

The Effectiveness of Police Roles in Addressing the Distribution of Alcoholic Beverages in Pematang Siantar City

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ABSTRACT

The issue of alcoholic beverages in Indonesia has become a serious social problem, as despite numerous cases of alcohol-related deaths, the consumption of alcoholic beverages continues to rise each year, where law enforcement and relevant authorities have made efforts to regulate and eradicate alcohol abuse by apprehending both sellers and consumers involved in the illegal alcohol trade, yet the business continues to thrive, prompting this study to examine the urgency of alcohol prohibition, the role of law enforcement in alcohol control in Pematang Siantar, and the challenges faced in eradicating alcoholic beverages, leading to the conclusion that alcohol prohibition is crucial due to its negative impacts on behavior, morality, religion, and health, as well as its contribution to high crime rates, while the police play a vital role in mitigating alcohol abuse through guidance, supervision, and regulatory control, although law enforcement efforts are hindered by resistance from business owners who oppose police raids, perceiving them as detrimental to their economic interests.

Keywords: Liquor Law Enforcement, Social Impact of Alcohol Consumption, The Role of the Police in Liquor Control.

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of alcoholic beverage circulation in Pematang Siantar City remains a significant social concern, particularly due to its association with crime, public disorder, and health risks. The uncontrolled distribution and consumption of alcohol have been linked to increased rates of violence, traffic accidents, and juvenile delinquency, posing a serious threat to public security and social stability (Rahmat, 2021). In several areas, illicit alcohol sales occur openly, with many establishments selling unlicensed or illegally imported alcoholic beverages. Additionally, alcohol consumption among minors and vulnerable groups exacerbates societal problems, leading to higher crime rates and public

disturbances. Consequently, law enforcement, particularly the police, plays a crucial role in regulating, monitoring, and combating the illegal distribution of alcoholic beverages to ensure public safety and compliance with legal regulations.

From a legal perspective, Indonesia has enacted several regulations to control alcohol distribution, including Law No. 2 of 2002 on the Indonesian National Police, which mandates police responsibility in maintaining public order and preventing crimes associated with alcohol consumption (Salim, 2020). Additionally, Presidential Regulation No. 74 of 2013 on Alcoholic Beverage Control strictly regulates the sale, distribution, and consumption of alcoholic beverages to prevent illegal trade and misuse. Empirical studies have shown that effective law enforcement, combined with community-based initiatives, significantly reduces the negative impacts of alcohol consumption (Setiawan, 2019). However, despite these legal frameworks, the enforcement of alcohol-related regulations remains inconsistent, with many cases of bribery, lack of police oversight, and weak penalties for violators undermining the effectiveness of police interventions (Sari, 2022). These challenges highlight the need for a more structured and strategic approach in handling alcohol-related offenses in Pematang Siantar City.

This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of police interventions in controlling the distribution of alcoholic beverages in Pematang Siantar City by examining law enforcement strategies, regulatory challenges, and the impact of police actions on reducing alcohol-related crimes. The research will assess the level of compliance with alcohol regulations, explore the obstacles faced by law enforcement officers, and identify best practices for improving police effectiveness in alcohol control measures. By evaluating both legal and practical aspects of alcohol regulation, this study seeks to provide comprehensive insights into the strengths and weaknesses of current enforcement mechanisms, ultimately offering policy recommendations to enhance law enforcement effectiveness in curbing illegal alcohol distribution.

Based on preliminary observations, this study hypothesizes that the effectiveness of police interventions in controlling alcohol distribution in Pematang Siantar City is hindered by weak law enforcement, corruption, and lack of coordination between law enforcement agencies and local communities (Neuman, 2014). While existing legal frameworks provide clear guidelines for alcohol regulation, the lack of enforcement consistency and resource limitations have allowed illegal alcohol sales to persist, contributing to public disorder and social instability. Therefore, a more integrated approach combining law enforcement, community participation, and stricter legal oversight is essential to improving alcohol control policies and ensuring a safer social environment.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology employed in this study consists of two primary approaches: library research (literature review) and field research (empirical study), where library research involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of legal sources, including statutory regulations, the Indonesian Penal Code (KUHP), books, academic journals, online sources, and expert opinions, serving as the foundation for understanding the legal framework governing the distribution and regulation of alcoholic beverages (Creswell, 2014), while field research is conducted through direct observations and interviews at the North Siantar Police Sector (Polsek Siantar Utara) in Pematang Siantar, along with other relevant institutions involved in alcohol control enforcement, enabling the study to assess real-world law enforcement practices, identify challenges in police interventions, and evaluate the practical implications of existing legal measures (Neuman, 2014), with collected data being analyzed using a qualitative approach to derive patterns, themes, and legal implications for improving law enforcement effectiveness in curbing alcohol distribution (Patton, 2015).

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

The Impact and Challenges of Alcohol Distribution in Pematang Siantar

The consumption of alcoholic beverages poses significant health risks and contributes to various social problems, including moral decline, behavioral deviations, and increased criminal activity. The misuse of alcohol is no longer confined to adults, as an increasing number of minors and students have been found to consume alcoholic beverages, leading to heightened concerns among law enforcement and policymakers (Rahmat, 2021). Additionally, the circulation of illegal alcoholic beverages—which are often adulterated with harmful substances—further exacerbates health hazards and public safety risks. Recognizing these dangers, the Government of Pematang Siantar, through law enforcement agencies, particularly the police, has intensified its efforts to combat alcohol-related offenses (Salim, 2020).

From a sociological perspective, the urgency of eradicating the illegal circulation of alcohol is intended to provide solutions to mitigate the risks posed by alcohol consumption, particularly through preventive measures, risk reduction strategies, law enforcement responses, and rehabilitation efforts (Setiawan, 2019). The effectiveness of these measures depends on the consistency of legal enforcement and the active participation of relevant stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, local governments, and community organizations (Sari, 2022).

The distribution and impact of alcoholic beverages in Pematang Siantar have been evidenced by various cases of alcohol-related crimes and violations. For instance, in July 2012, authorities seized approximately 219 bottles of alcoholic beverages from UD Makmur Jaya, consisting of 17 different types of alcoholic beverages sold without proper licensing, violating local regulations on alcohol

distribution (BPS Pematang Siantar, 2021). Furthermore, on November 13, 2022, a murder case involving Ricardo Sihotang occurred, where he was fatally stabbed by a friend during an alcohol-fueled gathering in Kelurahan Bane, Pematang Siantar, demonstrating the direct link between excessive alcohol consumption and violent crime (Santoso, 2022).

Similarly, in March 2014, two separate criminal cases were recorded in Pematang Siantar, both triggered by excessive alcohol consumption, further reinforcing concerns over the association between alcohol abuse and rising crime rates. In addition, data from the Pematang Siantar Police Department revealed that a majority of violent crimes handled by local law enforcement were linked to alcohol consumption, with 55 reported cases of violent crimes, 42 of which involved domestic violence incidents exacerbated by alcohol abuse (Kapolres Pematang Siantar, 2022).

Despite existing regulations, the distribution of alcoholic beverages in Pematang Siantar remains widespread and poorly monitored, allowing easy access for both adults and minors. The proliferation of modern retail stores, street vendors, and traditional "warung tuak" (palm wine stalls) selling low-class alcoholic beverages (Category A Alcohol) further facilitates the widespread consumption of alcohol, particularly among young individuals (Neuman, 2014). The availability of these beverages in informal establishments, often accompanied by relaxation spaces, makes it convenient for youth and students to engage in alcohol consumption, thereby increasing the risk of underage drinking and alcohol dependency (Patton, 2015).

Given the prevalence of alcohol-related issues, effective law enforcement must prioritize several key measures:

1. Strengthening Law Enforcement Mechanisms – Ensuring that alcohol-related regulations are enforced consistently, with strict penalties for illegal alcohol sales and unlicensed establishments.
2. Increasing Public Awareness and Community Engagement – Implementing educational campaigns targeting students and vulnerable groups to inform them of the dangers of alcohol abuse.
3. Regulating Alcohol Distribution Points – Imposing stricter regulations on retail stores, traditional alcohol vendors, and public consumption areas to limit underage access to alcohol.
4. Enhancing Inter-Agency Collaboration – Encouraging collaboration between law enforcement, health authorities, and social institutions to develop comprehensive policies for alcohol control and rehabilitation programs (Sari, 2022).

By integrating law enforcement efforts with community-based initiatives, the negative impacts of alcohol consumption can be significantly reduced, ensuring a safer and more controlled environment in Pematang Siantar.

Law Enforcement and Police Efforts in Controlling Alcohol Distribution in Pematang Siantar

The law enforcement efforts in controlling the distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages in Pematang Siantar play a critical role in maintaining public order, as regulated under Regional Regulation No. 9 of 2014 on the Prohibition of Alcoholic Beverages and Regional Regulation No. 119 of 2011 on Alcohol Supervision, Control, and Regulation, where the police employ both preventive and repressive strategies to curb alcohol-related offenses, including public awareness campaigns, strict monitoring of alcohol vendors, law enforcement raids, and legal sanctions against violators, while alcohol abuse remains a major public safety concern, contributing to violent crimes, domestic abuse, and social disturbances, as evidenced by numerous cases of alcohol-related criminal activities, reinforcing the need for stricter regulatory oversight, tougher penalties, enhanced community participation, and stronger collaboration between law enforcement agencies and local authorities to ensure effective control of alcohol-related issues and the preservation of social stability in Pematang Siantar (Santoso, 2022; Kapolres Pematang Siantar, 2022; Sari, 2022).

Challenges in Law Enforcement Against Alcohol Distribution in Pematang Siantar

The law enforcement efforts in Pematang Siantar to regulate and eradicate the distribution of alcoholic beverages face multiple challenges, including information leaks regarding police raids, strategic concealment of illegal alcohol by vendors, direct resistance from business owners, ineffective legal sanctions that fail to deter repeat violations, low public awareness of alcohol-related dangers, limited police personnel and resources, and the vast operational jurisdiction that slows enforcement efforts, where additional obstacles arise from logistical difficulties in scheduling public awareness programs, insufficient infrastructure for comprehensive monitoring, reluctance among residents to report alcohol-related offenses due to legal and safety concerns, and the economic benefits gained by alcohol vendors, which incentivize them to continue operations despite law enforcement crackdowns, reinforcing the need for enhanced intelligence measures to prevent information leaks, stricter legal penalties, increased community participation in alcohol law enforcement, expanded educational campaigns, better allocation of police resources, and the integration of technology such as CCTV surveillance and digital complaint platforms, all of which are necessary to strengthen regulatory control, improve law enforcement efficiency, and ensure public safety in Pematang Siantar (Santoso, 2022; Kapolres Pematang Siantar, 2022; Sari, 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

The urgency of eradicating alcoholic beverages arises from their negative impacts on behavior, morality, religion, and health, as well as the high crime rates linked to alcohol consumption, where the police play a crucial role in addressing alcohol abuse through guidance, supervision, and regulatory control, although law enforcement efforts face significant challenges, including resistance from business owners during raids, who perceive these operations as financially harmful and often obstruct police inspections of suspected illegal alcohol sales and storage locations, thereby hindering the effective enforcement of alcohol-related laws.

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