




Legal Factors That Affect the Behavior of Teenagers Extorting Drivers

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the factors influencing juvenile extortion behavior against drivers in Tasifeto Barat District, Belu Regency, and to examine the efforts to overcome such behavior. This phenomenon has caused public unrest and has the potential to disrupt public order. This research employs an empirical legal method with a qualitative approach, using data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation involving 15 respondents, including juveniles, local communities, government officials, and police officers. The results indicate that the factors causing extortion behavior consist of internal and external factors. Internal factors include identity crisis and weak self-control among adolescents, while external factors include lack of parental supervision, peer influence, alcohol consumption, and economic conditions. Alcohol consumption is identified as the dominant factor triggering and reinforcing extortion behavior. The efforts to address this issue are carried out through pre-emptive, preventive, and repressive measures. Pre-emptive efforts include legal education and guidance, preventive measures involve patrols and environmental supervision, while repressive actions include law enforcement with a restorative justice approach. However, these efforts have not been fully effective due to the lack of continuous supervision and active involvement of families and communities.

Keywords: *Juvenile Delinquency; Extortion; Causal Factors; Countermeasures; Empirical Law.*

INTRODUCTION

The life of the nation and the state to assess and know the quality and capabilities of the state, not only from the head of state and civil society but also must pay attention to the upcoming regeneration, especially for the youth of a nation itself so that in the future it can create a positive assessment because young people or teenagers are the hope and direction that will determine how life will be in the future. Therefore, adolescents must be trained to anticipate all deviations or actions that do not have morals so that in the future it will not be too late, and will not be an obstacle to the development of a country with integrity. Adolescence is one of the stages in human growth and development, there is a period where we as humans will experience adolescence or in biological science often called the period of adolescence/puberty, where this period the hormones in the human body undergo changes where there will be a transition period from childhood to adolescence, a time when humans will search for their own identity in various ways.

Masa dimana manusia akan mencoba banyak hal baru dan rasa ingin tahu yang sangat tinggi pula mengenai sesuatu entah itu baik maupun yang tidak baik oleh sebab itu masa remaja merupakan masa yang labil, masa dimana kurang adanya pengontrolan dari dalam diri sehingga tidak sedikit remaja yang terjerumus ke dalam hal-hal yang kurang baik yang akan membawa diri mereka ke hal negatif yang bahkan sampai merugikan diri sendiri maupun orang lain, tidak menutupi kemungkinan juga mereka bisa melakukan tindakan-tindakan kriminal seperti pemerasan, pencurian, tawuran dan sebagainya yang merugikan. Juvenile delinquency has two functions, there are 2 functions of social action that they

usually do, both positive and negative, namely: Positive actions of adolescents, namely:¹ a) Social association: Through this social association, adolescents can learn things, from how to communicate, how to respect, how to control themselves to be in the midst of society. Social associations also adolescents can speak freely in public (for example, there are many students who are smart at speaking at school); b) Having many friends: One of the positive impacts of promiscuity is that teenagers make more friends, both from their age to adulthood. They will be easily accepted because they can socialize well, and can adapt to a new environment; c) New experiences: Positive impacts in promiscuity, adolescents can have new experiences to train themselves to develop well; d) Please help: Adolescent associations also have a positive impact because they can help each other and help others in distress; e) Negative actions of teenagers.

Negative juvenile delinquency social action is an act committed by a teenager and this act has harmed many people such as the community, family, parents and others. The following are the actions of teenagers that have harmed many people, namely:² a) Extortion: One of the acts committed by teenagers and has harmed many people, in the extortion many teenagers have done something to the community forcibly which results in many of the surrounding communities becoming victims of the delinquency of the teenager; b) Consuming alcoholic beverages (alcohol): Many adolescents begin to learn to consume liquor so that it causes a negative act in themselves that harms them and many people; c) Brawls and Fights: Fights are a type of juvenile delinquency due to the complexity of city life caused by trivial problems; d) Abuse of narcotics, illegal drugs and liquor: Narcotics users and unauthorized drug users, with the aim of obtaining pleasure, introduce adolescents who can cause other criminal acts such as murder, rape, theft, and robbery. Criminal acts are criminal acts that harm others and violate legal norms. The following is a table of extortion that occurred in West Tasefeto District, Belu Regency, from 2023 - 2025.

Table 1.1 Extortion of Drivers from 2023-2025

No	Year	Number of Cases
1	2023	10
2	2024	22
3	2025	14
Total Cases		46

Source: Primary Data processed

Such a phenomenon occurred in West Tasifeto District, Belu Regency which was carried out by teenagers, namely extortion or illegal levies by teenagers on drivers, this incident continued when they had started consuming alcohol so that it caused them to dare to carry out the extortion action, what they asked for was money to buy alcohol that had run out or had run out, The extortion of the money was used to buy alcoholic beverages so that the teenagers no longer spent their personal money to buy but used the money from the extortion that was carried out. This incident continues if there is one of the teenagers who has a birthday, a breakup, or also just a mere pleasure that encourages them to carry out the extortion action, their victims are bus drivers, bemo transportation, rental car services, this

¹ Kartini Kartono, *Patologi Sosial 2 : Kenakalan Remaja*, (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, Tahun 2019).

² *Ibid*

has caused anxiety for the drivers if they want to pass through the road so that the surrounding community also feels the anxiety because it can cause congestion, even accidents.

They also did not hesitate to stop drivers in the middle of the road which could cause accidents and congestion, so that village officials such as Neighborhood Unit/ Community Unit, hamlet heads, and village heads as well as security forces have secured the teenagers by tightening guards at the scene of the incident. However, these efforts did not last long, if the village parties and security were no longer on guard they would continue to carry out the action again at night or midnight, so that the security parties and the village would not be on guard anymore so that the gap was used by teenagers to carry out extortion actions against drivers with various threats such as wanting to hit the driver, Damaging the vehicle, from the example of the above phenomenon has proven that in adolescence or when a child becomes a teenager he will experience hormonal changes or in other words will experience his wild puberty period so that it causes less control and lack of self-control of a person. During puberty, curiosity in teenagers is usually very high, so the act of wanting to try certain things is also strong. This desire to try is what makes teenagers do all forms of deeds that should be good deeds, but due to the lack of control and ignorance from parents and other adults, the actions taken are more directed towards criminal acts committed by teenagers.

Based on the above statement, it can be concluded that the act of extortion carried out by teenagers is considered to violate social values in schools and in society.³ Then instead of being orderly, the sanctions given actually make teenagers more difficult to regulate, thus the question that can be formulated to answer this phenomenon in the analysis of this paper is What are the Factors Causing Extortion Behavior Against Drivers in West Tasifeto District, Belu Regency? Are efforts to counter adolescent behavior extorting drivers in West Tasifeto District, Belu Regency?

METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

This research uses an empirical legal research method where this research is carried out directly in the field. The approach used in this study is a stratification approach that aims to facilitate the solution of problems faced by the community and this approach critically examines the placement of individuals to the available places in the structure and encourages them according to their role position. The data collection techniques used in this study are in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The research data sources used in the research are divided into three, namely, primary, secondary and tertiary data. All data is obtained, in qualitative juridical analysis, by describing and explaining the main matters related to this research, based on the problems raised.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Factors Influencing Teenagers Extorting Drivers in West Tasifeto District, Belu Regency

1. Adolescent Social Factors

³ Nyi R Irmayani, "Fenomena Kenakalan Remaja Pada Aktivitas Geng Motor," *Sosio Informa: Politeknik Kesejahteraan Sosial* 4, no. 2 (2018): 401-17. <https://ejournal.poltekesos.ac.id/index.php/Sosioinforma/article/view/1220>

Adolescent associations have a huge influence on the development of personality, attitudes, and behaviors. In adolescence, a person is in the stage of searching for identity so that they are easily influenced by the surrounding environment, especially peers. One of them is alcohol consumption causing adolescents to lose self-control, increase pseudo-courage, and decline in the ability to think rationally. In this condition, teenagers are more likely to commit aggressive actions, including forcibly stopping vehicles and asking for money with threats. This condition strengthens the theory of social control which states that weak self-control is the main trigger for deviant behavior.⁴

In addition, the results of the interviews show that the main purpose of extortion is to obtain money to buy liquor, so that extortion and consumption of liquor are interrelated and form a recurring cycle. Teenagers who have consumed alcohol will commit extortion, and the money from the extortion is used to buy alcohol. This makes alcohol not only a trigger, but also a reinforcement of the sustainability of extortion behavior.

In addition to consuming alcohol as the main factor, there are supporting factors that strengthen the occurrence of extortion behavior, including: The influence of older youth or "older brothers" The results of the interviews show that in practice, not all extortion acts come purely from the initiative of adolescents. There is the influence of young men or so-called "older brothers" who are more mature and single, who order or direct teenagers to extort drivers. Teenagers are often used as implementers in the field because they are considered more courageous and difficult to act on legally.

This phenomenon indicates the learning process of criminal behavior through association, as described in the *differential association* theory by Edwin H. Sutherland, which states that crime is learned through interaction with a distorted social environment.⁵ Teens who associate with more mature individuals and behave deviantly will tend to imitate such actions.

2. Lack of parental attention due to migration

Family factors are also the dominant causative factors. Based on the results of the interviews, some of the teenage perpetrators come from families where their parents, both fathers and mothers, go abroad to work. This condition causes adolescents to get less affection, attention, and supervision, so it is easier to blend in with a negative social environment.

This condition is in line with the opinion of Kartini Kartono who stated that the lack of parental attention and supervision is a factor that supports the occurrence of juvenile delinquency.⁶ Teens who don't get family control will seek recognition outside the home, including deviant behavior.

3. Self-Prominence Factors

The interview results also showed that some teens considered the act of extortion to be "cool" and made them look brave and recognized in the social group. Teenagers who participate in extortion are often seen as more sociable and have a higher social position

⁴ Travis Hirschi, *Causes of Delinquency*, (Oakland: University of California Press, 1969), p. 16.

⁵ Edy Pramono Rahmawaty Ismail, Adnan Wahyu Kashogi, Gokma Uliate Sitompul, Irvan Asido Siagian, William Thamrin Simatupang, and Jofian Wirnandi Wijaya, "Analisis Kenakalan Anak Dalam Relasi Keluarga Ditinjau Dari Perspektif Differential Association Theory 8, no. 2 (2024)," *IKRA-ITH HUMANIORA: Jurnal Sosial Dan Humaniora* 8, no. 2 (2024): 210-18, <https://jurnal.staiserdanglubukpakam.ac.id/index.php>.

⁶ Kartini Kartono, *Op. Cit.* p. 8

among their peers. This view is related to the identity crisis of adolescents, and makes them weak in self-control, where they try to gain social recognition through the wrong means. Travis Hirschi's theory of social control explains that weak social bonds and moral values are not able to control one's deviant behavior.

4. Factors of Unhealthy Mindset in Adolescents

An uncondusive social environment also forms the wrong mindset of adolescents. Based on interviews, the habit of consuming alcohol, gathering until late at night, and negative peer influence make extortion behavior considered normal and natural. This reinforces the theory that the environment has a major influence on adolescent behavior. According to Sutherland, criminal behavior thrives in an environment that supports or tolerates such acts.⁷

5. Social Status Factors of Children Out of Wedlock

From the results of the interview, it was also found that there were teenagers who were children out of wedlock, who felt that they did not have a parental figure or a place to lean on emotionally. This condition causes feelings of unlucky, inferiority, and marginality, thus encouraging the teenager to commit extortion as a form of venting and searching for identity.

This condition can be attributed to Robert K. Merton's Strain theory, which explains that social pressure and feelings of marginalization can encourage individuals to commit deviant actions as a form of adaptation to social injustice, in the study there were 5 children who had an incomplete background of being born to a father and mother who caused them to wander around with their peers so that they integrated with their environment because at home they did not get comfort in the house.

6. Road Infrastructure Condition Factors

Another factor found in the interview results is the condition of the natural and road infrastructure. In the event of a fallen tree or a damaged road with potholes that hinder road access, teenagers around the location will help clean or repair the road independently. However, the assistance was then used as an excuse to ask for money from each driver. This action in practice, developed into the habit of forcibly asking for money, so it turned into a form of extortion. In fact, these activities are used as a temporary livelihood by some teenagers. The money from the extortion is generally used to buy liquor and be consumed together. Related to this, it can be found that the main and supporting factors are very influential in causing juvenile delinquency in the form of drunkenness and extortion. The following are the internal factors and external factors that cause this: 1) Internal Factors – Self-Prominence Factors: Adolescents are individuals who are in the transition period from children to adults, so psychologically they are still experiencing the search for identity. Based on the results of interviews with several juvenile perpetrators, it is known that the act of extortion is carried out as a form of self-proof, courage, and an effort to gain recognition from peer groups. This identity crisis causes adolescents to be easily influenced by the environment and tend to engage in deviant behavior without considering the legal repercussions. This is in line with the opinion of Kartini Kartono who states that juvenile delinquency is a social pathological symptom due to the failure of adolescents in the process of adjusting to societal norms.⁸ In addition, the theory of social control put forward by Travis Hirschi also explains that the weak social ties of individuals with family, school, and society

⁷ Edwin H Sutherland, Donald R Cressey, and David F Luckenbill. *Principles of criminology*. (Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 1992), p. 75.

⁸ Kartini Kartono, *Op.Cit.* p. 8

will increase the chances of deviant behavior.⁹ Weak Self-Control, the results of the study show that adolescent extortionists have low self-control, especially in controlling emotions and behavior. This condition is further aggravated by the habit of consuming alcohol, which causes adolescents to act aggressively and irrationally. Adolescents who are unable to distinguish between acceptable and unlawful behavior are more likely to commit criminal acts. This is in accordance with Hirschi's view that criminal behavior arises when the mechanisms of self-control and social control do not function optimally; 2) External Factors: a) Family Factors: The family is a perfect environment that plays an important role in the formation of children's personalities. Based on the results of interviews with the community and the West Tasifeto sub-district, it is known that most of the juvenile perpetrators of extortion come from families that lack attention and supervision. Lack of communication between parents and adolescents seeks attention outside the home, including through deviant associations. According to Kartini Kartono, disharmonious family conditions are one of the main supporting factors for the emergence of juvenile delinquency; b) Environmental and Social Factors: A negative social environment has a great influence on adolescent behavior. Based on the results of the study, teenagers extort due to the influence of peers, people who are considered 'older brothers' and the habit of gathering while consuming alcohol. This is in line with the differential associative theory put forward by Edwin H. Sutherland, which is that criminal behavior is behavior that is learned through social interaction with groups that have previously committed crimes; d) Income Factor: Economic limitations are also a driving factor for extortion. Teenagers engage in extortion as an instant way to earn money, especially to buy liquor without having to work. The strain theory put forward by Robert K. Merton explains that the pressure between life goals and the limitations of legitimate means encourages individuals to commit deviant actions.

B. Efforts to Counter Adolescent Behavior Extort Drivers in West Tasifeto District, Belu Regency

Efforts to counter extortion behavior carried out by adolescents in West Tasifeto District are carried out through three main approaches, namely Pre-emptive, Preventive, and Repressive.

1. Pre-Emtif Efforts

Pre-emptive efforts are carried out through legal counseling and socialization to adolescents and the community about the legal impact of extortion. Police officers together with the sub-district government provide education about juvenile delinquency, the dangers of liquor, and the importance of maintaining public order. Pre-emptive efforts are carried out by instilling positive values in adolescents before the occurrence of violence. One of the steps that can be provided is to provide training and activities according to the talents of the youth's interests, such as martial arts, boxing, or other physical activities that are channeled through the arena and official coaches. With these facilities, adolescents' talents and energy can be channeled positively and controlled, so that they are not vented through acts of violence or extortion.

In addition, a persuasive approach by listening to the complaints and problems of adolescents without judgment is also an important step. This approach aims to build trust between adolescents, the community, and the local government so that adolescents feel cared for and do not seek an outlet through deviant behavior. This effort aims to instill legal

⁹ Kartini Kartono, *Ibid.* p. 8

awareness from an early age so that adolescents do not fall into criminal behavior.

2. Preventive Measures

Preventive efforts are carried out through routine patrols in locations prone to extortion, restrictions on adolescent activities at night, and supervision from village officials and local communities. Preventive efforts are made to prevent extortion by reducing the triggering factors. Considering that alcohol is the main factor, stricter supervision and management of alcohol circulation is needed. One of the alternatives that emerged from the interview was the provision of an official and controlled *sopi* management place, so that it could be a legal source of income for the community and reduce the practice of extortion as a temporary livelihood.

Local governments also need to be responsive in dealing with environmental conditions, such as repairing damaged roads and handling fallen trees which are often used as an excuse to ask for money from motorists. By fixing infrastructure, the chance of extortion can be minimized. According to Soejono Soekanto, preventive efforts are preventive measures taken before criminal acts occur to create social order.¹⁰

2. Repressive Efforts

Repressive efforts are carried out against adolescents who have committed extortion through coaching, data collection, and legal processes in accordance with Law Number 11 of 2012 concerning the Juvenile Criminal Justice System. Law enforcement officials in their handling prioritize a restorative justice approach so that adolescents can be fostered and not repeat their actions. Repressive efforts are carried out through strict law enforcement but still prioritize a coaching approach, considering that the perpetrators are teenagers. Law enforcement officials need to provide educational sanctions to have a deterrent effect without neglecting the future of children.

CONCLUSION

The factors that cause extortion behavior against drivers in West Tasifeto District, Belu Regency are influenced by the main factor, namely *mirat* and supported by internal factors in the form of identity crises and weak self-control of adolescents, as well as external factors in the form of lack of family attention, the influence of the social environment and economic factors. Efforts to counter extortion behavior carried out by adolescents have been carried out through pre-emptive, preventive, and repressive efforts, but these efforts have not been carried out optimally because there is still a lack of continuous supervision and the active role of families and communities.

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¹⁰ Soejono Soekanto, *Faktor-faktor yang Memengaruhi Penegakan Hukum*, (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2018), p. 95.

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