

Contribution of Local Governments in Preventing Corruption, Collusion, and Nepotism (Pematangsiantar City Study)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the contribution of local governments in the prevention of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) with a case study in Pematangsiantar City. The research method used is normative-empirical legal research with descriptive-analytical specifications, using legislative, conceptual, and sociological approaches. Legal materials are obtained through literature studies of laws and regulations, academic literature, and relevant documents, then analyzed qualitatively juridically. The results of the study show that the contribution of local governments in the prevention of KKN in Pematangsiantar City still faces a number of obstacles, especially in the aspects of internal supervision, intervention of political interests, and low ethical awareness of the apparatus. However, there have been positive developments through the implementation of an internal control system, regional financial transparency, and strengthening collaboration between local governments and the DPRD within the framework of public accountability. This study concludes that the effectiveness of KKN prevention in the regions is highly dependent on the synergy between legal instruments, political commitment, and bureaucratic integrity, with implications for the need for governance reform and the strengthening of a fair and transparent legal culture.

Keywords: Local Government, KKN Prevention, Government Collaboration, Good Governance.

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Introduction

Corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) are multidimensional problems that have been rooted in the Indonesian government system for a long time. KKN not only causes state financial losses, but also erodes public trust in legal institutions and government. In the context of constitutional law, KKN is a violation of the basic principles of good governance which requires accountability and transparency in the exercise of public power.

As a criminal act that is included in the category of extraordinary crime, corruption has a systemic impact on the economy and regional political stability. The Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW) report in 2024 noted that there were 619 corruption cases in the regions with total state losses reaching Rp9.3 trillion, and most of the cases occurred at the district/city government level[1]. This fact shows that the eradication of KKN in the regions still faces serious challenges, both from institutional and political aspects.

The Pematangsiantar City Government in recent years has faced a number of cases of alleged corruption that show the weak supervision and internal control of the bureaucracy. The first prominent case was the Hand Capture Operation (OTT) carried out by the North Sumatra Police in July 2019 against the Regional Financial Management Agency (BPKD). A total of 19 employees were secured for being involved in illegal levies (pungli) in the distribution of employee incentives with a value of Rp186 million.

In addition, in 2025, the Head of the Pematangsiantar City Transportation Office will be named as a suspect in the case of abuse of parking levies in the Vita Insani Hospital area. The results of the investigation show that most of the parking levy proceeds were not deposited into the regional treasury and were allegedly used for personal and group interests.

These two cases illustrate that the legal responsibility of the Pematangsiantar City Government in enforcing the principle of clean governance has not been fully implemented. In fact, normatively, these responsibilities have been regulated in Law Number 28 of 1999 concerning the Implementation of a Clean and Free State from KKN, Law Number 31 of 1999 jo. Law Number 20 of 2001 concerning the Eradication of Corruption Crimes, and Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government.

But in practice, policies and political commitments at the local level are not always oriented towards eradicating corruption. The relationship between the executive (city government) and the legislature (DPRD) is often colored by short-term political interests. Mas'ood explained that in the local political system in Indonesia, patron-client politics still dominates the public decision-making process, so accountability is often sacrificed for political interests. [2]

Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing the responsibility of the Pematangsiantar City Government in preventing KKN, as well as assessing the extent to which collaboration between the Government and the DPRD can strengthen a clean, accountable, and integrity government system. The formulation of the problem is how to contribute to the Pematangsiantar City Government in efforts to prevent Corruption, Collusion, and Nepotism, what is the form of collaboration between the City Government and the DPRD in creating a transparent government that is free from Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism (KKN) and what are the obstacles and legal remedies that can be carried out in strengthening the integrity of local government in Pematangsiantar City.

Literature Review 2.1 Good Governance Theory

Good Governance is a series of processes that are applied in organizations, both private and public, to determine decisions. 4] The theory of good governance is the foundation for the implementation of modern government. According to Sedarmayanti, good governance is a system of government administration that ensures the creation of public participation,

accountability, and transparency in the policy-making process. 5] This principle serves as the legal and ethical basis in the administration of a state that is free from KKN.

This principle then becomes a reference for every local government in realizing a clean and just government. In the context of administrative law, good governance requires public officials to act in accordance with the principles of legal certainty, public interest, and professionalism. Violations of these principles have the potential to give rise to administrative legal liability, even criminal if there are elements of corruption.

In the context of the Pematangsiantar City Government, the theory of good governance is a benchmark to assess the extent to which the policies and actions of the city government reflect the principles of openness and accountability, for example in the management of regional levies, procurement of goods/services, and the preparation of the APBD.

2.2 Legal Contribution Theory

Legal contribution theory views that law plays a role not only as a set of normative rules, but also as a tool of social engineering to create clean and integrity governance. In the context of local government, legal contributions are reflected through the establishment of local regulations, supervisory mechanisms, and increased legal awareness of the apparatus to prevent corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) practices. [6]

According to Soerjono Soekanto, the law has three main functions: as a means of social control, a means of social engineering, and a means of social integration. [7] This function shows that the law contributes to building a just and transparent order of government. The law not only plays a repressive role in cracking down on KKN perpetrators, but also is preventive by strengthening the legal culture and ethics of government administration.

2.3 Government Collaboration Theory (Collaborative Governance)

The Government of Indonesia is responsible for protecting the rights and obligations of all its citizens through its executive and legislative powers to create valued, qualitative, and comprehensive national laws in the form of the formulation/design, formation, and enactment of responsible laws on behalf of every citizen, every nation, and every country. [8]

The theory of collaborative governance emphasizes the importance of cross-institutional cooperation in achieving effective governance and integrity. Dwiyanto argued that government collaboration emphasizes the importance of synergy between local governments, legislatures, and communities in building institutional integrity. This collaboration is not only a technical aspect, but also a form of political commitment to clean governance.

In the context of Pematangsiantar City, collaboration between the city government and the DPRD has a strategic meaning. The DPRD plays a role in the function of legislation and supervision of executive policies, including in terms of the preparation and evaluation of regional budgets. If this collaboration is based on integrity and transparency, the potential for corruption in regional financial management can be minimized. Thus, the theory of collaborative governance is used to assess the extent to which coordination and partnership between the Pematangsiantar City Government and the DPRD are running in efforts to eradicate KKN.

2.4 Political Theory of Patronage (Patron-Client Politics)

The political power that exists in state institutions such as the executive and legislature plays a very decisive role. This is reflected in many cases in Indonesia where the law is more often used as a tool to achieve certain political goals than to uphold social justice. [9] In the context of Indonesian local politics, the practice of patronage is still the dominant phenomenon. Mohtar Mas'oeed stated that the patronage relationship is a relationship between political elites and subordinates that is transactional and based on personal interests.

In the context of local government, this pattern of relationships is often an obstacle in the eradication of corruption because public decisions are colored by the interests of political elites. This theory explains why in many regions, including Pematangsiantar, public policy is

often not based on the interests of the wider community, but rather the result of political compromise between executive and legislative officials. As a result, public decisions become vulnerable to conflicts of interest and abuse of power. In the framework of community service eradication, patronage theory is used to analyze cultural and political barriers that cause weak supervision and difficulty in law enforcement at the local level.

Studies on the contribution of local governments in preventing corruption, collusion, and nepotism have attracted the attention of various academics and legal practitioners in Indonesia. A number of relevant previous studies have shown that the effectiveness of KKN prevention at the regional level depends on a combination of the legal system, institutional integrity, and the application of good governance principles in the implementation of local government.

Research conducted by Supriyadi (2017) entitled "The Role of the DPRD in the Prevention of Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism in the Regions" in the Journal of Legal Horizons Vol. 6 No. 2 of the Merdeka University of Malang, found that the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) has a strategic role in preventing KKN through the function of supervision of local government policies. However, the effectiveness of such supervision is highly dependent on the political commitment, moral integrity of DPRD members, and an adequate internal supervision system. [10]

Furthermore, Maisarah and Mirza Satria Buana (2023) in an article entitled "The Dilemma of the Merit System as an Instrument for the Prevention of Corruption, Collusion, and Nepotism in Filling Positions in Regional Government" published in the Collaborative Journal of Science of Lambung Mangkurat University, explained that the merit system should be an effective instrument in preventing the practice of KKN in filling positions of state civil servants. However, in practice, the implementation of the merit system is often hampered by political intervention, weak external supervision, and limited capacity of regional apparatus. [11]

Meanwhile, Evi Maria, Abdul Halim, and Eko Suwardi (2021) in an empirical study entitled "Financial Distress, Regional Independence and Corruption: An Empirical Study in Indonesian Local Governments" published in JASF: Journal of Accounting and Strategic Finance Vol. 4 No. 1, analyzed the relationship between regional financial independence and the level of local government corruption in Indonesia. The results of the study show that the higher the level of regional independence, the greater the potential risk of corruption, because central control over regional finances is reduced. The condition of financial distress does not have a significant effect on the level of regional corruption. [12]

From the results of previous research that have been presented, it appears that most of the previous studies have emphasized more on the function of institutional supervision, the implementation of the merit system, and the influence of regional financial independence on the level of corruption. Although they make important contributions, these studies have not comprehensively examined the legal contribution of local governments in the context of preventing corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) through a normative-empirical approach that combines aspects of laws and regulations, institutions, and the legal culture of the apparatus.

This research has novelty in the form of a juridical approach that integrates legal contribution theory, Friedman legal system theory, and the principle of good governance to assess how law functions not only as a regulatory norm, but also as an instrument for shaping clean and accountable local governance.

Research Methodology

Research methods are a very diverse set of approaches that researchers can use to dig deeper into the phenomena they are researching. [13] This research is descriptive-analytical, aiming to systematically describe and analyze the contribution of local governments in the prevention of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) based on legal aspects and their

implementation in the field. [14] The type of research used is normative-empirical legal research, by combining the analysis of legal norms and empirical facts in local government. This study uses three approaches[15], namely:

1. Statute approach, to examine the legal basis for the implementation of local government and anti-corruption policies;
2. Conceptual approach, to review supporting theories, such as good governance theory, legal contribution theory, government collaboration theory, and patronage political theory;
3. Sociological approach, to understand bureaucratic practices and behaviors in the implementation of anti-corruption policies at the local level.

The source of legal materials consists of primary legal materials (laws and regulations, court decisions, and official documents of local governments), secondary legal materials (books, journals, and research results), and tertiary legal materials (legal dictionaries and encyclopedias). The technique of collecting legal materials is carried out through library research to obtain relevant normative and conceptual data. The research location is focused on Pematangsiantar City, because it has dynamic political and bureaucratic characteristics as well as several corruption cases that reflect challenges in the implementation of anti-corruption policies. The analysis of legal materials is carried out qualitatively, by interpreting the relationship between norms and government practices in a descriptive-analytical manner to produce argumentative and objective conclusions. [16]

Results 4.1 Contribution of Local Governments in KKN Prevention

Local governments have a strategic position in Indonesia's decentralized system, where regional autonomy provides broad authority for regions to regulate and manage their own interests based on the aspirations of the community. In this context, the moral and juridical responsibility of local governments has become increasingly greater in ensuring the implementation of clean, transparent, and accountable government. [17]

The contribution of local governments in the prevention of KKN is reflected in the application of good governance principles which include transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and the rule of law. [18] Through the application of these principles, local governments are expected to not only be central policy implementers, but also pioneers in fostering an anti-corruption culture in the bureaucratic environment. In Pematangsiantar City, the implementation of the principle of good governance has begun to be carried out through a program to improve the integrity of the apparatus and digital-based bureaucratic reform.

One of the tangible forms of this contribution is the implementation of a digital public service system that is significantly able to reduce potential budget irregularities and strengthen transparency in every public decision-making process. [19] This digitalization of public services shows a structural commitment from local governments to prevent the practice of bribery, gratuities, and collusion in regional resource management.

In addition, local governments also play a role in strengthening the legal framework for KKN prevention by issuing regional regulations and internal policies related to gratuity control, LHKPN reporting, and regional expenditure supervision. This step is in line with the concept of legal contribution, where law is not only a tool for controlling behavior, but also a tool of social engineering (law as a tool of social engineering) that can encourage changes in morality and bureaucratic behavior in a cleaner and more integrity direction. [20]

The local government also establishes cross-agency collaboration with law enforcement officials such as the District Attorney's Office and the Police, as well as collaborates with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in the implementation of the Monitoring Center for Prevention (MCP) which is a benchmark for corruption prevention at the regional level.

Through this collaboration, local governments are able to identify corruption-prone points and design supervisory strategies that are more adaptive to local conditions.

However, the effectiveness of local government contributions is often hampered by local political dynamics and patronage relationships between local officials and the DPRD. In practice, some anti-corruption policies are still formalistic because of political interests in budget preparation and placement of strategic positions in the bureaucratic environment. This phenomenon shows that although normatively local governments have shown contributions to the prevention of KKN, empirically there are still gaps in its implementation due to low local political integrity. [21]

In the context of Pematangsiantar City, cases such as the Hand Capture Operation (OTT) by the North Sumatra Police against BPKD officials and the corruption case of the Head of Hub in the abuse of the parking levy in 2025 show that corrupt practices at the local level are still a serious problem that must be addressed through a systemic approach. This fact strengthens the argument that the contribution of local governments cannot stop at the regulatory level, but must be accompanied by the ethical and moral commitment of every public official.

Therefore, local government efforts in preventing KKN must be integrative, namely by synergizing legal, institutional, bureaucratic morality, and community participation. Collaboration with the DPRD also needs to be directed not at transactional political relations, but at functional partnerships oriented towards public policy oversight. Only in this way, the contribution of local governments in the prevention of KKN can be realized substantively and sustainably in accordance with the principles of good governance.

4.2 Dimensions of Good Governance and Local Government Performance

The implementation of good governance is the main prerequisite in the prevention of KKN. The principles of transparency and accountability are the main foundations in building public trust. In the context of Pematangsiantar, even though a digital financial reporting system has been implemented, many work units have not optimized their functions. This can be seen from the findings of the BPK which still records inconsistencies in the use of BOS funds and regional grants in 2024. [22]

These obstacles show that legal tools and technological systems have not been fully able to replace the importance of personal integrity of regional officials. Good law will lose its functional power if it is not accompanied by the ethical awareness and legal culture of the apparatus. Therefore, legal development needs to be accompanied by a change in bureaucratic mindset that puts public services above personal or group interests.

4.3 Government Collaboration and Political Interests Dynamics

Local government collaboration is an important factor in creating clean, transparent, and accountable governance. In this context, the relationship between local governments and the DPRD is an integral part of the local government system that demands synergy, not just the division of functions. This collaboration should ideally be realized through complementary mechanisms: local governments play the role of public policy implementers, while the DPRD carries out supervision, legislation, and budgeting functions that are instruments of control over the running of government.

From a governance law perspective, the synergy between the executive and the legislature in the regions has a strategic position to ensure the implementation of the principles of good governance. This collaboration is a means to balance power, maintain policy transparency, and ensure that every budget decision and public policy reflects the interests of the wider community. Local governments cannot run effectively without the support of the DPRD, nor

will the DPRD function optimally without the openness and responsibility of local governments. [23]

However, in practice, the relationship between the local government and the DPRD is often colored by complex political interest dynamics. At an ideal level, collaboration aims to create institutional harmony. But in reality, the political process in the preparation of the APBD, the discussion of draft regional regulations, and the implementation of supervisory functions are often influenced by the interests of political parties, coalitions, and power patronage. This causes the collaborative relationship to shift from a pattern of productive partnerships to a pattern of transactional negotiation.

The DPRD, which constitutionally has the function of supervising the running of government, often faces a dilemma between the political interests of the party and the moral responsibility to the community. In certain situations, the relationship between the local government and the DPRD, which should be functional, can turn into an arena for political compromise that opens up space for the practice of conflict of interest and abuse of authority. This dynamic raises the potential for weak control over the implementation of regional policies, especially in the field of budgeting and regional financial management that is prone to corrupt practices.

On the other hand, there is also a positive collaborative practice between the local government and the DPRD which is oriented towards the prevention of KKN. This kind of collaboration is reflected in a shared commitment to strengthen the internal oversight system, adopt a public information disclosure policy, and establish regional regulations that encourage public participation in budget planning and monitoring. This effort shows that despite political challenges, synergy between local governments and DPRD can still be directed towards governance with integrity.

In the context of the Pematangsiantar City Government, executive and legislative relations show a dynamic pattern. Some periods show effective collaboration in the drafting of anti-corruption regulations and budget transparency, but on the other hand, there are also political tensions due to differences in interests between coalition parties supporting regional heads and the opposition. This dynamic illustrates that efforts to prevent KKN in the regions do not only depend on legal and institutional aspects, but also on the maturity of political ethics and morals of public officials in interpreting collaboration as a shared responsibility.

Thus, the success of KKN prevention at the regional level is not enough only with regulations or supervisory institutions, but must be accompanied by a collaborative commitment between local governments and the DPRD that puts integrity, transparency, and public interest above short-term political interests. [24] Collaboration based on government ethics will strengthen the legitimacy of the law and increase public trust in local governments as clean and just government administrators.

4.4 Case Study of Pematangsiantar City Government

a. OTT BPKD Officials of Pematangsiantar City (2019)

The OTT case by the North Sumatra Regional Police on July 11, 2019 against officials of the Regional Financial Management Agency (BPKD) revealed the weakness of the internal supervision system. The official was arrested for receiving illegal levies related to the process of disbursing the regional expenditure budget. [25] This phenomenon illustrates the weak application of the principles of transparency and accountability which are the main principles of good governance. In the context of patronage politics, this case also shows how strategic positions are often used as a tool for political exchange after the election of regional heads. This worsens the independence of the bureaucracy and opens up space for abuse of authority.

b. Corruption Case of the Head of Hub of Pematangsiantar City (2025)

The case of Kadishub, who was designated as a corruption suspect in July 2025 for the abuse of the parking levy at Vita Insani Hospital [26], shows a tangible form of procedural irregularities and weak legal control functions. JS was charged with causing state losses of IDR 48.6 million due to the issuance of a legally defective decree. In addition, there were allegations of extortion by law enforcement personnel worth Rp200 million, showing the complicated power relationship between the bureaucracy and the law apparatus.

4.5 Obstacles and Efforts of Local Governments in Eradicating KKN

Some of the main obstacles faced by the Pematangsiantar City Government include: a)

Patronistic Political Culture

The relationship between executive and legislative officials is often based on practical political interests, rather than on moral commitments in the eradication of KKN.

b) Weak Coordination Between Supervisory Agencies

The synergy between the Inspectorate, BPK, and the DPRD is still formalistic, not yet leading to a substantive supervision system.

c) Limitations of Human Resources Apparatus

There are still many apparatus in charge of finance and law who do not have the competence to detect potential corruption and maladministration.

d) Lack of Community Involvement

Public participation in regional budget supervision is still low due to lack of access to public information and public legal awareness.

Local governments have a strategic responsibility in creating clean and accountable governance. Efforts made in the prevention of KKN can be classified into three main approaches, namely structural, cultural, and regulatory approaches.

First, a structural approach is carried out through institutional strengthening and internal supervision systems. The Pematangsiantar City Government has optimized the function of the Regional Inspectorate as a government internal supervision apparatus (APIP) in detecting potential budget irregularities from the planning stage to the implementation of work programs. [27] This step is also supported by the implementation of the Government Internal Control System (SPIP) which is the main instrument in strengthening regional financial transparency.

Second, the cultural approach is realized through the development of bureaucratic ethics and the cultivation of integrity within the state civil apparatus (ASN). The local government conducts socialization of the code of ethics, integrity training, and anti-corruption campaigns in collaboration with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) and the North Sumatra Provincial Inspectorate. This effort is directed to instill a strong moral awareness and public responsibility in every ASN.

Third, a regulatory and collaborative approach is carried out by strengthening cooperation between local governments and the DPRD in the preparation and supervision of the implementation of anti-corruption policies. The DPRD plays the role of a public policy supervisory institution, while the local government is the implementer, so the synergy between the two is important to prevent the occurrence of collusion and abuse of power. However, local political dynamics often give rise to conflicts of interest, especially in budgeting and supervision of public projects that open up space for political patronage.

In addition, the Pematangsiantar City Government also innovates through the implementation of digital-based public service systems such as e-Budgeting, e-Planning, and e-Procurement, which aim to increase transparency and minimize the opportunity for bribery practices in the procurement process of goods and services. This step shows the structural

awareness of local governments to transform towards the principles of good governance and open government.

However, the effectiveness of these efforts still faces challenges, especially in terms of the commitment of the implementing apparatus and weak sanctions for violations of ASN discipline. Therefore, more substantial institutional reform is needed by strengthening the role of the community and local media as part of the external supervision system over the running of local government.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the contribution of local governments in the prevention of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) is not only determined by the existence of regulations, but mainly by political commitment, institutional collaboration, and integrity in the implementation of governance. Local governments play a strategic role in building an internal supervisory system, strengthening transparency, and encouraging public participation in public budget management.

Normatively, KKN prevention is regulated in various regulations such as Law No. 23 of 2014 and Government Regulation No. 12 of 2019, but its effectiveness is highly dependent on the political will of local governments and the support of the DPRD in carrying out its supervisory function with integrity. Collaboration between local governments and the DPRD is the key to clean governance. Healthy collaboration strengthens transparency and accountability, while collaboration influenced by political interests has the potential to weaken the control function and open up space for abuse of authority.

The OTT case of the North Sumatra Police against BPKD officials and corruption of the Head of the Pematangsiantar City Hub in 2025 shows the weakness of the regional supervision system and the influence of political interests in the bureaucracy. Therefore, efforts to prevent KKN need to be directed at strengthening political ethics, government digitalization systems, and collaborative culture based on public integrity.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce the theories of good governance, legal contribution, government collaboration, and patronage politics, by affirming that laws should function not only as norms, but also as instruments for shaping ethical and transparent bureaucratic behavior.

Practically, local governments and the DPRD need to strengthen data-based supervision mechanisms, public information disclosure, and political ethics education, so that collaboration is not trapped in party interests or power patronage. In the future, similar research can be developed with a legal socio-political approach, in order to examine the relationship between local power and the effectiveness of anti-corruption policies in various regions in Indonesia. Thus, the prevention of KKN can only be successful if the law, politics, and morality of government are balanced within the framework of a collaborative and integrity government.

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