

**CRIMINOLOGICAL STUDY OF ILLEGAL RACING BY CHILDREN
(Study at Medan Police Headquarters)**

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ABSTRACT

Illegal racing is a phenomenon that often poses risks and dangers to the community. This practice involves illegal racing on highways, often carried out at high speeds and without regard for traffic regulations. In addition to endangering the lives of drivers and others around them, illegal racing also damages road infrastructure and disrupts public order and security. The phenomenon of illegal racing, as a form of juvenile delinquency, will become a major problem if not addressed quickly and appropriately. Illegal racing is an act prohibited and regulated by positive law in Indonesia. This illegal racing causes fear and concern in the community because the risks faced are very high, ranging from dealing with the police, accidents resulting in disability and even death. The research problem formulation in this study is what is the modus operandi of illegal racing carried out by children in Medan City, what are the factors causing illegal racing carried out by children, and what solutions can be provided to prevent illegal racing carried out by children.

The illegal racing methods practiced by children in Medan are essentially similar to those in other regions: groups, nighttime until early morning, and utilizing deserted public roads. However, there are distinct urban characteristics, such as the use of social media to schedule times and locations, the involvement of motorcycle communities or gangs, and the primary goal of seeking thrills. The factors contributing to illegal racing among children are influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. Internally, curiosity, adrenaline, a search for identity, and a desire for peer recognition are the main triggers. Externally, there is a lack of parental supervision and weak social control within the community. The Medan Police's solution to preventing illegal racing among children involves a repressive, preventive, and educational approach.

Keywords: Criminology, Illegal Racing, Children.

A. Introduction

One of the most common crimes committed by children is illegal racing. Illegal racing is a phenomenon that often poses risks and dangers to the community. This practice involves illegal racing on highways, often conducted at high speeds and without regard for traffic laws. In addition to endangering the lives of drivers and others in the vicinity, illegal racing also damages road infrastructure and disrupts public order and safety.¹The phenomenon of illegal racing, a form of juvenile delinquency, will become a major problem if not addressed promptly and appropriately. Illegal racing is prohibited and regulated by Indonesian law.²This illegal racing has caused fear and concern in the community. The risks involved are significant, ranging from dealing with the police to accidents resulting in disability and even death.³

Criminal provisions regarding this matter are regulated in Article 297 in conjunction with Article 115 letter b of Law Number 22 of 2009 concerning Traffic and Road Transportation, which states that: any person who drives a Motorized Vehicle racing on the Road as referred to in Article 115 letter b shall be punished with imprisonment for a maximum of 1 (one) year or a maximum fine of Rp. 3,000,000.00 (three million rupiah).

The illegal racing examined in this study is illegal racing that occurs in the Medan City area, which is still under the supervision of the Medan Police. Illegal racing is a persistent problem, with the same incidents occurring every year, and the perpetrators are generally children. Of course, this raises the question of why this crime has never been resolved, and this crime continues to occur, even though there is a police force that has the authority to take action.

Therefore, it's important to examine the Medan Police's performance in addressing this issue, given that these crimes can endanger the child and other road users. It's also important to examine the motives behind these crimes and the extent of the efforts the Medan Police have made. Based on this description, it will be carried out research entitled "Criminological Study of Illegal Racing Crimes Committed by Children (Study at Medan Police Headquarters).

B. Research Methods

¹Clara Jennifer Manullang. "Analysis of Strain Criminology Theory in Illegal Racing Cases" Unes Law Review Journal, Vol. 5 No. 4, June 2023. Page 3709

²Ni Putu Rai Yuliartini. "Criminological Study of Juvenile Delinquency in the Phenomenon of Illegal Racing in the Jurisdiction of the Buleleng Police Department" Udayana Master of Law Journal, Vol. 7 No. 3, 2014. Page 396

³Ibid., Page 397

A study cannot be called research if it does not have a research method.⁴ Research methods are one of the factors of a problem that will be discussed. The study was conducted using secondary data which was analyzed qualitatively using the Desk Research Method. The literature materials used in writing this research are several references originating from research results, studies, and reviews of several writings which are then summarized into a scientific paper.⁵

C. Discussion

1. Illegal racing mode carried out by children in Medan City

According to the Medan Police, the illegal racing methods used by children in Medan generally follow similar patterns as in other areas, but there are some unique characteristics that have developed in urban areas like Medan. Illegal racing typically occurs at night and into the early morning, especially on main roads or areas relatively free of public transportation.⁶ Some of the modes that are often used include:⁷

1. Gathering: Children usually gather at specific points such as ring roads, flyovers, or straight, wide roads. From these gathering points, they then determine the race route.
2. Betting Many illegal races involve wagers of money, motorbikes, or other valuables. This betting is a major draw for both participants and spectators.
3. Racing is generally conducted by racing two motorcycles over a certain distance, similar to drag racing. The winner is determined by who reaches the finish line first.
4. Modifying Vehicles The vehicles used are usually modified, both in terms of the engine (bore up, racing exhaust, replacing the carburetor) and the body (reducing the vehicle's weight).
5. Provoke the opponent Before the race begins, children often provoke or challenge other groups to race. This usually results in large crowds.

⁴ Hanifah, I., Hariyanto, H., Ginting, L., Koto, I., & Syafriana, R. (2026). Legal Protection of Indonesia's Fisheries from Foreign Investment: A Social-State Approach. *Jurnal IUS Kajian Hukum dan Keadilan*, 14(1).

⁵ Simatupang, R. S. A., Hanifah, I., & Mansar, A. (2025). The Concept of Restitution as Legal Accountability in the Crime of Human Trafficking. *Pena Justisia: Media Komunikasi dan Kajian Hukum*, 24(1), 3554-3462.

⁶ Results of the interview with Briptu Jhona Veri Natalio Pinem as the Criminal Investigation Unit of Medan Police, September 1, 2025, at 20.00 WIB

⁷ Results of the interview with Briptu Jhona Veri Natalio Pinem as the Criminal Investigation Unit of Medan Police, September 1, 2025, at 20.00 WIB

6. Convoy There is also a convoy mode, where the race is carried out in the form of a group of motorbikes that speed together while blocking the road and disturbing other road users.
7. Have informants The perpetrators usually have "informants" or lookouts who signal the arrival of the police. Once there's a raid, they immediately scatter into small alleys.

2. Factors that cause illegal racing by children

According to the Medan Police, the factors that cause illegal racing among children in Medan City are quite complex and are interrelated with social, psychological and environmental aspects, including:⁸

- a. First, social factors and prestige are key drivers. Many children are influenced by their peers to participate in races as a means of proving themselves, demonstrating courage, or simply to be seen as great in their group.
- b. Second, minimal parental supervision allows children to freely use motorized vehicles without supervision. This lack of family attention creates an opportunity for children to seek a livelihood on the streets.
- c. Third, the lack of official channels for channeling automotive hobbies encourages children to indulge their passion for racing on public roads. Official circuits remain limited, while legal automotive activities are not always easily accessible.
- d. **Economic factors and betting** also has an impact. Some children get involved in illegal racing not only as a hobby, but also because of the promise of quick profits, whether money or goods.
- e. The influence of social media This trend is also strengthened, as many children are motivated to create content or go viral through illegal racing.
- f. Lack of legal awareness and low understanding of traffic safety It also makes children consider illegal racing as mere entertainment, even though the risks are very high.

Finally, urban environments that have wide and quiet roads at night, such as the Ringroad or flyovers in Medan, indirectly provide spaces that are considered ideal for racing.

3. Solutions to prevent illegal racing by children

Prevention is better than cure, as the saying goes. However, in practice, we often become careless, only realizing the negative event or incident has already occurred. This is also

⁸Results of the interview with Briptu Jhona Veri Natalio Pinem as the Criminal Investigation Unit of Medan Police, September 1, 2025, at 20.00 WIB

true for juvenile delinquency. For example, if we recognize that peer groups are a dominant factor contributing to juvenile delinquency, then every parent, teacher, or other relevant party should take preventative measures, including supervising children's playgroups. However, children are often able to outwit or deceive those who care for or supervise them, as in cases of drug abuse among adolescents.⁹

Efforts to overcome juvenile delinquency must be carried out as early as possible, because based on a study it was found that 80% of delinquent children if not handled properly will develop into criminals in adulthood. On the other hand, crime or juvenile delinquency itself is very complex, therefore many theories or approaches discuss the problem of juvenile delinquency. In the perspective of criminology, experts often discuss it through biological, psychological, and social approaches. In the current modern era there is a tendency that environmental factors can be one of the dominant factors causing juvenile delinquency. In addition, environmental factors can also be used as a means (solution) in efforts to overcome juvenile delinquency.¹⁰

From a criminological perspective, many theories and concepts have been proposed to find solutions to combat juvenile delinquency. Preventive, repressive, and curative approaches should be implemented appropriately to achieve maximum results.¹¹

The Medan Police have taken several steps to curb the rise in illegal racing involving children. Their solutions are generally repressive, preventative, and educational, including:¹²

a. Raids and Night Patrols

- 1) Police routinely conduct raids at points that are often used as illegal racing arenas, such as the Ring Road, flyovers, and main roads in Medan City.
- 2) Motorbikes caught in raids, especially those that have been modified, are immediately confiscated.

b. Legal Enforcement

- 1) Children caught participating in illegal racing are given guidance.

⁹Sarwini. "Juvenile Delinquency: Causality and Efforts to Overcome It" Jurnal Perspektif Vol. XVI No. 4, 2011, Page 249

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Results of the interview with Briptu Jhona Veri Natalio Pinem as the Criminal Investigation Unit of Medan Police, September 1, 2025, at 20.00 WIB

- 2) For serious cases (for example involving large bets or endangering others), the perpetrator can be prosecuted according to the Traffic Law.
- c. Guidance and Calling of Parents
 - 1) Children who are caught are usually not immediately imprisoned, but are given guidance.
 - 2) Their parents were summoned to the police station to take responsibility and supervise the home.
 - d. Establishment of an Official Street Race Arena (Legal Street Race)
 - 1) Medan Police are coordinating with the local government and the Indonesian Motor Association (IMI) to provide an official forum for young people who enjoy racing.
 - 2) With the existence of a legal racing arena, children are guided to channel their hobbies safely.
 - e. Education in Schools and Society
 - 1) Police are conducting outreach to schools about the dangers of illegal racing.
 - 2) Provide traffic education so that children understand the legal and safety risks of illegal racing.
 - f. Strengthening the Role of Society

The city police are inviting community leaders, parents, and motorcycle communities to participate in supervising and providing guidance to teenagers.
 - g. Community-Based Preventive Program

Several creative steps, such as official motorcycle modification competitions, automotive activities, and dialogue patrols, have been taken to bring the police closer to young people.

D. Conclusion

The illegal racing practices practiced by children in Medan are essentially similar to those practiced in other areas: groups, nighttime and early morning, and utilizing deserted public roads. However, there are distinct urban characteristics, such as the use of social media to schedule times and locations, the involvement of motorcycle communities or gangs, and the primary goal of seeking sensation, recognition, and betting. This suggests that the illegal racing phenomenon in Medan reflects not only the deviant behavior of individual children but is also

influenced by urban environmental factors, lifestyles, and youth culture, which tend to seek survival through these dangerous activities.

The factors contributing to illegal racing among children are influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. Internally, curiosity, adrenaline, the search for identity, and the desire for peer recognition are the primary triggers. Externally, lack of parental supervision, weak social control within the community, the influence of motorcycle gangs, and easy access to modified vehicles contribute to the increased likelihood of illegal racing. Furthermore, the lack of legal facilities for pursuing automotive hobbies is also a contributing factor. Thus, illegal racing among children in Medan City arises from the interaction between personal motivation and socio-environmental conditions that do not support the development of positive behavior.

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