policy capacity might have placed less weight on other important drivers like technology  or international cooperation.

These limitations point to pathways for future research, such as extending the  geography, including quantitative data, and examining other variables affecting policy capacity to address violence against women and children. We also suggest that future research explore the cultural dimensions of policy implementation and capacity to ensure that protective measures are culturally relevant and practical.

**Conflict of Interest Declaration:**

The author declares no conflicts of interest related to this research, authorship, or manuscript publication. No financial, professional, or personal relationship has influenced the content or findings presented in this study.

**Informed Consent Declaration:**

This study involved human participants, and informed consent was obtained from all individuals before participating. Informants were provided with detailed information on the research, procedure, procedure, potential risks, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Confidentiality and anonymity will be strictly maintained under ethical guidelines. This research complies with relevant institutional and international ethical standards for human subject research.

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