

Policy Transformation and Alternative Efforts to Prevent Narcotics Crime in South Sumatra

Andy Alfatih , Diana Dewi Sartika *, , Dyah Hapsari Eko Nueraheni ,
and Nabila Tahira 

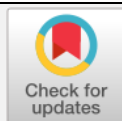
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University, 30662,
Ogan Ilir, South Sumatera Province, Indonesia

* Corresponding Author: dianadewisartika@fisip.unsri.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Publication Info:

Research Article



How to cite:

Alfatih, A., Sartika, D. D.,
Nueraheni, D. H. E., & Tahira, N.
(2024). Policy Transformation and
Alternative Efforts to Prevent
Narcotics Crime in South
Sumatra. *Society*, 12(2), 203-213.

DOI: [10.33019/society.v12i2.655](https://doi.org/10.33019/society.v12i2.655)

Copyright © 2024. Owned by
author (s), published by Society.

OPEN  ACCESS



This is an open-access article.

License: Attribution-
NonCommercial-ShareAlike
(CC BY-NC-SA)

Received: February 26, 2024;

Accepted: November 11, 2024;

Published: November 15, 2024;

ABSTRACT

Crime is a daily phenomenon that emerges within society. From a structural-functional perspective, crime is considered disturbing and disruptive to the harmonious and stable order of life (social pathology). Drug-related crime is considered a serious crime, even bordering on extraordinary crime, as it has a significant negative impact on the wider community. The research aims to describe the handling of drug-related crimes by the police apparatus in South Sumatra. The research method used is qualitative research to examine incidents and various data variations that emerge in the field, employing a case study approach. The results and discussions show that the South Sumatra Provincial Police have been responsive in addressing drug-related issues in the province, ranging from prevention to rehabilitation, using 4 approaches: 1) Soft Power Coach, 2) Hard Power Coach, 3) Smart Power Coach, and 4) Corporation. The use of drugs can occur due to several factors, namely Poverty Factors, Environmental Factors, Criminal Involvement Factors, and Dependency Factors, highlighting the need for optimal supervision to prevent individuals who have recovered from relapsing into drug consumption. BNN South Sumatra collaborates with the PKK board to create a drug-free village with the aim of monitoring indications of drug use in the village community and forming a rehabilitation task force that is responsible for socializing the community not to use drugs again and stay away from drug use in the community.

Keywords: Narcotics Crimes; Policy; Prevention Efforts; South Sumatra

1. Introduction

Crime is a daily phenomenon that emerges within society. From a structural-functional perspective, crime is considered disruptive and destructive to the order of life that should be harmonious and stable (Social pathology). In other terms, according to Shaw and McKay (Lilly et al., 2015), this condition is known as a social disorganization environment where control weakens, and the traditions of crime and the criminal world compete with conventional institutions. Other terms that also emerge as forms of social situations where people behave according to their desires without regard for the interests of others, even seizing the rights of others, are known as social deviation, social disintegration, and social differentiation (Kartono, 2017).

Crimes vary widely, ranging from theft, brawls, snatching, immoral acts, assault, and taking the life of a victim through murder, crimes related to narcotics, and others. These crimes also have specific specifications, such as violet motorbike theft or robbery (motorcycle mugging), and there are also criminal acts or fraud based on the use of gadgets (IT), commonly known as cybercrime, as well as crimes committed by the upper-middle class known as white-collar crime. Various types of violence, according to Mustofa, are referred to as the typology of crime (Mustofa, 2010).

Indonesia adopts a predominantly punitive approach, emphasizing strict law enforcement against drug traffickers, which includes severe penalties and a focus on the eradication of illegal narcotics through arrests and destruction of drugs (Sinaga et al., 2022). The implications of these policy transformations are profound. For instance, the move towards depenalization and restorative justice not only aims to reduce the burden on the criminal justice system but also seeks to foster a more supportive environment for individuals struggling with addiction (Jacinto et al., 2008).

This study specifically focuses on one type of crime, namely narcotics-related offenses. This crime is considered a serious crime, even leading to an extraordinary crime, because it has a detrimental or negative impact on the wider society. Crimes related to drug abuse aim to slowly but surely kill and destroy humanity (Prahassacitta, 2016).

Specific data on narcotics-related crimes in the South Sumatra Province indicates that in 2022, the crime rate ranked third-highest in Indonesia, following North Sumatra Province and DKI Jakarta (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022). This phenomenon cannot be ignored and requires special attention to be recognized and addressed. This condition forms the background for researchers to elaborate on policies related to the high rate of narcotics-related crimes and also to explore alternative policies for addressing these crimes.

2. Theoretical Framework

There are various definitions of public policy, according to several experts. Among them is the following definition. States that public policy is every intentional and lawful decision or action made by the government with the aim of protecting public interests, addressing public issues, empowering the public, and creating public welfare (Alfatih, 2010).

Jenkins defines public policy as a series of interrelated decisions made by an individual or a group of political actors concerning the determination of goals and the means to achieve them in specific circumstances where the achievement of these choices fundamentally lies within the power of those political actors (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003). In the same source, Anderson articulates public policy as a series of specific actions intentionally taken by an individual or a group of decision-makers (within the government) to address existing problems.

Meanwhile, Easton succinctly states that public policy is the application of various values that are coercive (by the government) to the entire society (Yousa, 2007). In the same source, Laswell and Kaplan indicate that public policy is a program intended to achieve various goals, values, as well as prevailing and desired norms.

Viewing drug crime through the lens of social learning theory reveals that individuals can adopt behaviors through their interactions with others, particularly their peers. Research by Newcomb et al. demonstrates a significant link between early drug problems and later involvement in criminal activities, highlighting how drug use can be learned and normalized within social environments (Newcomb et al., 2001). Social learning theory offers valuable insights into the factors that play a role in drug-related offenses. Understanding the normalization of drug use and the impact of social networks is crucial in comprehending how drug crimes are sustained and controlled within communities.

The function of a public policy serves as infrastructure in the utilization of facilities and resources owned by the government. Infrastructure can be interpreted as the basic facilities to ensure that both facilities and human resources function properly and correctly. Public policy becomes the infrastructure used to harness public resources. Without policy, the utilization of public resources would be contrary to the law. For example, without a policy, such as a decision letter from an authorized official granting permission for the use of official vehicles or the use of public funds, then the official vehicle or public funds cannot be used. Without the decision letter (policy) from the authorized official, the use of the official vehicle or the use of public funds could be considered theft, embezzlement, or corruption, and it can be subject to legal penalties.

3. Research Methodology

This study was qualitative research employing a case study approach, considering the specific nature of narcotics-related crimes prevalent in South Sumatra Province, which ranked third in Indonesia. The research did not involve generalization from processed sample data to the research population, as is typically done in quantitative research. Instead, it focused on the depth and variations of data that emerged in the field (Creswell, 2016; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

To achieve the objectives and analyze correlating factors and policies addressing crimes in South Sumatra Province, the subjects of this research included the Regional Police of South Sumatra and several other relevant figures, such as activists from the Legal Aid Institute (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum, or LBH), inmates, and prison officers. The involvement of the Regional Police provided insights into crime handling at the government level. At the same time, input from relevant figures allowed for an in-depth understanding of the issue from multiple perspectives.

Interviews were conducted to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the topic under study. At the same time, observation was used to obtain relevant data and information regarding behaviors, interactions, and events that occurred in the field. This involved directly observing the research subjects and their environment, enabling the researchers to capture more accurate and context-rich information.

3.1. Data Analysis Technique

In general, data analysis in this research follows Creswell's depiction of a linear and hierarchical approach (Creswell, 2016). The analysis is constructed from the bottom up, starting from collecting raw data to interpreting the meaning of themes through description. However,

in its application, it is not rigid, and this approach can be more interactive, with each stage interconnected and not always adhering strictly to the presented sequence.

Analysis begins from the early stages of the research, during the research process, and includes the formulation of conclusions. Data analysis starts from the early stages of the research through the formulation of basic research assumptions related to the literature review in the proposal writing. Then, after entering the data collection stage, raw data, secondary data, interview transcript, interim reports, field notes, photos, videos, and others will be obtained. The field data is organized and prepared in such a way for analysis purposes. Once organized, the researcher reads through all the obtained data. This stage is crucial to help the researcher better understand the research context holistically and determine if there is any additional information needed. Reading the data is not a one-time activity but is repeated to ensure that no data is overlooked for analysis purposes.

3.2. Qualitative Method

Data collection is a crucial aspect of research. To achieve the ultimate goals of a study, relevant data must be collected and explored comprehensively. In the process of data collection, the researcher immerses themselves and actively engages directly. Data collection in this study is conducted through in-depth interviews and documentation by gathering secondary data related to the research focus.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Description of Data Related to Drug-Related Crimes

Based on the data on the Number of Uncovered Drug-Related Crime Cases in the Drug Detective Directorate of the South Sumatra Regional Police and its Subordinates from 2020 to July 2023 in terms of Police Reports (LP), it is observed that the majority of police reports for drug-related crimes in 2020, 2021, and 2022 were recorded in the Palembang City Police. There were 280 cases in 2020, 319 cases in 2021, and 294 cases in 2022, totaling 893 cases during that period. Conversely, the Four Lawang Resort Police were the subordinates of the Drug Detective Directorate that received the least police reports, with a total of 111 cases during 2020, 2021, and 2022.

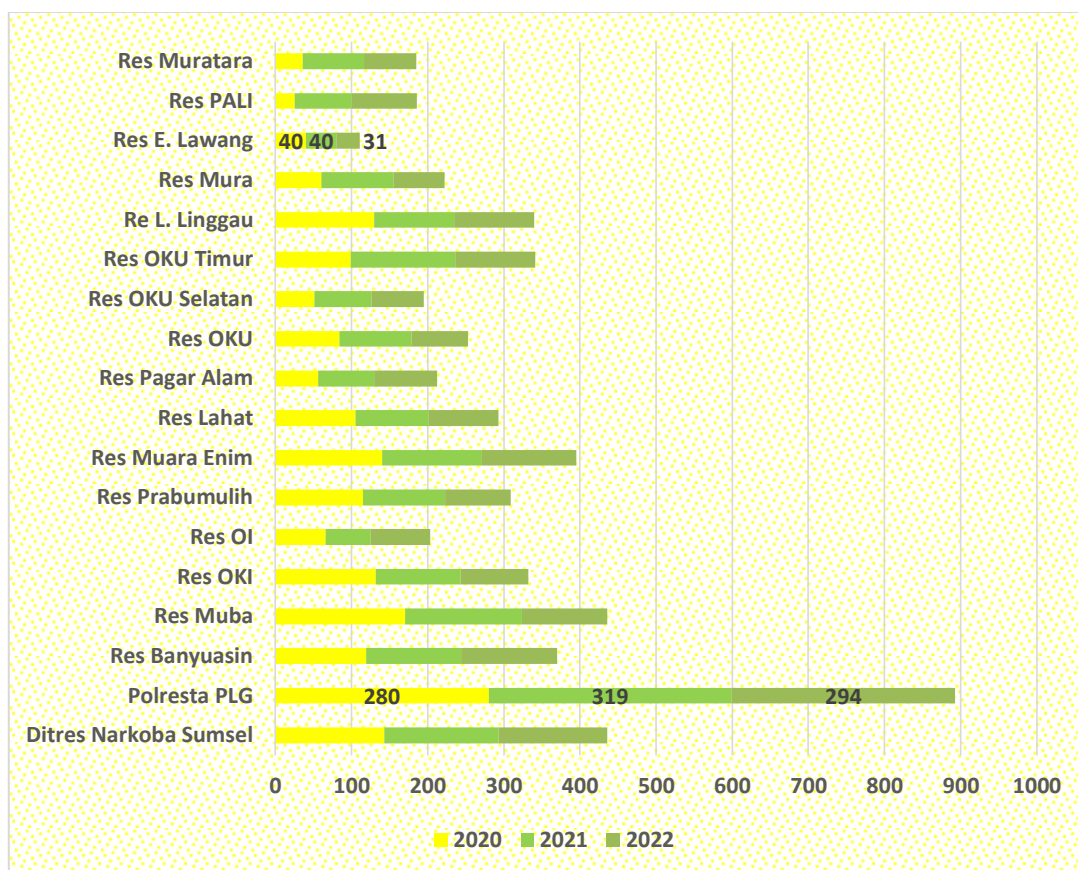


Figure 1. The Number of Drug-Related Crime Cases Uncovered by the Drug Detective Directorate of the South Sumatra Regional Police and Its Subunits Based on Police Reports from 2020 to July 2023

Source: Processed from the data of the Indonesian National Police South Sumatra from 2020 to 2022

Figure 1 indicates police reports on drug-related crime cases. Therefore, Figure 3 below illustrates suspect data, which is more numerous or larger than the police report data. In line with the data in Figure 2, the data in Figure 3 also shows that the highest number of suspects in drug-related crimes is in the Palembang City Police, especially in 2022, reaching 360 suspects. Meanwhile, the fewest suspects in drug-related crimes are reported in the Empat Lawang Resort Police.

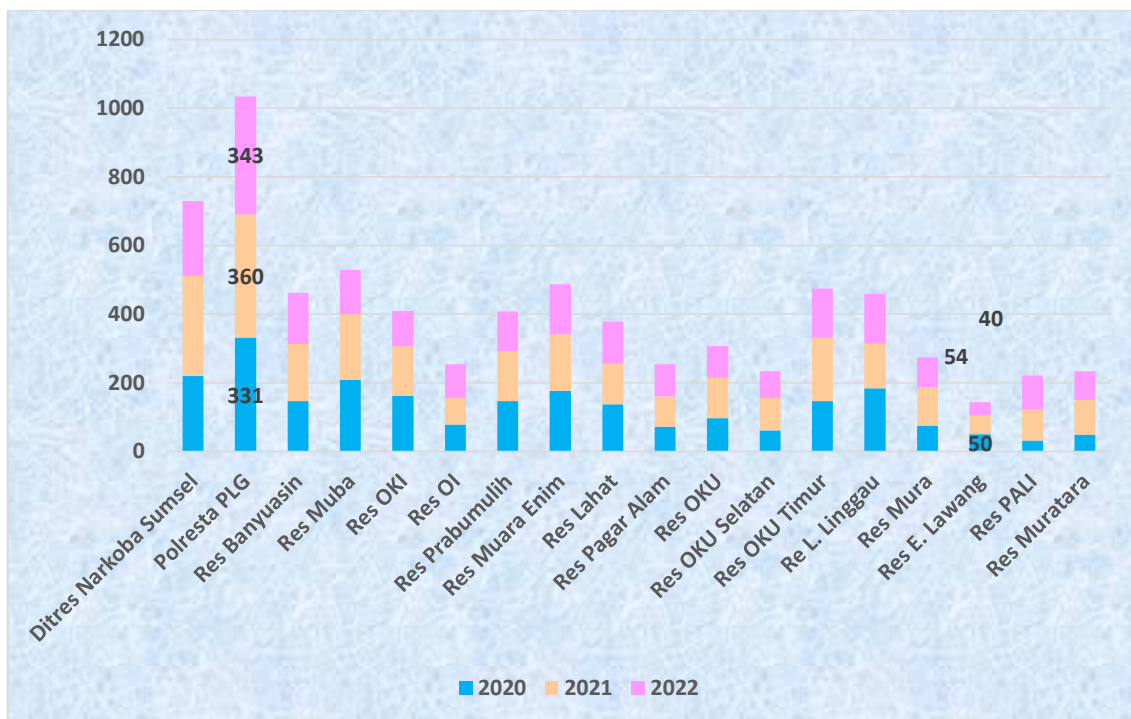


Figure 2. Suspects in Narcotics Crimes

Source: Processed from the data of the Indonesian National Police South Sumatra from 2020 to 2022

Regarding the evidence of drug-related crimes, four types of evidence were seized by the Indonesian National Police in South Sumatra from 2020 to mid-2023. The most frequently confiscated substance in drug-related cases was marijuana, followed by methamphetamine, locally known as *Sabu*. Notably, the quantity of *Sabu* seized has shown a significant and continuous increase from 2020 to 2023, highlighting its growing prevalence in the region.

If looked at based on age, the individuals involved in drug-related crimes are mostly in the productive age range, specifically those above 30 years old (See Figure 4), with the majority having completed Senior High School education (See Figure 5). This condition is certainly worrisome as the productive age should ideally be filled with positive activities for self-development, strengthening families, and contributing to society at large. This condition represents a pathological state, where there is a group of individuals acting against the values and norms they believe in, disrupting the stable and harmonious social order (Kartono, 2017).

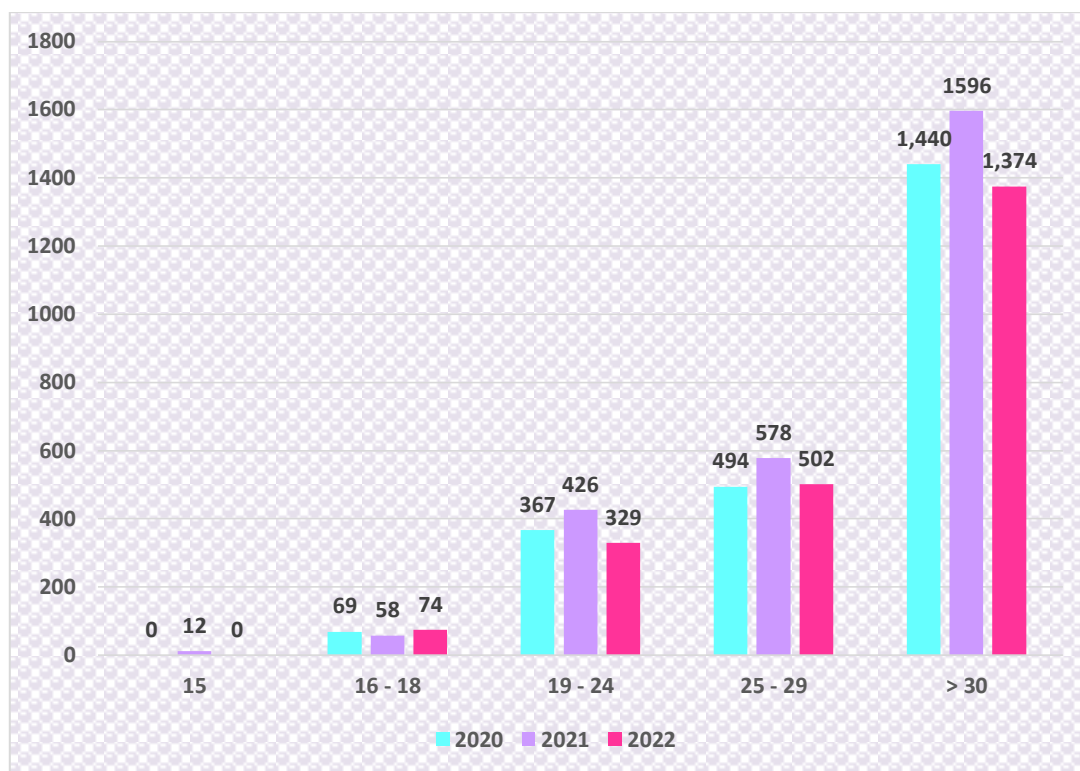


Figure 3. Perpetrators of Drug-Related Crimes Based on Age

Source: Processed from the data of the Indonesian National Police South Sumatra from 2020 to 2022

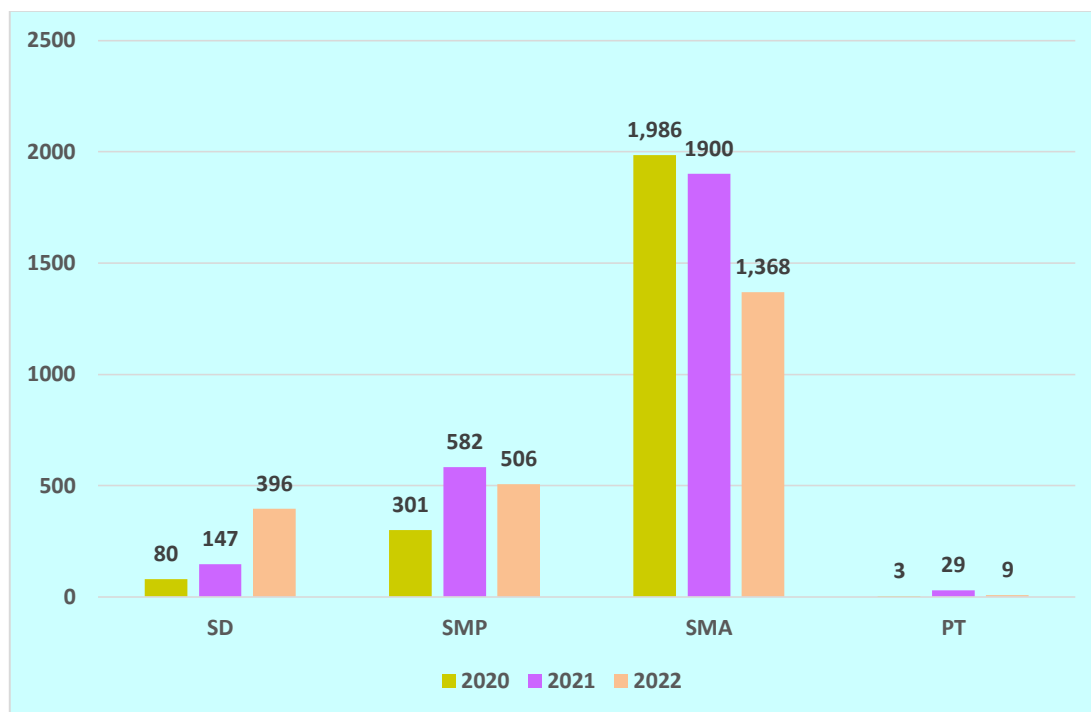


Figure 4. Perpetrators of Drug-Related Crimes Based on Educational Background

Source: Processed from the data of the Indonesian National Police South Sumatra from 2020 to 2022

When viewed based on occupational background, it is known that those involved in drug-related crime cases during the period of 2020, 2021, and 2022 are individuals whose occupations

mostly include laborers, unemployed individuals, farmers, entrepreneurs, and those working in the private sector.

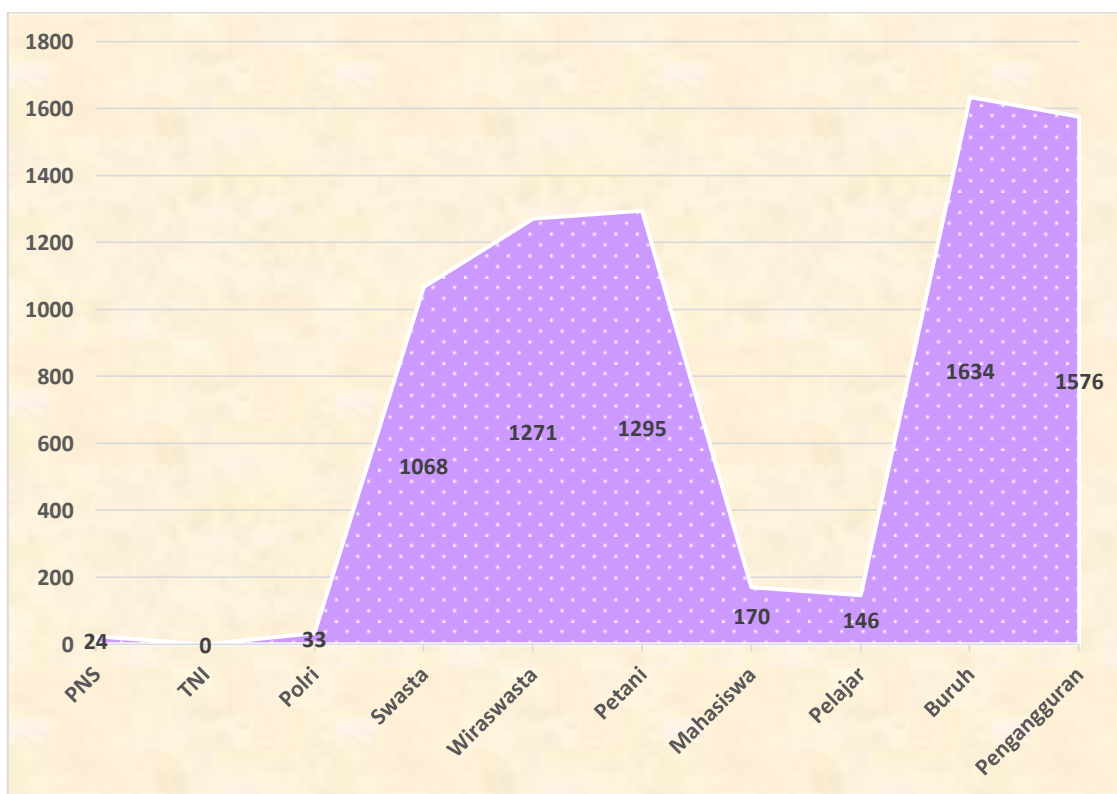


Figure 5. Average Number of Occupations of Drug Offenders

Source: Processed from the data of the Indonesian National Police South Sumatra from 2020 to 2022

4.2. Implementation of Policies and Alternative Policies Related to Narcotics Crimes

According to the Head of the Sub-Directorate of Narcotics Crime Intelligence Division of the South Sumatra Regional Police, two major policies have been implemented to address drug-related crimes. The first is an extensive educational campaign on the dangers of drugs aimed at raising public awareness and fostering community resistance to drug abuse. The second is the systematic assessment of drug addicts for rehabilitation, following the guidelines established under the Indonesian National Police Regulation (Peraturan Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia, or Perpol) Number 8 of 2021, which emphasizes restorative justice in criminal handling. The approach to restorative justice requires fulfilling both general and specific conditions to ensure its application aligns with societal and legal expectations.

The general requirements for handling criminal cases through restorative justice are divided into substantive and formal conditions. Substantively, the case must not cause social unrest, incite conflict, or threaten national unity. It must also avoid associations with radicalism, terrorism, or severe crimes like corruption and homicide, and the offender must not be a repeat offender as determined by court records. Formally, restorative justice demands evidence of reconciliation between the involved parties, such as a signed peace agreement and evidence that the offender has met obligations to the victim, including restitution and compensation for damages—though exceptions apply for drug-related crimes. Specific conditions for narcotics-related cases include criteria such as the offender being a drug addict or victim seeking rehabilitation, being caught in possession of small amounts for personal use, and having no

connections to drug trafficking networks. The offender must also undergo an integrated assessment and show willingness to cooperate with law enforcement for further investigations.

Interviews with representatives from the National Narcotics Agency (Badan Narkotika Nasional, or BNN) of South Sumatra reveal a multifaceted strategy for narcotics prevention and rehabilitation. This strategy comprises four main approaches. The Soft Power Approach involves prevention through education, rehabilitation, and community empowerment initiatives. The Hard Power Approach emphasizes strict law enforcement and eradication operations in drug-prone areas. The Smart Power Approach integrates advanced technology for intelligence gathering, arrests, and mapping drug networks, thereby enhancing operational efficiency. Finally, collaboration underscores the importance of partnerships with government entities, local communities, and private organizations to ensure the effectiveness of anti-drug campaigns.

The “Bersinar” (Clean from Drugs) program is a flagship initiative that combines these strategies to build drug-free villages. In collaboration with local governments, BNN works closely with community leaders to create sustainable programs that empower residents to resist narcotics. These include educational workshops, training in economic skills, and increased enforcement in high-risk areas. Leveraging technology, BNN has developed a community reporting website, enabling anonymous submissions of suspicious activities, thus fostering community participation and ensuring rapid response from authorities.

BNN’s preventive efforts extend beyond individual users to include broader social frameworks such as families, schools, and community organizations. A notable initiative is the partnership with the Family Welfare Movement (Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga, or PKK) organization through the Dasawisma program, where one representative per ten households monitors for signs of drug use within their families. In parallel, BNN has established a rehabilitation task force focused on education and relapse prevention rather than arrests. Rehabilitation efforts encompass medical and social approaches. Medical rehabilitation addresses physical dependence on drugs through detoxification and treatment, while social rehabilitation focuses on psychological recovery and reintegration into society.

According to Brigadier General Pol Djoko Prihadi, approximately 70% of individuals undergoing rehabilitation successfully recover, while the remaining 30% face challenges such as relapse due to environmental and economic factors. To address this, BNN emphasizes post-rehabilitation monitoring, including engaging families and communities to provide a supportive environment for individuals returning from rehabilitation centers. However, limited resources often hinder these efforts, leaving many at risk of returning to old patterns of behavior.

Community empowerment programs form another critical pillar of BNN’s strategy. These initiatives aim to provide alternative livelihoods for former drug users and vulnerable groups, equipping them with skills such as hydroponic farming, fish breeding, and baking. The goal is to shift the community’s mindset from dependency on narcotics to productive activities that contribute to personal and economic growth. By creating such opportunities, the program aspires to foster resilience against drug abuse while simultaneously addressing the root causes of addiction, such as poverty and lack of employment prospects.

Despite the comprehensive nature of South Sumatra’s drug policies, challenges remain in overcoming societal stigma and improving the overall effectiveness of prevention programs. Continuous evaluation and adaptation of strategies are essential to address these issues and achieve meaningful progress in the fight against narcotics crimes.

5. Conclusion

This research provides policy recommendations on actions that relevant stakeholders can take to minimize drug-related crimes in South Sumatra. The South Sumatra Regional Police have implemented two key policies: educating the public on the dangers of drug use and conducting assessments of drug addicts for rehabilitation, in accordance with Indonesian National Police Regulation Number 8 of 2021 on handling criminal acts based on restorative justice. Meanwhile, the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) of South Sumatra employs a four-pronged approach: (1) prevention, rehabilitation, and community empowerment through the Soft Power Coach strategy, (2) measured law enforcement via the Hard Power Coach strategy, (3) the use of IT and advanced technology under the Smart Power Coach strategy, and (4) collaboration with stakeholders through the Corporation approach to enhance the prevention and rehabilitation of drug users.

Cross-sector collaboration plays a critical role in expanding resources and expertise to improve the effectiveness of drug prevention measures. This approach involves partnerships among the government, private sector, and civil society, addressing issues that cannot be resolved by one sector alone. Such collaboration creates synergies that strengthen the impact of policies and programs. An example of this is the South Sumatra BNN's partnership with the Family Welfare Movement (PKK), formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the "Clean Drug-Free Village" initiative. This program focuses on monitoring indications of drug use within village communities and fostering awareness. Additionally, the formation of a rehabilitation task force aims to educate the community on the importance of avoiding drug use and supporting rehabilitation efforts.

6. Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their gratitude to all parties who provided support and facilitated the research and publication of this article.

7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

References

- Alfatih, A. (2010). *Implementasi Kebijakan dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat*. Unpad Press.
- Badan Pusat Statistik. (2022). *Statistik Kriminal 2022*.
<https://www.bps.go.id/id/publication/2022/11/30/4022d3351bf3a05aa6198065/statistik-kriminal-2022.html>
- Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research Design, Pendekatan Metode Kualitatif, Kuantitatif dan Campuran*. Pustaka Pelajar.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications.
- Howlett, M., & Ramesh, M. (2003). *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems*. Oxford University Press.
- Jacinto, C., Duterte, M., Sales, P., & Murphy, S. (2008). "I'm Not a Real Dealer": The Identity Process of Ecstasy Sellers. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 38(2), 419-444.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/002204260803800203>
- Kartono, K. (2017). *Patologi Sosial 2 - Kenakalan Remaja* (14th ed.). PT Raja Grafindo Persada.

- Lilly, J. R., Cullen, F. T., & Ball, R. A. (2015). *Teori Kriminologi, Konteks dan Konsekuensi*. Prenadamedia Group.
- Mustofa, M. (2010). *Kriminologi* (2nd ed.). Sari Ilmu Persada.
- Newcomb, M. D., Galaif, E. R., & Locke, T. F. (2001). Substance use diagnoses within a community sample of adults: Distinction, comorbidity, and progression over time. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 32(3), 239–247. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.32.3.239>
- Prahassacitta, V. (2016). The Concept of Extraordinary Crime in Indonesia Legal System: is The Concept An Effective Criminal Policy? *Humaniora*, 7(4), 513. <https://doi.org/10.21512/humaniora.v7i4.3604>
- Sinaga, J. F., Ediwarman, & Mulyadi, M. (2022). *Comparison Between Indonesia and the United States in Enforcement of Narcotics Illicit Trafficking*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220204.004>
- Yousa, A. (2007). *Kebijakan Publik, Teori dan Proses*. Laboratorium Pengkajian Penelitian dan Pengembangan Administrasi Negara, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, Universitas Padjajaran.

About the Authors

- 1) **Andy Alfatih** obtained his Doctoral degree from Padjadjaran University, Indonesia, in 2010. The author is an Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University, Indonesia.
E-Mail: alfatihmpa@yahoo.com
- 2) **Diana Dewi Sartika** obtained her Master's degree from Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, in 2007. The author is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University, Indonesia.
E-Mail: dianadewisartika@fisip.unsri.ac.id
- 3) **Dyah Hapsari Eko Nueraheni** obtained her Master's degree from Sriwijaya University, Indonesia, in 2008. The author is an Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University, Indonesia.
E-Mail: dyah_enh@yahoo.co.id
- 4) **Nabila Tahira** obtained her Master's degree from Sriwijaya University, Indonesia, in 2023. The author is a lecturer at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Sriwijaya University, Indonesia.
E-Mail: nabilatahira73@gmail.com