

Increasing Public Legal Awareness of Corruption in Hamparan Perak District Klambir Lima Kebun Village

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Abstract

Corruption is one of the problems that still threatens social and economic stability in Indonesia. People who do not fully understand the adverse effects of corrupt acts have the potential to perpetuate this practice. This research aims to increase public legal awareness of corruption crimes in Hamparan Perak District, Klambir Lima Kebun Village. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach with interview, observation, and documentation techniques. The results show that the level of public legal knowledge about corruption is still low, which leads to a lack of awareness to report and prevent such practices. Therefore, efforts to increase legal awareness need to be carried out through legal counseling involving various parties, both the government, educational institutions, and the community itself. With the increase in legal awareness, it is hoped that the community can be more active in preventing and eradicating corruption crimes in their surrounding environment.

Keywords: Legal Awareness, Corruption, Society, Legal Counseling

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Introduction

In the view of social science, crime is defined as a social phenomenon born in structural injustice or the manifestation of the diversity of human behavior which is reactions to the conditions of the socioeconomic social class of a person or community group. Regardless of where they come from, people who are in weak economic conditions and are pressed for the necessities of life, plus a lack of faith, tend to think short-sightedly. It can be said that it will legalize all the ways in which his life needs can be met. [1] Corruption is a criminal act that harms the state and society at large. Public legal awareness is very important so that they are able to recognize, report, and prevent corrupt practices. Socialization is a strategic instrument in increasing public understanding and attitudes towards the dangers of corruption and its prevention measures. The phenomenon of corruption that occurs in Indonesia is always a hot issue to discuss. One of the things that has always been the main topic in connection with the law enforcement process is the eradication of corruption. Corruption practices today are developing with the emergence of new practices that seek to take advantage of gaps or weaknesses in various existing laws and regulations. [2] The regulation of corruption eradication in 3 Indonesia runs in such a way in the midst of the political power that occurs in each order of law enforcement is a process of elaboration of legal ideas and ideals that contain moral values such as justice and truth in concrete form. [3] Starting from the era of the old order, the new order, to the reform, the problem of corruption in Indonesia seems to have become "Culture". Corrupt practices have spread to the business sector and can be found at every level of the bureaucracy, both legislative, executive, and judiciary. Various efforts have been made to eradicate corruption, but the results are still far from what was expected. In an excerpt from Indonesia Corruption Watch, Indonesia's corruption perception index has decreased from 38 to 34. This results in Indonesia occupying the position of 1/3 of the most corrupt countries in the world. If clear law enforcement is not carried out and the deterrent effect is given to the perpetrators of corruption crimes, it will cause paralysis for the Indonesian legal system. Overcoming this problem requires the firmness of law enforcement officials, including the police, prosecutors, and judges, as well as all levels of society to participate in supervising the enforcement of corruption crimes in Indonesia.

Community participation has its own urgency in efforts to prevent and eradicate corruption crimes, especially through the functions of social control, reporting, and public education. Awareness and active participation of citizens in overseeing public policy and budget management is one of the tangible forms of community contribution in building a clean and accountable government. In fact, from a legal and governance perspective, community involvement has been recognized as an important part of the surveillance and transparency system. Corruption weakens democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to government instability. In addition, corruption also hinders economic development, as foreign investment becomes less desirable and local businesses often feel unable to cope with the high costs of taking care of licensing or protection imposed by corrupt officials. [4]

If corruption in a society has been rampant and becomes the food of the community every day, then the consequences will make the society a chaotic society, no social system can function properly. Every individual in society will only be selfish, even selfish. There will be no sincere cooperation and brotherhood. [5] Empirical facts from research results in many countries and theoretical support by social scientists suggest that corruption has a negative effect on a sense of social justice and social equality. Corruption causes sharp differences between social groups and individuals in terms of income, prestige, power and others. Corruption also endangers the moral and intellectual standards of society. When corruption is rampant, there is no main value or glory in society. Theobald stated that corruption creates a climate of greed, selfishness, and cynicism. [6]

The prevention and eradication of corruption is carried out so that a country is clean from

corrupt acts that often occur, besides that the prevention and eradication of corruption can also teach young people that corrupt behavior will only bring misery and cause losses for the institution and the corrupt perpetrators themselves. This can make the younger generation think that corrupt behavior does not have a positive impact on the survival of the nation and state. Corruption has a wide and serious impact on Indonesia. First, the occurrence of institutional damage. [7] Corruption weakens government institutions, hinders economic growth and harms the people. Second, the inhibition of investment. Corruption creates uncertainty for investors, which can ultimately hinder long-term economic growth. Third, there is inequality. Corruption deepens social and economic disparities, as resources are diverted from programs that support the poor into the personal pockets of corrupt elites. All of these situations will collapse the civilization of the Indonesian nation.

LITERATURE Review

2.1 Legal Awareness and Legal Culture in Society

a. Definition of Legal Awareness

Legal awareness is the understanding and compliance of individuals or groups with the legal norms that apply in society. According to Satjipto Rahardjo, legal awareness is divided into two types: heteronomous and autonomous. Heteronomous legal awareness is characterized by obedience to the law due to coercion or threats, while autonomous legal awareness arises from within the individual due to the understanding and belief in the importance of law in social life. In Indonesia, although the legal awareness of the public is quite good, it is still heteronomous, which is the reason why the problem of corruption is still high and difficult to eradicate.

b. Legal Culture in Society

Legal culture reflects people's attitudes and behaviors towards the law, which is reflected in the habits, norms, and values that live in society. A good legal culture will support the creation of an orderly and law-abiding society. However, in Indonesia, legal culture is still influenced by factors such as traditional values, religion, and complex social systems, which can affect people's level of legal awareness.

2.2 Corruption in the Village

a. Definition and Impact of Corruption

Corruption is an act of abuse of authority by public officials for personal or group interests, which is detrimental to the state and society. Corruption crimes at the village level often occur in the management of village funds, which should be used for development and community welfare. Corruption at the village level can hinder development, undermine public trust in the government, and create social injustice.

b. Factors Causing Corruption in Villages

Some of the factors that cause corruption in the village include:

- 1) Lack of Supervision: Lack of control from the community and related institutions over the use of village funds.
- 2) Low Legal Education: Lack of understanding of the community and village officials about the law, so that they are not aware that their actions fall into the category of corruption.
- 3) Culture of Corruption: There is a culture that tolerates or even considers corrupt practices reasonable in daily life.
- 4) Limited Resources: Limited funds and facilities to implement corruption eradication programs at the village level.

2.3 Efforts to Increase Public Legal Awareness

a. Legal Education and Counseling

Legal education and counseling are the first steps in increasing public legal awareness. Programs such as Legal Awareness Villages initiated by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights aim to build legal awareness rooted in the community through socialization, discussions, simulations, and KADARKUM competitions. This program is expected to create a more law-abiding, safe, and harmonious community environment.

b. The Role of Village Governments in Increasing Legal Awareness

The village government has an important role in increasing the legal awareness of the community. One of them is by carrying out direct socialization, empowerment of village institutions, and cooperation with related parties. Research in Lampoko Village, Balusu District, Barru Regency shows that the village government's efforts to increase community legal awareness through socialization and empowerment of village institutions are effective in increasing community participation in the village development process.

c. Collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies

Cooperation between the village government, law enforcement officials, and other related institutions is very necessary in efforts to eradicate corruption. The Pelalawan District Attorney's Office, for example, held legal counseling activities during the pandemic to increase public legal awareness based on Article 30 paragraph (3) letter a of Law Number 16 of 2004 concerning the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Indonesia. However, the results of the study show that this activity is still not running optimally due to obstacles such as COVID-19 factors, network constraints when activities are online, limited time, and public stigma towards the prosecutor's office.

2.4 Challenges in Increasing Legal Awareness in Villages

Some of the challenges faced in increasing the legal awareness of the community in the village include:

- a. **Lack of Access to Information:** Limited public access to clear and easy-to-understand legal information.
- b. **Unsupportive Local Culture:** The existence of a local culture that tolerates corrupt practices or does not support law enforcement.
- c. **Limited Facilities and Resources:** Limited funds, facilities, and experts to carry out legal education and counseling programs.
- d. **Negative Stigma against Law Enforcement Agencies:** There is a negative public perception of law enforcement agencies that can reduce the effectiveness of corruption eradication programs.

Increasing public legal awareness of corruption crimes in Klambir Lima Kebun Village, Hamparan Perak District, requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach between the village government, law enforcement officials, and the community. Legal education and counseling programs, such as Legal Awareness Villages/Villages, can be an effective means of building legal awareness rooted in the community. However, challenges such as lack of access to information, unsupportive local culture, limited facilities, and negative stigma against law enforcement agencies need to be overcome so that efforts to eradicate corruption at the village level can run optimally.

Research Methodology

This study uses a quantitative approach with a pretest-posttest design, which is a design used to measure changes in the level of understanding of the younger generation towards the concept and dangers of corruption before and after participating in anti-corruption education. This method was chosen to obtain objective and measurable data on the effectiveness of anti-corruption education in improving participants' understanding.

This research is in the style of field research with a type of qualitative research that is rich and conditional and will produce descriptive data. This research uses qualitative research methods because of the tradition in social education science which fundamentally relies on human observation both in the individual and in interaction with others in a society. Qualitative research methods do not actually aim to examine or prove the truth according to the theory but the existing theories are developed using the collected data.

The definition of qualitative research methods is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behaviors. Kirk and Mille's qualitative research is a particular tradition in the social sciences that fundamentally depends on observations of human beings in their own spheres and in relation to those people in their language and in their peril. The purpose of qualitative research is the collection of descriptive data rather than using numbers as the main method.

The data collected is in the form of text, words, images, although it is possible to collect quantitative data. And data can be in the form of manuscripts such as recordings, interviews, field notes, photos, video tapes, personal documents, notes or memos, and other official documents. The descriptive data will be analyzed and interpreted. Qualitative data collection is carried out by interview, observation and document review methods. The main informants (primary sources) are elements of the government, administrators of religious organizations and the community. Primary data tracing is carried out through interviews by determining key informants who are considered worthy and appropriate and knowing the problems being researched. From the description above, what is meant by qualitative research is data obtained from informants (in the form of words) based on actual facts (telling the truth) so that the words can be trusted and become valid. [8] Where in this study, the design is continuously adjusted to the reality of the field. Qualitative research does not aim to examine or prove the truth according to the theory but the existing theories are developed using the collected data.

Results

Corruption is one of the main problems that hinder development and damage the social order in Indonesia. Despite various efforts have been made, the level of corruption in Indonesia is still relatively high. One of the factors causing this is the low legal awareness of the public against corruption. [9] Therefore, increasing public legal awareness is a strategic step in efforts to eradicate corruption.

Legal awareness is an individual's understanding and compliance with applicable legal norms. According to Soerjono Soekanto, legal awareness includes knowledge, understanding, and compliance with existing laws. High legal awareness will encourage the public to obey the law and be active in preventing and reporting corruption crimes.

Some of the factors that cause low legal awareness in the community include:

1. Low Levels of Education: People with low levels of education tend to lack understanding of the importance of the law and the impact of breaking the law.
2. Lack of Access to Information: Limited access to information about the law makes people unaware of their rights and obligations.
3. Patronage Culture: A strong patronage culture in some areas can strengthen corrupt practices and make the community less responsive to corruption eradication efforts.
4. Lack of Legal Socialization: The lack of socialization activities about the law causes the public to not have an adequate understanding of the law.

To increase public legal awareness of corruption, some of the efforts that can be made include:

1. Legal Counseling: Legal counseling is one of the strategic approaches to increase public awareness and understanding of the importance of transparent, accountable, and law-compliant budget governance. This counseling also aims to encourage community participation in supervising the management of Village Funds to prevent irregularities that are detrimental to development at the village level.

2. **Anti-Corruption Education:** Anti-corruption education needs to be strengthened as an effort to increase public awareness of corruption. This education can be carried out through various methods, such as counseling, training, socialization campaigns, and the integration of anti-corruption values in the educational curriculum.
3. **Utilization of Information Technology:** In today's digital era, social media and technology are effective means of disseminating legal information. Village governments can utilize social media platforms and village websites to present legal content in an easy-to-understand and attractive form.
4. **Collaboration with Law Enforcement Agencies:** Raising legal awareness in villages cannot be done partially. The village government can establish good cooperation with law enforcement officials, such as the police and the prosecutor's office. This collaboration includes providing legal counseling, humane law enforcement, and legal case assistance for villagers in need.
5. **Establishment of Legal Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis):** Legal Awareness Groups (Pokdarwis) are a forum for villagers who have a high concern for law enforcement. Pokdarwis plays a role as a facilitator in disseminating legal information and legal assistance for residents in need. The establishment of Pokdarwis is expected to increase the community's legal awareness on an ongoing basis.

Some of the challenges faced in efforts to increase public legal awareness include:

1. **Limited Human Resources:** Lack of number and quality of legal educators at the village level.
2. **Local Culture:** The existence of a patronage culture that hinders openness and active participation of the community in supervision.
3. **Lack of Facilities and Technology:** Limited access to information and technology that hinders the effective dissemination of information.
4. **Lack of Support from the Government:** Lack of budget allocation for socialization and legal education activities at the village level.

Increasing public legal awareness of corruption is a strategic step in efforts to eradicate corruption. Through legal counseling, anti-corruption education, the use of information technology, collaboration with law enforcement agencies, and the establishment of Legal Awareness Groups, it is hoped that the community's legal awareness can increase. Despite the challenges, with commitment and cooperation between the government, law enforcement agencies, and the community, these efforts can be successful.

Based on the results of interviews and observations, most of the people of Klambir Lima Kebun Village have a limited understanding of the law, especially related to corruption. This is due to the lack of legal education and the lack of socialization regarding the importance of supervision of village financial management.

Some of the efforts that have been made to increase public legal awareness include:

- a. **Legal Counseling by Law Enforcement Officers:** The Deli Serdang Police together with village officials held counseling on corruption crimes and the importance of supervision of the use of Village Funds.
- b. **Socialization through Social Media and Village Information Boards:** The village government uses social media and information boards to disseminate information related to the use of Village Funds and development activities.
- c. **Training and Technical Guidance:** The village government collaborates with educational institutions and related agencies to provide training to the community on transparent and accountable village financial governance.

Conclusion

Increasing public legal awareness of corruption crimes in Klambir Lima Kebun Village, Hamparan Perak District, is an important step in reducing corrupt practices that are detrimental to village development and community welfare. Based on the results of the analysis, there are several conclusions that can be drawn regarding efforts and challenges in increasing legal

awareness in the village.

The Importance of Legal Education: One of the main keys in increasing public legal awareness is legal education and counseling. People who are more educated about the law, especially related to corruption crimes, tend to be more sensitive and active in supervising and reporting irregularities that occur at the village level. Therefore, the village government, in collaboration with law enforcement officials, needs to increase the frequency and quality of legal counseling programs to the community.

Use of Technology for Transparency: The use of information technology in conveying legal information is very effective in today's digital era. The community can be accessed more easily through social media, village websites, or other technology-based applications. With transparency in the management of the Village Fund and the government process, the community can supervise and prevent potential budget abuse.

Community Involvement in Supervision: People who have a high legal awareness play a more active role in supervising budget management and the implementation of village development projects. This supervision can be done by forming community groups or forums that have a role in ensuring that the budget used is in accordance with the public interest and is not misappropriated.

The Importance of Collaboration between the Government and Law Enforcement Agencies: Cooperation between the village government and law enforcement officials (police, prosecutor's office, and KPK) must be strengthened. Legal counseling, as well as direct assistance related to the use of Village Funds, can be an effective mechanism in preventing corruption crimes. In addition, strict law enforcement against corrupt perpetrators will give a strong signal to the public that acts of corruption will not be allowed.

Challenges in Raising Legal Awareness: Although various efforts have been made, the biggest challenge in raising legal awareness in Klambir Lima Kebun Village is the low level of community education and limited access to accurate information. In addition, the patronage culture that is still valid in some regions also affects the reluctance of the public to participate in supervision and report corruption crimes.

Recommendations to Increase Legal Awareness: To increase legal awareness of corruption crimes, some recommendations that can be given are: Improving legal education at the village level, especially in terms of corruption prevention and the importance of budget supervision. Optimizing the role of the Village Consultative Body (BPD) in conducting supervision and becoming a facilitator in conveying legal information to the community. Strengthening the use of information technology for transparency and accessibility of information to the public. Involve civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations in the process of legal counseling and supervision.

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