

THE ROLE OF LEGAL COUNSELORS IN STRENGTHENING LEGAL AWARENESS AND LEGAL CULTURE THROUGH FIQH SIYASAH

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Abstract

This study examines the role of legal counselors in strengthening legal awareness and legal culture through the Legal Awareness Village Program. The research was motivated by the persistence of legal violations despite Bentiring Village being designated as a Legal Awareness Village. The study aims to analyze the implementation of legal counselors' roles, identify the supporting and inhibiting factors, and examine them from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah*. This research employed an empirical juridical approach using empirical legal research. Primary data were collected through interviews with legal counselors, village officials, and community members, while secondary data were obtained from legislation, books, journals, and other relevant documents. Data were analyzed qualitatively. The findings reveal that the implementation of legal counseling has been carried out but remains suboptimal. Legal education activities are still limited, community paralegals have not been established, and legal awareness programs have not been implemented consistently. Village government support and community participation serve as the main supporting factors, whereas limited funding, human resources, and the low frequency of legal counseling constitute the primary obstacles. The perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* indicates that legal counseling reflects the government's responsibility to promote justice, public welfare, and legal awareness through effective and sustainable public legal education.

Keywords: *legal counselors, legal awareness, legal culture, Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah.*

INTRODUCTION

Strengthening legal awareness and legal culture has become one of the primary objectives of national legal development in Indonesia. Legal awareness refers to the condition in which individuals understand, appreciate, and voluntarily comply with legal norms in their daily lives. Within the framework of a constitutional state (*rechtsstaat*), fostering legal awareness represents an essential governmental responsibility to ensure social order, legal certainty, and the protection of citizens' rights (Wun, 2024).

Legal awareness is influenced by various interrelated factors, including legal institutions, law enforcement, legal education, and legal culture. Legal counselors play a strategic role in shaping legal awareness through public legal education and community empowerment. Legal counseling also functions as an instrument for strengthening legal compliance by encouraging individuals to understand their rights and obligations within society (Simarmata et al., 2025).

Public legal awareness constitutes a fundamental element in establishing an orderly, just, and law-abiding society. The success of legal development is therefore measured not only by the existence of legal regulations but also by the extent to which citizens understand, respect, and implement those regulations in everyday life. Sustainable legal awareness contributes to strengthening legal culture and increasing public participation in maintaining social order (Wun, 2024).

The Indonesian government has introduced several policies to strengthen public legal awareness, one of which is the Legal Awareness Village Program. This program aims to develop communities that understand legal principles, comply with legal norms, and resolve legal issues through appropriate legal mechanisms. Legal counselors serve as the primary actors responsible for disseminating legal information, promoting legal literacy, and encouraging community participation in developing a law-abiding society (Budijanto, 2021).

The implementation of legal counseling has been regulated through the Regulation of the Minister of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia Number 36 of 2025 concerning the Legal Counseling System and the Circular Letter of the National Legal Development Agency Number PHN-HN.04.04-01 of 2022 concerning Guidelines for the Establishment and Development of Legal Awareness Villages. These regulations require legal awareness programs to be implemented systematically, continuously, and periodically to strengthen public legal understanding and compliance (Wulandari, 2025).

Empirical conditions indicate that the implementation of the Legal Awareness Village Program has not fully achieved the expected standards. Preliminary findings in Bentiring Village revealed that legal counseling activities during 2025 were conducted only once, despite regulatory provisions requiring periodic implementation. Interviews with village officials also indicated that community paralegals, who are expected to strengthen local legal capacity, had not yet been established. These conditions demonstrate a discrepancy between regulatory expectations and practical implementation, reflecting the need to strengthen institutional commitment and improve program sustainability (Increasing Legal Awareness of Village Communities Through an Integrated Legal Counseling Program, 2025).

The limited implementation of legal awareness programs is closely associated with several challenges, including budget constraints, limited human resources, insufficient coordination among stakeholders, and the low frequency of legal counseling activities. These obstacles reduce the effectiveness of legal education and hinder the achievement of the objectives of the Legal Awareness Village Program. Continuous evaluation is therefore required to improve program implementation while strengthening collaboration between legal counselors, local governments, and community members (Pahlewi et al., 2024).

This study analyzes the role of legal counselors in strengthening legal awareness and legal culture through the Legal Awareness Village Program. The study also examines the supporting and inhibiting factors affecting program implementation and evaluates governmental responsibility from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah*. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of legal counseling policies and provide an academic framework for strengthening public legal awareness based on both positive law and Islamic political jurisprudence.

Limited financial resources, the insufficient number of legal counselors, and the broad geographical coverage of legal counseling activities remain significant challenges in implementing the Legal Awareness Village Program. These conditions indicate that the success of public policy implementation depends not only on well-formulated regulations but also on institutional capacity, adequate resources, and effective coordination among implementing agencies. Limitations in budget allocation and human resources reduce the frequency and quality of legal counseling activities, thereby affecting the effectiveness of legal awareness development within the community (Simarmata et al., 2025).

Preliminary findings reveal that the community of Bentiring Village responded positively to legal counseling activities despite their limited implementation. Participants acknowledged that legal counseling improved their understanding of legal norms and

provided opportunities to discuss legal issues directly with legal counselors. Direct interaction between the community and legal counselors also strengthened public trust in government institutions while encouraging greater public participation in legal awareness programs (Serah et al., 2024).

Legal counseling serves not only as a medium for disseminating legal information but also as a mechanism for establishing effective communication between the government and society. Legal counselors function as facilitators who translate legal provisions into practical knowledge that can be understood and applied by community members. Their responsibilities include strengthening legal awareness, promoting legal compliance, and assisting citizens in resolving legal issues through appropriate legal mechanisms (Budijanto, 2021).

The strategic role of legal counselors extends beyond the delivery of legal information because they bridge the gap between abstract legal norms and everyday social realities. Effective legal counseling enables communities to understand their rights and obligations while encouraging voluntary compliance with legal regulations. Achievement of these objectives depends largely on the competence of legal counselors, institutional support, and the continuity of legal education programs (Simarmata et al., 2025).

Current implementation has not yet achieved the expected level of effectiveness. Legal counseling activities remain infrequent, while program coverage has not reached all segments of society. These conditions demonstrate a gap between the normative responsibilities assigned to legal counselors and the practical implementation of legal awareness programs. Institutional limitations, inadequate coordination, and varying levels of community participation continue to influence the effectiveness of legal awareness development (Waluyo, 2025).

The perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* views legal counseling as part of the government's responsibility to realize public welfare (*maṣlaḥah 'āmmah*) through legal education and the protection of citizens' rights. Government institutions are entrusted with ensuring that society understands legal norms and applies them responsibly in daily life. Public policies should therefore emphasize justice, legal certainty, and social welfare as fundamental principles of governance (Aprelia et al., 2023).

Evaluation of the implementation of legal counseling is necessary to determine whether the Legal Awareness Village Program has fulfilled its objectives in strengthening legal awareness and legal culture. Analysis from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* provides a comprehensive framework for assessing governmental responsibility in implementing legal education while promoting justice and public welfare. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of more effective legal counseling policies and sustainable legal awareness programs (Diana et al., 2025).

The perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah* considers the development of public legal awareness as part of the government's responsibility (*ulil amr*) to realize public welfare (*maṣlaḥah 'āmmah*). Government institutions are entrusted with maintaining social order through law enforcement and continuous legal education. Public authority is expected not only to formulate legal policies but also to ensure their effective implementation in promoting justice, legal certainty, and social welfare. The principles of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* emphasize that governmental authority must be exercised responsibly to achieve the public interest while protecting the rights of all members of society (Aprelia et al., 2023).

The development of public legal awareness represents a practical manifestation of governmental responsibility in strengthening legal compliance and legal culture.

Achievement of these objectives depends on the effectiveness of legal counseling activities, institutional commitment, and active community participation. Limited implementation of legal awareness programs may reduce their contribution to developing a law-abiding society and achieving sustainable legal development (Simarmata et al., 2025).

The discrepancy between the normative standards established by legal regulations and their practical implementation within society provides an important basis for further research. Evaluation of the role of legal counselors is necessary to determine the extent to which legal awareness programs have fulfilled their intended objectives while strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture. Community participation and institutional support remain decisive factors in improving the effectiveness of legal counseling programs (Putra et al., 2023).

This study is conducted to analyze the implementation of legal awareness and legal culture development, identify the factors influencing program implementation, and evaluate governmental responsibility from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah*. The findings are expected to contribute to the formulation of more effective and sustainable legal counseling policies while strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture. Contemporary studies emphasize that legal literacy and continuous legal education constitute essential instruments for building a law-abiding society and improving public compliance with legal norms (Wulandari, 2025).

This study specifically aims to analyze the role of legal counselors in strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah*. The study also evaluates the effectiveness of legal counseling activities in supporting the implementation of the Legal Awareness Village Program and promoting public welfare through responsible governance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed an empirical juridical approach to analyze the role of legal counselors in strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah*. The research was conducted in Bentiring Village and the Regional Office of the Ministry of Law, Bengkulu Province. These locations were selected because they are directly involved in the implementation of legal counseling activities and the Legal Awareness Village Program.

The research participants consisted of legal counselors, village officials, and community members who had participated in legal counseling activities. Primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews, while secondary data were obtained from legislation, scientific journal articles, official reports, and other relevant documents. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation to obtain comprehensive information regarding the implementation of legal counseling and the factors influencing its effectiveness.

Qualitative data analysis was applied through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis focused on evaluating the implementation of legal counseling, identifying supporting and inhibiting factors, and examining governmental responsibility in strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture from the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Role of Legal Counselors in Strengthening Public Legal Awareness and Legal Culture Based on Indonesian Legal Regulations

The findings of this study were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation conducted at the Bentiring Village Office, the Regional Office of the Ministry

of Law of Bengkulu Province, and other stakeholders involved in the implementation of legal awareness and legal culture development programs. The analysis compares the normative framework governing legal counseling with its empirical implementation in Bentiring Village to evaluate the effectiveness of legal counselors in strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture.

The Legal Awareness Village Program represents one of the government's strategic policies for promoting legal awareness and strengthening legal culture within society. National legal regulations assign legal counselors the responsibility to conduct legal counseling, develop Legal Awareness Villages, establish and supervise Legal Awareness Family Groups (*Kadarkum*), facilitate community legal empowerment, and monitor the implementation of legal awareness programs. These responsibilities demonstrate that legal counselors are expected to function not only as providers of legal information but also as facilitators of sustainable legal education capable of strengthening public legal awareness and encouraging compliance with legal norms.

Empirical findings indicate that the implementation of these responsibilities has been carried out but has not yet reached the expected level of effectiveness. Legal counseling activities in Bentiring Village were conducted only once during 2025, despite national guidelines recommending that legal awareness activities be implemented at least twice annually. Community-based legal support mechanisms, including *Kadarkum* groups and community paralegals, have also not been fully established. These conditions indicate a discrepancy between the normative responsibilities assigned to legal counselors and their practical implementation. Limited institutional capacity, insufficient program intensity, and inadequate supporting structures continue to influence the effectiveness of legal awareness development (Simarmata et al., 2025).

The implementation of legal counseling demonstrates that legal counselors have successfully performed their educational function by improving public understanding of legal rights and obligations. Interview results revealed that community members gained greater legal knowledge after participating in counseling activities and became more confident in discussing legal issues affecting their daily lives. Legal counseling also created opportunities for direct interaction between government institutions and the community, allowing legal counselors to respond to legal concerns related to family disputes, land conflicts, and other community legal issues. These findings indicate that legal counseling contributes positively to strengthening legal literacy while encouraging greater community participation in legal awareness programs (Serah et al., 2024).

The interactive method adopted during legal counseling activities proved effective in facilitating communication between legal counselors and community members. Discussions and question-and-answer sessions encouraged active participation and enabled legal counselors to provide practical legal explanations based on the specific needs of participants. Interactive legal counseling therefore functions not only as a medium for disseminating legal information but also as an instrument for developing legal culture through participatory learning and continuous public engagement. Limited frequency of counseling activities, however, reduces opportunities for reinforcing legal values and weakens the long-term impact of legal education. Sustainable implementation supported by regular counseling activities is therefore required to strengthen legal awareness and legal culture more effectively (Sariroh et al., 2024).

Legal counselors also perform an important role as agents of social change by connecting government institutions with local communities. Their responsibilities extend beyond legal education to include facilitation, mediation, and community empowerment in

resolving legal issues. Research findings indicate that the educational role has been implemented effectively, while the facilitative and mediating functions remain constrained by the absence of community paralegals and limited follow-up activities after legal counseling sessions. These limitations reduce institutional capacity to provide continuous legal assistance and weaken community empowerment in addressing legal problems independently (Putra et al., 2023).

Comprehensive evaluation of the findings demonstrates that the implementation of legal counselors' roles in Bentiring Village has fulfilled several essential responsibilities mandated by national regulations but has not yet achieved optimal effectiveness. Legal counseling activities have contributed to improving public legal awareness and legal literacy, yet sustainable legal culture requires stronger institutional commitment, increased program intensity, continuous community empowerment, and broader collaboration among relevant stakeholders. Strengthening these aspects is expected to improve the effectiveness of the Legal Awareness Village Program while supporting the development of a law-abiding society characterized by greater legal awareness and responsible civic participation (Waluyo, 2025).

Factors Influencing the Implementation of Public Legal Awareness and Legal Culture Development

The implementation of public legal awareness and legal culture development is influenced by institutional, social, and organizational factors that determine the effectiveness of legal counseling programs. Research findings indicate that support from the Bentiring Village Government has become an important factor in facilitating the implementation of legal counseling activities. The village administration provided administrative assistance, coordinated community participation, and collaborated with legal counselors from the Regional Office of the Ministry of Law to organize legal awareness programs. Institutional collaboration strengthens program implementation because local governments function as strategic partners in connecting public institutions with community members. Active cooperation between village authorities and legal counselors contributes to the successful dissemination of legal information and encourages greater public involvement in legal education activities (Budijanto et al., 2021).

Community participation also contributed significantly to the implementation of legal awareness programs. Interview results revealed that participants actively engaged in discussions, asked questions concerning legal issues affecting their daily lives, and demonstrated increased understanding of legal rights and obligations after attending legal counseling sessions. Interactive participation created opportunities for legal counselors to identify community legal needs while strengthening legal literacy among participants. Previous studies similarly conclude that participatory legal counseling enhances public legal awareness because community members become actively involved in the learning process rather than acting solely as recipients of legal information (Irawan et al., 2024).

Research findings further indicate that several institutional constraints continue to reduce the effectiveness of legal awareness development in Bentiring Village. Limited financial resources restricted legal counseling activities to only one implementation during 2025, despite national policy encouraging periodic legal education. Limited funding also affected the establishment of community paralegals and reduced opportunities for continuous legal mentoring. Human resource limitations presented additional challenges because the number of legal counselors available at the Regional Office of the Ministry of Law remained insufficient to serve all assisted villages effectively. These conditions reduced program continuity and limited the long-term internalization of legal values within the community.

Comprehensive evaluation demonstrates that the effectiveness of public legal awareness programs depends not only on regulatory support but also on institutional commitment, community participation, financial sustainability, and adequate human resources. Sustainable legal awareness requires continuous legal counseling, stronger inter-institutional collaboration, sufficient budget allocation, and broader community empowerment through the establishment of community-based legal support mechanisms. Strengthening these factors is expected to improve the implementation of the Legal Awareness Village Program while promoting a stronger legal culture and greater public compliance with legal norms (Samosir et al., 2025).

Analysis of Public Legal Awareness and Legal Culture Development from the Perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah*

The implementation of public legal awareness and legal culture development constitutes an integral part of governmental responsibility in executing public policies. From the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah*, executive authority (*al-sultāh al-tanfidhiyyah*) is responsible for implementing laws and public policies in a manner that promotes justice, legal certainty, and public welfare. Government institutions therefore bear responsibility not only for establishing legal regulations but also for ensuring that these regulations are effectively implemented through legal counseling, public education, and community empowerment. Legal counselors function as executive actors who translate governmental policies into practical legal services for society, making legal awareness programs an important instrument for achieving the objectives of Islamic governance (Angraini et al., 2025).

The implementation of legal counseling in Bentiring Village demonstrates that the program has reflected the fundamental principles of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* by providing legal education aimed at improving public legal awareness and encouraging compliance with legal norms. Community members reported increased understanding of their legal rights and obligations after participating in legal counseling activities, indicating that the program contributes positively to strengthening legal literacy. The objective of *maṣlahah* (public welfare), however, has not yet been fully realized because legal counseling activities remain limited in frequency, community paralegals have not been established, and continuous legal mentoring has not been implemented. These findings indicate that the realization of public welfare requires sustainable implementation supported by adequate institutional capacity and continuous governmental commitment (Safitri et al., 2025).

Governmental responsibility (*ma'suliyah al-daulah*) within *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* extends beyond policy formulation toward ensuring effective implementation and equitable access to legal services. Research findings reveal that legal counselors have fulfilled their educational responsibilities by disseminating legal knowledge and facilitating communication between government institutions and the community. Institutional limitations, including restricted financial resources, limited numbers of legal counselors, and the absence of community paralegals, have nevertheless reduced the effectiveness of program implementation. These conditions demonstrate that effective public policy requires adequate institutional resources, professional human resources, and sustainable administrative support to achieve its intended objectives (Mayyadah et al., 2025).

Evaluation of the research findings further indicates that legal counselors perform an important role as agents responsible for implementing governmental policies through legal education and community empowerment. Their responsibilities include disseminating legal information, encouraging legal compliance, strengthening legal culture, and promoting social order within society. Several empirical obstacles, including limited program continuity

and insufficient institutional support, continue to create a gap between the normative objectives of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah* and their practical implementation. Strengthening institutional collaboration, increasing the frequency of legal counseling, expanding community participation, and establishing community paralegals are therefore essential to improving the effectiveness of legal awareness programs and achieving sustainable public welfare (Nisak et al., 2025).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the implementation of public legal awareness and legal culture development in Bentiring Village is consistent with the principles of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah*, particularly regarding governmental responsibility to realize justice and public welfare. Achievement of these objectives requires stronger institutional commitment, adequate financial support, sustainable legal counseling, and continuous community empowerment. Comprehensive implementation of these elements will strengthen legal awareness, encourage voluntary compliance with legal norms, and support the realization of accountable and welfare-oriented governance in accordance with the principles of Islamic political jurisprudence (Irwansyah, 2023).

KESIMPULAN

The implementation of the role of legal counselors in strengthening public legal awareness and legal culture in Bentiring Village has been carried out through direct legal counseling activities using lectures, discussions, and question-and-answer methods in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of Law Number 36 of 2025 concerning the Legal Counseling System. The findings indicate that the program has contributed to improving community legal knowledge, supported by the commitment of the village government, active community participation, and institutional collaboration with the Regional Office of the Ministry of Law of Bengkulu Province. The implementation, however, has not yet achieved optimal results because legal counseling activities were conducted only once during the year, community paralegals have not yet been established, the development of Legal Awareness Family Groups (*Kadarkum*) remains limited, the number of legal counselors is insufficient, and budget constraints continue to affect the sustainability of legal awareness programs. These conditions demonstrate that legal counseling has primarily focused on the dissemination of legal information rather than on sustainable community empowerment. From the perspective of *Fiqh Siyasah Tanfidziyah*, the implementation of legal awareness and legal culture development represents the government's responsibility to realize *maṣlahah* (public welfare), justice, and public legal services through legal education. Strengthening institutional collaboration among the Regional Office of the Ministry of Law, the Bentiring Village Government, and community stakeholders is therefore essential to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of legal awareness programs, ultimately fostering a law-abiding society while fulfilling the broader objectives of public welfare and good governance.

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