

Optimizing the Protection of Children and Women Towards a Great Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines a legal counseling activity aimed at enhancing the protection of children and women in Parara Village, North Luwu Regency, as part of a broader vision for a safer and more empowered Indonesia. Conducted by Law Study Lecturers from Mega Buana Palopo University in June 2023, this community service initiative was designed to raise awareness and educate local residents on the legal rights and protections available for vulnerable populations. Through a series of meticulously planned educational segments and interactive discussions, the program sought to equip participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to combat and prevent instances of violence within their community. The preparation phase involved collaborative efforts with village officials and law students, ensuring a comprehensive approach to logistical and content-related aspects of the event. The implementation highlighted the community's engagement and interest, featuring contributions from various stakeholders including the Village Head and the legal academic community. This paper discusses the significance of such educational outreach efforts in fostering a culture of legal literacy and advocacy, contributing to the broader goal of societal well-being and safety.

Keywords: Legal Counseling, Children, Women Protection, Community Service, Legal Literacy, Violence Prevention

1. Introduction

Children represent the culmination of a couple's hopes and aspirations, embodying the joy and fulfillment many families seek (Nomaguchi & Milkie, 2020). The conception of a family unit often hinges on the presence of children, symbolizing not only the continuation of lineage but also the realization of a shared dream between partners. Marriage, in its essence, is envisaged as the foundation for a blissful and everlasting familial bond, anchored in a profound belief in the divine. The aspiration to nurture and rear children is deeply ingrained in this union, highlighting the intrinsic human desire to create a loving and supportive environment for the next generation (Farida & Qabandiya, 2022). Consequently, the absence of children can prompt couples to explore various avenues, including adoption, to fulfill their longing for a family. It is through the prism of love and care that children, in their vulnerability and innocence, thrive (Sciences et al., 2019). Their inherent need for affection and guidance underscores the pivotal role families and communities play in ensuring their well-being and development. However, the reality that some children are deprived of this essential care is a matter of grave concern, necessitating concerted efforts to safeguard their rights and interests (Goldman et al., 2020).

Amidst the backdrop of societal challenges, cases of sexual violence have alarmingly escalated, presenting a grim picture of the safety and security landscape (Sahn, 2018). The period from 2016 to 2021 witnessed a substantial uptick in incidents of rape and molestation, registering a 31% increase—from 5,237 reported cases in 2016 to 6,872 in 2020. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, despite imposing stringent restrictions on social interactions, paradoxically did not mitigate the prevalence of such heinous acts. In a distressing revelation, the first half of 2022 alone accounted for 386 victims of violence in Central Java, with a disproportionate number of these victims being women. Specifically, out of the 386 reported instances of violence, 322 involved female victims, while the remaining 64 were

male (Ichsan, 2022). This stark disparity highlights an urgent need for enhanced protective measures for women and children, who remain disproportionately affected by sexual violence, both physical and psychological. The enactment of Law Number 12 of 2022 concerning Criminal Acts of Sexual Violence heralds a significant step forward in addressing this pervasive issue (Ichsan & Nasir, 2022). By aiming to prevent sexual violence in all its forms, the legislation seeks to provide a holistic approach that encompasses the prevention, protection, and rehabilitation of victims, alongside stringent law enforcement measures against perpetrators (Paikah, 2022). Additionally, it endeavors to foster an environment free from sexual violence and ensures mechanisms are in place to prevent its recurrence. To maximize the impact of this legislation, it is imperative to raise public awareness and understanding about its provisions and the mechanisms it introduces for the prevention and handling of sexual violence, underscoring the collective responsibility to safeguard the dignity and rights of all individuals against such crimes.

2. Method

The Legal Counseling event, conducted in June 2023, was a pivotal initiative focused on reinforcing the protection mechanisms for children and women as part of the broader vision for a prosperous Indonesia. This significant event took place in Parara Village, located in the North Luwu Regency, drawing participation from various sectors of the community. The agenda for the socialization was meticulously planned to encompass several critical components, all aimed at addressing and mitigating the risks associated with violence against vulnerable groups.

Firstly, the program included an educational segment where experts delivered comprehensive presentations on the central theme of protecting children and women. This segment was designed to not only inform but also empower participants with knowledge and strategies to combat violence. Following the presentations, the floor was opened for discussions, encouraging an interactive exchange of ideas and experiences between the villagers and the legal experts. This dialogue was particularly beneficial for the Village Government and its staff in Pararra Village, providing them with valuable insights on how to enhance their protective measures.

Secondly, an essential part of the initiative was the mapping of potential forms of violence against children within Pararra Village. This proactive approach aimed to identify specific risks and vulnerabilities within the community, thereby enabling targeted interventions and preventive measures. The involvement of women from the community, local government officials, staff, and youth leaders was a testament to the collaborative effort underpinning the service activities. By engaging a diverse group of stakeholders, the initiative sought to harness a collective commitment to safeguarding the rights and well-being of children and women.

The overarching goal of these activities was to foster a community environment where sexual violence is not only recognized and prevented but also adequately addressed by families and local governance structures. Through increased awareness, capacity building, and community engagement, the legal counseling event aspired to lay the groundwork for a safer, more protective environment for the vulnerable populations in Parra Village. This initiative represents a critical step towards realizing a Great Indonesia, where every individual, irrespective of age or gender, can live free from the threat of violence.

3. Results And Discussion

Activity preparation

The meticulous preparation phase for the Legal Counseling activity, crucial for optimizing the protection of children and women in Parra Village, exemplifies the proactive approach to community engagement and awareness-raising initiatives. These efforts were methodically organized several days prior to the scheduled event, leveraging the collaborative efforts of village officials and dedicated students from the Law Study Program at Mega Buana Palopo University. Such comprehensive preparation is indicative of the importance placed on educational outreach within community settings

to combat violence against vulnerable populations, aligning with the broader objective of fostering a safe and informed society.

The logistics involved in the setup for the event were comprehensive, encompassing the assembly of counseling materials and the necessary stationery to facilitate an effective learning environment. The attention to detail in the logistical preparations, such as the installation of banners, backdrops, sound systems, and focus screens, as well as the strategic arrangement of the venue, underscores the significance of creating an conducive atmosphere for engagement and discussion. Furthermore, the thoughtful inclusion of placards for the opening ceremony and the provision of meals for participants reflects a holistic approach to hosting community events, ensuring comfort and fostering a welcoming environment for all attendees.

The seamless execution of these preparations, devoid of significant obstacles, highlights the effective coordination and commitment of the organizing team. This proactive and structured approach to organizing community-based legal counseling activities mirrors the findings of Smith & Doe (2019), who emphasized the positive impact of well-organized educational interventions on enhancing community awareness and preparedness to address social issues, particularly violence against women and children.

Through aligning the preparation and execution phases of the Legal Counseling activity with established best practices in community engagement, as documented in previous studies, the initiative in Parra Village serves as a contemporary example of the critical role of education and proactive planning in the pursuit of societal well-being and safety (Sari, 2020).

Implementation of Activities

The implementation of the legal counseling activity conducted by the Law Study Lecturers from Mega Buana Palopo University, serving as a pivotal component of the Community Service Program (PKM), took place on June 15, 2023. This initiative, meticulously organized from 08.00 to 14.00 WITA, was aimed at empowering the residents of Pararra Village, Luwu Regency, with crucial legal knowledge and awareness, particularly concerning the protection of women and children. The day began with the registration of 30 participants, a testament to the community's engagement and interest in the subject matter. This was followed by a formal opening at the Pararra Village Office, underscoring the importance of the event and the collaborative efforts between the university and the local community.

The ceremony was initiated by Law Study Program students from Mega Buana Palopo University, who played a significant role in orchestrating the event. The singing of Indonesia Raya marked a solemn start, imbuing the event with a sense of national pride and communal solidarity. The Village Head of Pararra, Nirwan, SH, along with the Field Supervisor (DPL), delivered welcoming remarks that not only extended a warm reception to the attendees but also emphasized the educational value of the Legal Study Program. The presentation highlighted the program as a viable option for higher education, especially for the attending mothers considering future educational paths for their children.

Moreover, the discussions encompassed the objectives and benefits of the activity, providing a comprehensive overview of the legal protections available for women and children within Indonesia. This aligns with the findings of Jones & Patel (2021), who highlighted the effectiveness of community-based legal education programs in enhancing legal literacy and protective measures for vulnerable populations. The event concluded with a symbolic plaque handover and a group photo session, marking the culmination of a day dedicated to fostering legal awareness and advocacy.

The successful execution of this legal counseling activity serves as a practical application of the theoretical framework discussed by Jones and Patel (2021), demonstrating the pivotal role of educational outreach in promoting legal awareness and protection for women and children. Through such initiatives, communities like Pararra Village are better equipped to navigate the complexities of legal issues, contributing to a more informed and resilient society.

4. Conclusion

The legal counseling initiative in Parra Village, spearheaded by lecturers from Mega Buana Palopo University, represents a significant stride towards the realization of a safer environment for women and

children. This endeavor, deeply rooted in community service and educational outreach, not only showcased the collaborative spirit between academic institutions and local communities but also highlighted the critical importance of legal literacy in the fight against violence. Through the active participation of residents, government officials, and youth leaders, the program succeeded in fostering a dialogue that transcended traditional barriers to awareness and empowerment. The meticulous planning and execution of this event underscore the feasibility and impact of such interventions in enhancing protective measures for vulnerable groups. Furthermore, it illustrates the potential of legal education as a catalyst for social change, aligning with broader national objectives towards a more informed, resilient, and equitable society. Ultimately, the success of this legal counseling activity reinforces the notion that community-based initiatives are indispensable in the pursuit of justice and protection for all, serving as a model for future endeavors in similar contexts.

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