



LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST ILLEGAL LEVIES AT THE ISLAMIC CENTRE OF TULANG BAWANG BARAT

Aura Larasati Hidayat¹, Erna Dewi², Fristia Berdian Tamza³
¹²³Universitas Lampung, Bandar Lampung, Lampung, Indonesia

auralarasati94@gmail.com, erna@maiser.unila.ac.id, Fristia.berdian@fh.unila.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This study discusses law enforcement against illegal levies in the Tubaba Islamic Center tourist area. Illegal levies remain one of the most common forms of law violations in various sectors, including tourism. Illegal levies at the Islamic Center are carried out by security guards who demand money from traders under the pretext of “security fees.” This act of illegal levy is contrary to applicable laws and is regulated as a criminal act of corruption and extortion. The case of illegal levies in the Tubaba Islamic Center tourist area, which was reported through the Saber Pungli website, faced several obstacles, such as the lack of digital evidence to support the report on the Saber Pungli website, lack of coordination between law enforcement agencies, and low legal awareness among the community. Cultural factors also pose an obstacle to combating illegal levies because the community tends to accept the practice of levies as a common custom in the public service system. Theoretically, this research can contribute to expanding or enriching the criminal law literature on law enforcement against public sector office crimes, especially in tourist areas. In practical terms, this research is expected to provide input for the government and law enforcement agencies to develop a more transparent and integrity-based monitoring system for delivering public services.

Keywords: *Criminal Law, Illegal Levies, Law Enforcement, Tourist Area*

1. Introduction

The phenomenon of illegal fees, which is still commonly encountered today, cannot be separated from its dark, historical roots. This condition has ultimately formed a negative tradition that is maintained and continuously carried out. Furthermore, illegal fees have become a plague that has infected all social strata, affecting both the upper and lower-middle classes. Legally, the practice of illegal levies (pungli) has been identified as a criminal offense in the Criminal Code (KUHP) of Indonesia. Article 368 of the KUHP explicitly threatens a maximum prison sentence of nine years for any individual who unlawfully forces another party to give goods, pay, or accept deducted payments, with the aim of benefiting themselves or others. Even before the term ‘pungli’ became popular, the KUHP had categorized this type of transaction into several offenses, such as extortion (Article 368), gratification (Article 418), and unlawful acts and abuse of authority (Article 23).

Legally, the practice of illegal levies (pungli) is classified as a violation of the law under the Criminal Code (KUHP). Article 368 of the Criminal Code specifically stipulates that anyone who deliberately and unlawfully forces another person to hand over goods, make a payment, or agree to a payment deduction, with the intention of benefiting themselves or another party, is punishable by a maximum of nine years’ imprisonment. Even before the term ‘pungli’ became popular in society, this legal concept had been accommodated by the KUHP through several terms, such as the criminal act of extortion (Article 368), gratification (Article 418), and unlawful acts and abuse of authority (Article 23). Illegal levies (pungli) can be defined as the practice of requesting money outside the officially agreed-upon terms. This action aims to abuse authority to obtain illegal personal gain. The main characteristic of pungli as a corrupt criminal act is the imposition of additional costs that have no legal basis. In Indonesia, this phenomenon is still commonly found, especially in the public-service sector. From a law enforcement perspective, these actions, whether intentional or unintentional, and whether they have been carried out or merely attempted, essentially cause material and immaterial losses to the community.



Based on Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2016, the Saber Pungli Task Force is equipped with several strategic functions and authorities. Its main functions include intelligence, prevention, enforcement and justice. Operationally, its tasks include developing a prevention system, collecting data through information technology, and coordinating and carrying out operations to eradicate illegal levies, including sting operations. In addition, this task force has the authority to recommend disciplinary sanctions for perpetrators, establish anti-extortion units in public service agencies, and evaluate all eradication activities that have been carried out. The Saber Pungli Task Force represents a government policy aimed at legal reform. As a multisectoral institution, this task force consists of personnel from the Indonesian National Police, the Attorney General's Office, and the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPANRB). Based on the mandate of Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2016, the main task of this task force is to eradicate illegal levies effectively and efficiently through the optimization of resources, including personnel, work units, and facilities, from ministries and institutions and local governments.

The beauty of the Islamic Center tourist destination in West Tulang Bawang Regency (Tubaba), when seen with open eyes, is currently mired in problems in its management system. The magnificent building, a legacy of the administration of Umar Ahmad, the two-term Regent of Tubaba, is now the subject of public discussion because its security guards have been officially reported to the police by tourists after allegedly being involved in extortion. Based on the results of the journalist's investigation, the illegal fees were justified as security fees. This was confirmed by one of the MSME traders around the Tubaba Islamic Center who did not want his initials to be published. The collection of security fees from MSME traders around the Tubaba Islamic Center was purely an act of illegal fees because it had no clear legal basis. Furthermore, the security guards at the Tubaba Islamic Center receive a fixed salary charged to the Tubaba Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) every month. According to a report by IndonewsMedia on November 14, 2024, several traders in the West Tulang Bawang Islamic Center area complained about alleged extortion and illegal levies by management or security officers.

The merchants stated that they were required to pay a certain amount of money as stall fees or selling permits without any official regulations, and some considered this practice coercive. This situation prompted a serious response from the local government of the city. On December 17, 2024, the Tubaba Regional Government decided to replace the Islamic Center security team with Satpol PP officers after evaluating the performance of the security officers, which was deemed problematic. This replacement was carried out through a Satpol PP Task Order, emphasizing that security in the area must be handled by more professional and institutionally responsible personnel than the previous ones.

The security guard suspected of extorting money from traders reached a settlement with the victim. The money previously demanded by the perpetrator is returned to the victim. However, the legal process is still ongoing, and the police are still conducting investigations related to this case.

2. Research Methodology

The approach to problems in legal research writing is the scientific method or perspective used by researchers to examine, analyze, and understand the legal issues under study. This approach serves as a basic framework for answering research questions using systematic and targeted methods. According to Soerjano Soekanto, the approach in legal research serves to clarify the structure of thinking in compiling and developing legal arguments, both normative and empirical, as follows.

This study uses two types of data, primary and secondary, which are collected through a qualitative approach to comprehensively describe the legal resolution of illegal levies at the Islamic Center reported through the Saber Pungli website. Primary data were obtained directly through interviews with authorities or parties directly related to the issues being studied. Interviews were conducted with law enforcement officials handling the case, Islamic Center managers involved in or aware of illegal levies, and members of the public or reporters who used the Saber Pungli platform. Using this primary data, the author obtained factual information about the chronology of the case, the reporting mechanism, and the legal resolution process in the field.



The secondary data sources for this study were derived from library research. This activity included reviewing various primary and secondary legal materials, as well as related scientific literature, to examine the issues under study. Data analysis is the process of examining all data collected from both library and field studies, interpreting them, and drawing logical conclusions in line with the research questions. Soerjono Soekanto explains that data analysis is the activity of interpreting and formulating the data obtained so that it can be used to answer the research questions. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively, which is a data analysis method used in qualitative research, focusing on understanding the meaning, concepts, characteristics, symbols, and descriptions of a social or legal phenomenon being studied. In legal research, qualitative analysis aims to explore the legal norms, principles, and social realities related to the application or implementation of the law.

3. Discussion

3.1. Law Enforcement Against Illegal Levy Cases at the Tulang Bawang Barat Islamic Centre

Illegal levies (pungli), as a violation of the law, are still commonly found in various fields, including the tourism sector. Pungli can be defined as any form of unofficial payment that has no legal basis; thus, this action is categorized as an illegal levy. In many cases, this action involves elements of abuse of authority. Illegal levies have long been rooted in society as a social phenomenon. Interestingly, long before the term 'pungli' became popular, the Criminal Code (KUHP) accommodated this form of crime through several specific terms and articles that are still the main reference for law enforcement officials today.

1. Article 368 of the Criminal Code stipulates that "Any person who, with the intention of benefiting himself or another person legally, forces another person by means of violence or threats of violence to give something that is wholly or partly the property of another person, or to grant a debt or cancel a debt, shall be punished for extortion with a maximum imprisonment of nine years."
2. Article 415 of the Criminal Code stipulates that "a civil servant or other person assigned to perform a public function on a permanent or temporary basis who deliberately embezzles money or valuable documents entrusted to him by virtue of his position, or allows such money or valuable documents to be taken or embezzled by another person, or assists as an accomplice in committing such acts, shall be punished with a maximum imprisonment of seven years."
3. Article 418 of the Criminal Code stipulates that "a civil servant who accepts a gift or promise, knowing or reasonably suspecting that the gift or promise is given because of the power or authority associated with his position, or which, according to the person giving the gift or promise, is related to his position, shall be punished with imprisonment of up to six months or a fine of up to four thousand five hundred rupiah."
4. Article 423 of the Criminal Code stipulates that "a civil servant who, with the intention of unlawfully benefiting himself, either by himself or through another person, abuses his authority to force another person to surrender something, make a payment, make a deduction from a payment, or perform work for his own personal gain, shall be punished with a maximum imprisonment of six years."

Extortion is classified as a form of abuse of power or misuse of office, whereby power is used to obtain personal gain or gain for others by forcing individuals to hand over goods, pay a sum of money (including through deductions), or perform certain actions. The relevance of this case can be seen from an incident in 2024, where 78 KPK employees received severe sanctions for their involvement in extortion practices at the institution's detention center. As a further consequence, they were required to issue a public apology. The dynamics of crime in society run parallel to the progress of society itself because, in essence, crime is a social construct. As long as human desires remain unchecked, criminal acts will continue to exist in society, nations, and states. In this context, extortion is not a new phenomenon but rather a reality of contemporary bureaucracy whose historical roots can be traced back to the past as a legacy of the enduring patrimonial culture.

Historically, extortion has long been recognized as a form of criminal offense that is subject to legal sanctions. However, to date, the Indonesian criminal law framework, both in the Criminal Code



(KUHP) and other laws and regulations, does not explicitly and specifically regulate extortion as an offense. There are no provisions that explicitly state extortion as a criminal offense along with its criminal sanctions.

Illegal levies in the tourism sector are a serious problem that can damage the image of tourist destinations and undermine tourists' confidence in public services. Illegal levies in this sector generally take various forms, such as charging entrance fees that do not comply with regulations, illegal parking with excessive fees, and unofficial levies by unscrupulous officials or community groups who take advantage of their strategic position in tourist areas. Such practices not only cause economic losses for tourists but also violate the principles of clean governance, as stipulated in Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2016 on the Task Force for the Eradication of Illegal Fees (Saber Pungli). A similar phenomenon can also be found in religious areas that double as tourist attractions, such as the Tulang Bawang Barat Islamic Center in Lampung. This area is not only a center for religious activities but also attracts tourists because of its architectural value and social function. However, the high number of visitors often opens up opportunities for illegal fees to be charged, whether in the form of unofficial parking fees, cleaning fees, or donations that cannot be administratively accounted for.

Illegal collection activities have become a phenomenon that can disrupt community performance and undermine public trust in law enforcement. Illegal collection activities have become a form of extortion, which is a social symptom that continues to surround community life and is detrimental to the victims. According to Soerjono Soekanto, the essence of law enforcement lies in balancing the relationships between values summarized in various rules. This process aims to create harmony of views and manifest it into attitudes and concrete actions, which ultimately leads to the creation of peace in social interactions.

Efforts to combat crime in the realm of criminal law are integral to law enforcement. Thus, it can be concluded that criminal law policy is an integral part of the overall law enforcement policy. In practice, the implementation of criminal law policy is essentially the execution of policy through several stages.

- a. Formulation Stage, which is the phase in which criminal law policy is implemented in abstracto (conceptually) by the legislative body. This stage is also known the legislative policy stage.
- b. Application Stage, which is the phase of operational implementation of criminal law policy by law enforcement agencies, including police and judicial institutions. This stage is also referred to as the judicial policy stage.
- c. The Execution Stage is the actual implementation of criminal law policy by law enforcement officials. This stage is also known in various literature as the executive policy stage or administrative policy stage.

Based on these three stages, it can be concluded that this effort is a rational process that is systematically designed to achieve certain objectives while also representing a series of activities that materialize national policy. It is also emphasized that national development must strive to realize all stages of criminal law policy, given its position as an integral part of the social policy. Ultimately, it is impossible to achieve successful societal development if it relies solely on criminal law instruments.

1. Formulation Stage of Law Enforcement for Illegal Levy Crimes

The formulation aspect of handling illegal levies at the Tulang Bawang Barat Islamic Center finds its legal basis in Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2016 concerning the Task Force for the Eradication of Illegal Levies and Law No. 31 of 1999 in conjunction with Law No. 20 of 2001 concerning the Eradication of Corruption Crimes. These two legal products serve as the legal foundation that qualifies illegal levies as criminal acts that must be eradicated, given their destructive impact on public service governance and erosion of public trust in the government. Law enforcement against illegal levies in Indonesia faces various obstacles. Illegal levies are not explicitly mentioned in the Criminal Code of China. The government has formulated several strategic policies, such as Presidential Instruction No. 5 of 2004, the Whistleblower System and Justice Collaborator Program, and the establishment of the Task Force on Illegal Levies in 2016. This task force serves as an external mechanism to detect and crack down on illegal levies in various public-service sectors. In general, criminal acts can be immediately prosecuted because they clearly violate the provisions of criminal law. However, the reality of concrete



criminal cases, with all their complexities, is often very different from abstract criminal law provisions. In this context, interpretation plays a crucial role as a bridge to apply the law appropriately, ultimately leading to fair law enforcement.

In response to the absence of a Regional Regulation that specifically regulates illegal levies in West Tulang Bawang, the local DPRD has voiced the importance of immediately forming a special regulation governing the practice of illegal levies. The establishment of this regional regulation is considered important to ensure that Local Own-Source Revenue (PAD) sourced from official levies such as retribution, hotel and restaurant taxes, and other types of taxes has a legal basis that is valid, transparent, and accountable, so that it can be properly justified. Illegal levies (pungli) as a form of extortion are a persistent social phenomenon that continues to accompany the dynamics of community living. Various existing countermeasures cannot completely eradicate this practice, given its complex root causes, particularly related to human efforts to maximize their livelihoods and the existence of diverse individual interests.

2. Enforcement Stage of Illegal Levy Criminal Acts

This stage is the most crucial in the criminal justice system because the formulated law is applied in practice. This stage is carried out by law enforcement officials, especially the police, prosecutors and courts. Illegal levies are categorized as complaint offenses (klacht delict), whereby criminal proceedings can be initiated only if there is a complaint from the aggrieved party. Illegal levies, especially those that are minor or occur in certain social relationships, often require ethical and social considerations before they can be treated as criminal cases.

Victims of illegal levies (pungli) are parties who suffer losses as a result of the unlawful and unregulated demand or collection of money, goods, or services by certain individuals, in this case, security guards. In the context of criminal law, victims of illegal levies are legal subjects who have the right to legal protection in the form of preventive protection (prevention of violations) and repressive protection (enforcement and recovery after violations occur). The West Tulang Bawang Police followed up on reports of illegal levies at the West Tulang Bawang Islamic Center. The steps taken by the Tipidkor Team investigators after receiving instructions from their superiors were to complete the administrative task order to collect information and documents and verify and analyze the data. In the case of illegal levies at the Islamic Center, investigators are still collecting evidence because the complainant did not provide documents detailing the illegal levies at the Islamic Center.

The author analyzes that, in practice, law enforcement officials have exercised preventive and precautionary functions in law enforcement. Reports submitted by the public through the Saber Pungli website are first verified and clarified to ensure their accuracy. This is a form of legal protection for victims and whistleblowers, ensuring that the legal process is objective and does not lead to the criminalization of certain parties without strong grounds.

3. Enforcement Stage of Criminal Law Enforcement for Illegal Levies

The enforcement stage implements criminal verdicts that have permanent legal force. At this stage, perpetrators who have been proven guilty serve their sentences in accordance with the court's verdict, whether in the form of imprisonment, fines, or other administrative sanctions. The implementation of these criminal penalties is carried out by correctional institutions under the supervision of the Attorney General's Office and the Ministry of Law and Human Rights. In the context of modern criminal law policy, the executive stage is not only interpreted as the implementation of punishment but also as a stage of guidance and rehabilitation. The implementation of criminal punishment for perpetrators of extortion is expected to emphasize not only the punitive aspect but also the restorative and educational aspects, namely correcting behavior and instilling awareness that extortion harms society and damages public trust in the government. This approach is in line with the concept of progressive criminal law policy, which not only punishes but also improves the social and cultural legal systems.



The three stages of criminal law policy in law enforcement against illegal levies at the Tulang Bawang Barat Islamic Center have been supported by an adequate legal framework (formulative stage), but still face obstacles in the applicative stage due to a lack of evidence and public legal awareness. The executive stage has not yet been implemented because no perpetrator has been sentenced. However, conceptually, it remains an important part of ensuring deterrence and guidance for perpetrators of sexual violence. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen inter-agency coordination, provide stronger legal protection for whistleblowers, and increase public legal awareness so that law enforcement against illegal levies can be carried out effectively, fairly, and in the victims' interests. Law enforcement efforts against extortion crimes do not only depend on the performance of law enforcement officials but also require adequate support in terms of facilities and infrastructure.

Therefore, law enforcement is not only carried out through legislative instruments but also through the empowerment of officials and optimal legal facilities. Operationally, this law enforcement covers two main aspects: the application of sanctions and the implementation of supervision by the government. Supervision serves as a preventive measure to enforce compliance, whereas the imposition of sanctions acts as a repressive measure to restore compliance. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that illegal levies generally occur when there is an agreement between the two parties. However, if the goods, money, or facilities that have been given are then taken without the knowledge of the giver by the person concerned, this act can be classified as embezzlement or corruption. Conversely, if the collection is carried out with an element of coercion from one party, the action falls into the category of extortion. The efforts made by the West Tulang Bawang Police to prevent the recurrence of illegal fees are to carry out preventive activities in the form of patrols conducted by the West Tulang Bawang Police's Samapta Unit and to appeal to the community and officers at the Islamic center not to collect illegal fees and to report any cases of illegal fees for immediate follow-up.

The prevalence of illegal levies (pungli) in Indonesia can be traced to two main factors. First, the weak effectiveness of complaint service institutions that function to receive and follow up on reports from the public. In practice, the Inspectorate, as the internal supervisory unit in each agency, has not optimally responded to complaints from external parties, especially the public. Second, this practice is also difficult to eliminate because it has become an ingrained culture, where some people perceive that giving money to public service officials as a "bribe" is normal to ensure the smooth running of their affairs. The reality of illegal levies is also shaped by socio-cultural factors, where, in certain communities, this practice is seen as normal and not a criminal act. This permissive culture creates the perception that illegal levies are not a crime but a form of "business," so that perpetrators feel they have social justification. In this context, community participation is a significant determinant of law enforcement effectiveness. When public awareness and compliance with the law are low, the effectiveness of the law cannot be guaranteed.

The author's analysis shows that law enforcement is necessary to realize an ideal legal order in society. Optimal implementation of law enforcement will have a positive impact in the form of integrity and justice, which will ultimately create a sense of security and comfort in public service. This is because law enforcement is essentially a process of enforcing the functioning of legal norms as a guide for behavior in all legal interactions in social and state life. Consistent law enforcement against illegal fees will, in turn, shape good social norms towards the realization of a just society.

1.2. Factors Hindering Law Enforcement in Resolving Illegal Levy Cases through the Saber Pungli Website at the Islamic Center in West Tulang Bawang

Illegal levies (pungli) can be defined as any form of unofficial fee collection that is not legally sanctioned. Most cases occur due to abuse of authority. As a social phenomenon, illegal levies have become a constant reality in the dynamics of society. Furthermore, this practice has contributed to the erosion of public trust in law enforcement and government bureaucracy. The Indonesian legal framework, through Law No. 20 of 2001 concerning the Eradication of Corruption and Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2016 concerning the Task Force for the Eradication of Illegal Levies, defines illegal levies as acts committed by civil servants or state officials who unlawfully abuse their authority for their own benefit or that of others, by forcing someone to give goods, pay, or accept deducted



payments, or to do something. Although the Criminal Code does not explicitly mention the term “illegal levies,” it can be classified as a criminal act of fraud, extortion, or corruption, as regulated by the law.

Illegal levies are understood by the public as a form of violation, but generally, the public tolerates them, allowing them to grow and develop due to a lack of concern among the public and a lack of courage to report them to the authorities. Law acts as a social institution that aims to achieve justice in society. As an institution embedded in society, the effectiveness of its enforcement is highly dependent on the community’s capacity to implement it. Therefore, each community will implement the law in its own unique way, which may differ from other communities’ implementation. These differences are greatly influenced by the availability of resources and infrastructure that a community has to achieve justice, which also reflects the close relationship between legal institutions and the level of development of social organizations in the community.

Several factors cause communities to tend to tolerate extortion practices, including:

1. Low public awareness that extortion is a form of maladministration.
2. A culture that tends to be tolerant and accepting of extortion practices.
3. A lack of courage among the public to report extortion acts.

Social factors, such as shyness, fear of being ostracized, or the assumption that illegal levies are normal, pose particular obstacles to efforts to eradicate illegal levies. According to Soerjono Soekanto, these conditions are part of the cultural factors of society, namely the attitudes, values, and perceptions of society towards the law itself. If the legal culture of society is still permissive towards minor violations such as illegal levies, then law enforcement will be difficult to implement effectively. Creating safe and comfortable conditions requires synergy between the police and the community, given that both parties are inseparable entities in realizing a social order. Achieving this ideal condition requires a collective will and awareness of the importance of order. In line with the function of law, Soedjono Dirdjosisworo argues that the essence of the law is to create harmony and peace in society. The law plays a role in creating an honest and peaceful social order across all strata of society.

The crime of extortion, classified as illegal levies in Article 368 paragraph (1) of the Criminal Code, does not specifically limit the subject of the law, which means that every individual has the potential to become a perpetrator of illegal levies. From the perspective of legal subject criteria, there is a fundamental difference between illegal levies categorized as criminal acts of corruption and those classified as criminal acts of extortion (dwingen). Several legal instruments regulate the prosecution of extortion practices. Although the Criminal Code does not explicitly mention the offense of illegal levies, Article 368 of the Criminal Code can be applied with a maximum penalty of nine years' imprisonment for perpetrators who commit thuggish acts, as they fulfill the elements of the crime of extortion. In addition, Article 423 of the Criminal Code together with Article 12 letter e of Law No. 20 of 2001 concerning Corruption Crimes can be imposed on civil servants who are proven to have committed extortion. From the perspective of modus operandi, there is a fundamental difference between illegal levies categorized as corruption and those as general crimes. Although both forms of crime contain elements of coercion, illegal levies in the context of corruption are carried out through abuse of position or authority, while illegal levies as general crimes are carried out through violence or threats of violence.

The two types of acts classified as illegal levies have very different characteristics and natures, both in terms of the perpetrators and the methods used. Therefore, these two forms should not be combined into a single category of criminal acts called illegal levies. Based on these differences, the government must establish clear boundaries regarding acts that can be classified as extortion, particularly in the context of criminal law, so that there is no overlap between its status as a specific and general criminal act. Furthermore, concrete steps are needed to determine whether illegal levies are a separate offense that requires a clear definition of the act or merely a sociological term such as hate speech, which does not qualify as a criminal offense. The classification of criminal acts as illegal levies creates ambiguity in their legal qualifications. If illegal levies are not defined as separate criminal offenses, they are merely a group of behaviors. Thus, the term illegal levies is not a legal term but rather a social concept, similar to the status of hate speech in the legal system.



There is no written evidence to prove the case of illegal levies at the Islamic Center, in accordance with Article 184 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which requires two pieces of evidence for the case to be considered a criminal offense. The case is still in the process of gathering information because the complainant did not provide documents containing evidence of illegal levies at the Islamic Center. Therefore, it is hoped that the complainant can provide evidence or documents related to the illegal levies so that it can be clarified whether the incident is a criminal offense or an administrative violation. Based on Article 8 of Government Regulation No. 43 of 2018 concerning the procedures for community participation and the awarding of rewards in the prevention and eradication of criminal acts of corruption. Law enforcement is the collective responsibility of all elements of society, where an understanding of rights and obligations is an absolute prerequisite. The community must not be passive in the law enforcement process, but must play a proactive role. As a system of behavioral norms that is coercive in nature, the law will only be effective in changing behavior and encouraging the implementation of juridical values if it is widely socialized until it is internalized in the consciousness of the community.

According to Soerjono Soekanto, the success or failure of law enforcement is determined by five main factors that work together: If these five factors do not work in harmony, law enforcement will encounter obstacles. The five factors are.

1. Legal Factors

One of the factors hindering law enforcement in resolving cases of illegal levies at the Tulang Bawang Barat Islamic Center is the suboptimal legal substance governing the technical mechanisms for handling reports of illegal levies, especially those submitted through online systems such as the Saber Pungli website. Although Presidential Regulation No. 87 of 2016 established the Saber Pungli Task Force, it does not specify the standards of proof, procedures for verifying digital evidence, or protection for reporting members of the public.¹ As a result, many reports submitted through the website are halted at the initial verification stage because they do not meet the elements of extortion, as stipulated in Article 368 of the Criminal Code, or the elements of abuse of authority, as stipulated in the Corruption Eradication Law. This lack of technical regulations makes it difficult for officials to translate policy into concrete action, resulting in the slow and ineffective handling of reports.

2. Law Enforcement Factors

The next obstacle stems from the structure of law enforcement. Based on interviews with the West Tulang Bawang Police, investigators stated that most reports of illegal levies could not be pursued due to a lack of evidence or because the reporter did not provide additional information after the report was received. The verification process also requires coordination with the District Extortion Eradication Unit and the Regional Inspectorate, which, in practice, takes a long time, thereby slowing down the follow-up on reports. In addition, law enforcement officials face a heavy workload because they handle various types of cases; therefore, reports of extortion involving small amounts of money are often not prioritized. These structural obstacles directly impact the effectiveness of handling extortion reports at the Islamic Center.

3. Community Factors

The role of society is also significant, given that human social interactions are governed by various norms that aim to create an orderly and peaceful collective life. On the one hand, there are norms that regulate individual aspects, consisting of religious norms that aim to realize a life of faith, as well as moral norms that aim to shape individuals with a noble character and a clear conscience. A crucial phenomenon that needs to be recognized by all components of society is that the existence of illegal levies is essentially the result of systematic neglect in both the social and political spheres. From a political perspective, this practice has flourished because of the government's permissive attitude and its apparatus. In fact, the actions of a group of individuals in collecting illegal levies are often perceived as legitimate because they are legitimized by the behavior of the officials. Another supporting factor is the use of attributes that resemble official uniforms by perpetrators, which creates a false impression of legality.



4. Legal Culture Factors

Structural aspects and coordination between institutions are also significant challenges. Based on the interview results, the West Tulang Bawang Police received reports from the Saber Pungli website, but not all reports could be immediately followed up because they must first go through a verification and clarification process with the District Saber Pungli Unit and the Regional Inspectorate. This coordination process often takes a long time, resulting in inefficient follow-up of reports. Delays in inter-agency coordination result in a loss of momentum for evidence gathering in the field, especially if the evidence of illegal fees is situational and not recorded. The verification process must also be carried out through coordination with the District Saber Pungli Unit and the Regional Inspectorate, which, in practice, takes a long time, slowing down the follow-up of reports. In addition, law enforcement officials face a high workload because they handle various types of cases; therefore, reports of bribery involving small amounts of money are often not a priority. These structural obstacles directly affect the effectiveness of handling bribery reports at the Islamic Center.

5. Facilities and Infrastructure Factors

Facility and infrastructure factors also affect law enforcement effectiveness. The West Tulang Bawang Police have a digital reporting channel through the Saber Pungli website, but supporting facilities such as a report tracking system, digital forensic equipment, and human resources who understand online reporting technology are limited. In modern law enforcement, the success of the legal process is largely determined by adequate technical support. The lack of supporting facilities and infrastructure is also a significant obstacle in efforts to resolve illegal levy cases at the Tulang Bawang Barat Islamic Center. Illegal levies are quick actions that are not always recorded and often occur in locations that do not have visual evidence, such as closed-circuit television (CCTV). In addition, the reporting system on the Saber Pungli website is not equipped with a tracking system, so reporters do not know the progress of their reports. Equipment for analyzing electronic evidence, such as video recordings or photos, is also limited, making the process of proving the crime more difficult. The lack of supporting facilities means that officials do not have sufficient tools to prove illegal levies, so reports from the public often cannot be followed up with an investigation.

The author analyzes that, overall, Soerjono Soekanto's description of the five factors that hinder law enforcement confirms that the success of the law enforcement process is greatly influenced by the integration of clear and applicable legal substance, the quality of professional law enforcement officials, the availability of adequate facilities and infrastructure, public awareness and active participation, and a legal culture that supports the functioning of the norms. If one of these factors does not function optimally, for example, rules that are not operational, unresponsive officials, limited resources, a community that is reluctant to report, or a culture that is permissive of violations, then the entire law enforcement system will be distorted and unable to achieve its main objectives, namely, to create order, justice, and legal certainty. By comprehensively understanding these five factors, a more incisive analysis of the obstacles to law enforcement in cases of illegal levies reported through the Saber Pungli website can be conducted, thereby providing a complete picture of the complexity of the issues faced by law enforcement officials and the urgency of making systemic improvements so that efforts to eradicate illegal levies can be more effective and sustainable.

4. Conclusion

The factors hindering law enforcement in illegal levy cases include the five elements identified by Soerjono Soekanto: legal factors, law enforcement, infrastructure, society, and culture. Of these, the most dominant obstacle is the legal factor, because to date, there are no technical regulations that specifically govern the mechanism for proving illegal levies, especially those reported through online systems such as the Saber Pungli website. The absence of clear regulations or boundaries between official and illegal levies means that officials can only conduct initial verifications without escalating cases to the investigation stage. This legal uncertainty renders the law enforcement process ineffective and prevents it from providing adequate protection and legal certainty for the public as victims of illegal levies.

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