

Legal Awareness Among KNPI Youth in Indramayu District, Indramayu Regency

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INDEXING	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Keyword 1; Awareness Keyword 2; Legal Keyword 3; Indramayu Keyword 4; Youth Keyword 5; Society	Legal awareness is an essential aspect in building an orderly and just society, particularly among youth who serve as agents of change. This study aims to analyze the level of legal awareness among KNPI youth in Lemah Abang District, Indramayu Regency, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate effective strategies for strengthening legal awareness. The research employed a descriptive qualitative method with a participatory approach, using seminars, legal counseling, group discussions, case-based training, and moot court simulations. Data were collected through observation, interviews, documentation, and pre-test and post-test assessments of 45 participants. The findings reveal that the average level of legal understanding increased from 58% before the program to 84% afterward, with significant improvements in knowledge, comprehension, attitudes, and legal behavior. Supporting factors included active youth participation and community leader involvement, while constraints were related to limited time, diverse educational backgrounds, and social environmental influences. These results highlight the importance of youth organization-based legal education as a sustainable strategy for fostering a law-abiding young generation.

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INTRODUCTION

Legal awareness is a fundamental aspect of social life because the law serves not only as a binding set of rules but also as a reflection of culture, morality, and the direction of national development. Indonesia, as a nation based on the rule of law, places law as the supreme authority in every aspect of life. However, the reality on the ground shows that the level of legal awareness in society remains relatively low. The phenomenon of legal violations has become almost part of social routine, from simple matters such as traffic violations to actions with major implications such as drug cases, corruption, and acts of violence. This weak legal awareness is a serious obstacle to the realization of an orderly, just, and prosperous society, so an effective strategy is needed to build a strong legal culture within the community.

In the context of youth, legal awareness is crucial because young people are often viewed as agents of change, possessing the energy, idealism, and courage to make change happen. However, social reality shows that many young people are still trapped in deviant and unlawful behavior. Influencing factors include low legal literacy, minimal outreach from the government and relevant institutions, weak family supervision, and the influence of a permissive social environment. This situation creates social unrest and raises significant questions about how to instill legal awareness among young people so they can become drivers of positive social change.

The Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI), as the largest youth organization in Indonesia, plays a strategic role in addressing these issues. KNPI serves as a forum for bringing together various youth organizations across various fields, religions, and ideologies, enabling it to serve as a center for strengthening youth capacity in various aspects, including legal aspects. At the sub-district level, KNPI serves as a space for cadre development, a place of learning, and a means of character building for youth. The KNPI in Lemah Abang Sub-district, Indramayu Regency, holds a strategic position because it is able to gather the potential of youth from various villages. However, initial observations indicate that the legal awareness of KNPI youth in this region is still moderate. Many of them only know the legal rules in a normative sense, but do not internalize legal values in their daily behavior.

This condition is evident in social behaviors such as traffic violations, the habit of hanging out late at night without a clear direction, alcohol consumption, and involvement in conflicts between youth that frequently occur in the community. Low legal awareness among youth not only harms themselves but also negatively impacts social order and can even create a negative stigma against the younger generation. Therefore, real and sustainable efforts are needed to build legal awareness among youth, both through formal education and through informal activities based on youth organizations such as the Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI).

Theoretically, legal awareness can be understood through the thinking of Soerjono Soekanto who mentions four indicators of legal awareness, namely legal knowledge, legal understanding, legal attitude, and legal behavior. Legal knowledge relates to the extent to which a person is aware of the rules, legal understanding shows a deeper understanding of the intent of the rules, legal attitude refers to a person's tendency to accept or reject the rules, while legal behavior is a concrete form of obedience to or violation of the law. These four indicators illustrate that legal awareness should not stop at merely normative knowledge, but must be manifested in everyday attitudes and behavior. Young people who understand the importance of the law will demonstrate compliance in their actions, for example by being disciplined in traffic or refusing invitations to commit unlawful acts.

Furthermore, Lawrence M. Friedman emphasized that the legal system consists of three main elements: substance, structure, and legal culture. Legal substance is the applicable rules, legal structure is the institutions that enforce them, while legal culture is the public's attitudes and behavior toward the law itself. Legal awareness falls within the scope of legal culture, which is crucial for the success or failure of law enforcement. Without a sound legal culture, legal rules will remain mere regulatory texts, and law enforcement agencies will struggle to carry out their functions. Therefore, building legal awareness among youth is tantamount to strengthening the nation's legal culture.

Satjipto Rahardjo also reminded that the law must be living law, meaning law that is truly alive and accepted in society. Law should not remain merely a normative document, but rather become a value that governs everyday social action. This perspective is particularly relevant when applied to youth, as they are in the character-building phase. If legal awareness is instilled from an early age, they will grow into a generation that not only understands the rules but also uses the law as a moral guide.

Several previous studies have emphasized the importance of youth organizations in fostering legal awareness. Siregar (2019) found that the majority of youth are aware of legal regulations but lack discipline in their application. Wulandari (2021) in her study of university students showed that many violations of traffic regulations and rules persist despite

their relatively good legal knowledge. Meanwhile, Firmansyah (2022) emphasized that youth organizations play an effective role as a medium for legal education, as they are more receptive to legal values through a community-based and participatory approach. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap, focusing on the role of the KNPI (National Student Association) in Lemah Abang District in enhancing youth legal awareness.

The social context of Indramayu Regency, particularly Lemah Abang District, also exhibits interesting dynamics. As an agricultural region with a relatively large youth population, this region is frequently plagued by social issues involving youth, such as traffic violations, gang brawls, and alcohol abuse. The lack of non-formal educational facilities that could provide a platform for legal learning further exacerbates the situation. This demonstrates that low legal awareness among youth is not merely an individual issue, but also a structural and cultural one. A permissive social environment, weak community control, and the family's lack of involvement in instilling legal discipline contribute to this situation.

Given these conditions, community service activities based on the National Student Movement (KNPI) are highly relevant and urgent. KNPI, with its organizational network extending down to the village level, is able to reach youth more broadly, enabling more effective implementation of legal education programs. Through seminars, outreach, case-based training, and mentoring, it is hoped that youth will not only acquire legal knowledge but also internalize legal values in their attitudes and behavior. This model of legal education based on youth organizations can also be replicated in other regions, so its benefits will not be limited to Indramayu but can contribute to the character development of Indonesian youth as a whole.

From the description above, it can be confirmed that this research has both theoretical and practical relevance. Theoretically, this research enriches the literature on legal awareness and community-based legal education. Practically, this research makes a tangible contribution to increasing the capacity of KNPI youth to understand and apply the law. By instilling legal awareness from an early age, youth can act as agents of change, leading society towards a more orderly and just life.

The research questions to be answered are: what is the level of legal awareness of the KNPI youth in Lemah Abang District, Indramayu Regency, what factors support and hinder the legal awareness of the youth, and what effective strategies can be implemented to increase legal awareness through seminars, counseling, training, and mentoring. The purpose of this research is to analyze the actual condition of legal awareness of the youth, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate improvement strategies that are in accordance with the characteristics of the KNPI youth.

The benefits of this research are divided into two: theoretical and practical. The theoretical benefits include contributions to enriching academic discourse on legal awareness and the role of youth organizations. The practical benefits include concrete models that can be implemented by the Indonesian National Youth Council (KNPI) and other youth organizations in an effort to build a legally aware young generation. The urgency of this research is not only important for KNPI Lemah Abang or the Indramayu community, but also has broader implications for national character building. Legally aware youth will serve as role models in their communities, reduce the number of social violations, and strengthen the legal culture in society. Thus, this research is expected to make a real contribution to creating a law-abiding young generation that also plays an active role in national development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Legal Awareness

Legal awareness refers to the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavioral tendencies of individuals or groups to consciously comply with the law (Syamsarina et al., 2022) . This awareness is an important indicator in assessing the success of the legal system in society. In the context of youth, the level of legal awareness significantly determines the direction of youth participation in social, political, and state life. Youth with good legal awareness tend to be critical, responsible, and active in maintaining order and justice in their environment.

In general, civics education (PPKn) is an important medium for fostering legal awareness, particularly among students and youth. Through material covering social norms, democratic values, human rights, and the judicial system, civics education fosters a fundamental understanding of the importance of law in social life. Sila (2024) emphasizes that PPKn not only teaches theory but also builds students' legal character by cultivating attitudes and behaviors consistent with legal norms.

Furthermore, according to Syamsuri et al. (2024), civics education provides a strong foundation for the younger generation, enabling them not only to understand the law but also to apply it in their daily lives. This aligns with preventative measures against potential legal violations among youth. Through structured guidance from school age, youth are guided to become agents of change who uphold the values of justice, ethics, and legal responsibility in various aspects of life.

In this context, the role of youth organizations such as the Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI) is increasingly crucial. As a forum for consolidating youth across organizations, religions, and social backgrounds, KNPI has a significant opportunity to become a catalyst in strengthening legal awareness among the younger generation. Formal educational support through PPKn (Civil Service Education) must be bolstered with non-formal guidance through organizational activities, training, and more practical and experience-based legal counseling.

Effective Methods in Increasing Legal Awareness

a. Pancasila-Based Street Law

Law model , adapted to Pancasila values, has proven effective in increasing legal understanding and nationalist spirit among youth, particularly those living in rural areas (Amin and Ritonga., 2024). Street Law is a non-formal legal education method that prioritizes a practical, participatory, and case-based approach relevant to everyday life (Lumbanraja & Rusdiana, 2025) . When this method is combined with the noble values of Pancasila, such as social justice, deliberation and consensus, and respect for human rights, young people not only learn about the technical rules of law, but also understand the moral and ethical values that underlie them.

In practice, Pancasila-based Street Law activities are conducted through interactive legal counseling, group discussions, judicial simulations, and field visits to law enforcement agencies. This approach makes it easier for participants, especially young people, to internalize the importance of law in maintaining justice and social order. In Kenteng Village, for example, the program's implementation demonstrated significant results: legal understanding among young people increased

from 30% to 75% within six months, and awareness of national values rose from 40% to 85% (Wedhatami et al., 2024).

Thus, Pancasila-based Street Law is not only an effective strategy in legal education but also a means of shaping the character of young people with integrity, legal awareness, and love for their country. This program is highly relevant for adoption by youth organizations such as the Indonesian National Committee (KNPI) as part of a systematic effort to foster legal awareness based on national values.

b. Participatory Education and Experiential Learning

Participatory education positions youth as active participants in the legal learning process, not merely listeners. This method includes interactive discussions, legal case simulations, debates, and role-playing, encouraging direct involvement and in-depth understanding. Meanwhile, experiential learning emphasizes the learning process through direct practice, such as trial simulations, community advocacy, or legal outreach activities. This model has been proven effective in increasing legal awareness cognitively (knowledge), affectively (attitudes), and psychomotorically (behavior). The participatory approach includes case simulations, interactive group discussions, reflection, and pre- and post-tests. KNPI can adapt this method through training, simulations, and social legal activities, so that youth not only know the law but also care about it and are ready to participate in its enforcement (Mozin et al., 2025).

c. Civic Education (PPKn) as a Formative Pillar

Civics Education (PPKn) plays a central role as a pillar of legal character formation among the younger generation. Through this subject, students are introduced to the fundamental principles of the state, democratic values, the rights and obligations of citizens, and the legal and judicial systems applicable in Indonesia. Marsudi (2020) emphasized that PPKn material not only focuses on knowledge but also aims to foster legal attitudes and awareness from an early age. This learning process is crucial because it indirectly instills constitutional values and respect for the law as part of national life.

One of the strengths of PPKn is its ability to integrate legal learning with the social and cultural context of students. Through active learning methods, such as case studies, deliberation simulations, or debates on current legal issues, students are trained to think critically and take responsible positions in addressing legal and societal issues. Thus, PPKn not only produces young people who understand the law theoretically but also are able to apply it in their daily lives, both at school, at home, and in the community.

Furthermore, PPKn also provides a platform for character development aligned with the values of Pancasila. In this context, the legal understanding developed is not merely legalistic, but also moral and socially just. This makes PPKn a strategic instrument for building sustainable legal awareness, particularly among youth, the nation's future generation. Therefore, the synergy between formal education such as PPKn and non-formal development through youth organizations is key to successfully creating law-abiding, democratic, and ethical citizens.

The Role of KNPI in Encouraging Youth Legal Awareness

The Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI) is a youth organization that plays a strategic role in shaping the character and legal awareness of the younger generation. As a youth organization, KNPI has the strategic potential to become an agent for the internalization of law (Purnomo, 2022). In the youth context, the Indonesian National Youth Committee (KNPI) plays a significant role as a facilitator and agent of change in shaping legally aware youth. According to Irsang and Ismayanti (2024), KNPI, as a youth organization, is capable of carrying out strategic functions in implementing Law Number 40 of 2009 concerning Youth. Through social, political, and character education programs, KNPI encourages youth to understand their responsibilities and rights as citizens, including in the context of law and public ethics. This demonstrates that KNPI functions not only as a movement organization but also as an institution for fostering legal and social awareness.

The KNPI's educational role is also reflected in its regional programs. In Lebak Regency, the KNPI initiated the "Legal Literacy and National Defense" program, which aims to improve youth understanding of legal regulations and raise awareness of their rights and obligations within society. These activities go beyond seminars and include direct counseling and free legal consultations for young people (Revolusinews.com, 2025). These efforts demonstrate how the KNPI can serve as a bridge between legal institutions and youth communities, particularly in areas with limited access to legal information.

In addition to facilitating legal education, the Indonesian National Criminal Investigation Agency (KNPI) also serves as a government partner in implementing legal counseling. The Langsa District Attorney's Office, for example, emphasized the importance of collaborating with the KNPI in ensuring the success of legal counseling for the public, especially youth. In this regard, the KNPI serves as an effective communication channel for conveying legal messages persuasively and preventing deviant behavior among adolescents (Al-Amna, 2024).

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that the Indonesian National Student Association (KNPI) holds a strategic position in increasing legal awareness among youth through an educational, collaborative, and participatory approach. This role is strengthened by the KNPI's network of organizations at various regional levels, which enables the implementation of massive and sustainable legal development programs.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research and community program were implemented at the KNPI DPC Building in Indramayu Regency as the main location. The DPC building was selected based on strategic considerations, namely its easy access, adequate room capacity, and its representative position as a center for youth activities at the district level. The main activity chosen was a legal awareness seminar, designed to provide fundamental and applicable understanding to KNPI youth in Lemah Abang District. This research featured speakers from legal academics, practitioners, and law enforcement officials who are experts in their fields. The material presented covered the importance of legal awareness in social life, basic rules relevant to the daily lives of young people, such as traffic laws and minor crimes, and the role of young people as law-abiding agents of social change. The event was not simply a one-way lecture, but was presented interactively through question-and-answer sessions, discussions, and short case studies to help participants better understand the substance of the law.

The research and seminar was attended by 45 young people representing various youth organizations in Lemah Abang District. They came from diverse backgrounds, ranging from high school students to young workers, making the seminar an inclusive space for exchanging experiences. Through this seminar, young people not only gained legal knowledge but also had the opportunity to reflect on the legal issues they face daily. By centering the seminar at the KNPI DPC Building in Indramayu Regency, this implementation method emphasized the importance of collective and participatory legal education. Seminars have proven to be an effective means of instilling legal literacy, building critical awareness, and encouraging the development of more legally conscious attitudes and behaviors among young people.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the community service program, which included a legal awareness seminar at the KNPI DPC Building in Indramayu Regency, demonstrated measurable achievements based on pre- and post-test results. Prior to the activity, the average legal awareness score for youth was 58%. This score indicates that most participants only had a normative understanding of the law but did not yet fully understand its application. Following the activity, post-test results showed an average increase to 84%.

This improvement can be seen in four key indicators of legal awareness. Legal knowledge increased from 60% to 85% as participants received basic legal material directly from academics and practitioners. Legal understanding increased from 55% to 82% through discussions and case studies relevant to their daily lives. Legal attitudes increased from 58% to 83% after participants were encouraged to reflect on the importance of complying with regulations. Legal behavior increased from 59% to 86%, demonstrated by participants' commitment to greater discipline, for example in traffic and obeying village regulations. In this case we are poured into a table

Table. 1 Results of the Pre-test and Post-test of KNPI Youth Legal Awareness

Legal awareness indicators	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)
Legal knowledge	60	85
Legal understanding	55	82
Legal behavior	58	83
Legal stance	59	86
Average	58	84

Source: Author (2025)

Overall, the average legal awareness score increased from 58% in the pre-test to 84% in the post-test. This 26% increase demonstrates that the community service program successfully achieved its goal of improving youth legal literacy through a seminar at the KNPI DPC Building in Indramayu Regency. Therefore, Table 1 can be used as a strong quantitative indicator to assess the success of the community service program.

In addition to quantitative results, measurements through interviews and observations revealed changes in participants' attitudes and behavior. Before the seminar, some participants tended to be permissive toward minor rule violations, such as not wearing helmets, hanging out late at night, or neglecting class time. After the seminar, they began to realize that even minor violations have legal and social consequences. Several participants expressed their willingness to set an example for their community by being more disciplined in adhering to the rules.

Qualitative results also indicated that the seminar served as a space for collective reflection. Participants not only listened to the material but were also invited to identify legal issues in their respective communities and discuss solutions together. This process fostered awareness that law is not just a text, but an instrument that protects the interests of society.



Figure. 1 During the Seminar and Discussion

Source: Author (2025)

outcome of this program was a significant increase in legal awareness among KNPI Lemah Abang youth, across cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. From a cognitive perspective, legal knowledge and understanding improved, as demonstrated by post-test results. From an affective perspective, participants' attitudes toward legal regulations changed to become more positive. From a psychomotor perspective, legal behavior began to emerge through participants' commitment to obeying the rules and encouraging their peers to do the same.

In addition to individual outcomes, this program also yielded institutional outcomes. The Lemah Abang District KNPI now has a seminar-based legal education model that can be replicated in future activities. With the support of academic and practitioner speakers, this activity strengthens KNPI's role as a center for youth legal literacy at the local level.

Several factors contributing to the program's success included high participant enthusiasm, support from the Regency and Sub-district KNPI (National Student Association) administrators, and the presence of competent resource persons. The legal material, presented in simple language, facilitated participants' understanding of the legal substance. Support from community leaders also contributed positively, providing social legitimacy to the program.

On the other hand, there are inhibiting factors that need to be considered. First, time constraints prevent in-depth discussion of complex legal material. Second, the participants' diverse educational backgrounds influence their speed in understanding the material. Third, the permissive social environment remains a challenge, as despite increased legal awareness, participants' daily practices are still influenced by the culture around them. These obstacles highlight the need for follow-up in the form of ongoing mentoring to ensure that the changes are not temporary.

The program's success indicators can be seen from two aspects. First, quantitative success, which is an increase in average legal understanding from 58% to 84%. Second, qualitative success, which is a change in participant attitudes and behavior, as well as a

strengthening of the KNPI's role as a center for youth legal literacy. With these outcomes, the program can be categorized as successful in addressing the partner's problem, namely the low legal awareness of Lemah Abang youth.

CONCLUSION

The community service activity carried out through a legal awareness seminar at the DPC KNPI Building in Indramayu Regency has proven successful in increasing the legal awareness of youth in Lemah Abang District. Based on the pre-test and post-test results, the average legal understanding of participants increased from 58% to 84%, indicating a significant increase in aspects of legal knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and behavior. In addition, this activity also fostered participants' commitment to applying legal rules in their daily lives, such as traffic discipline and avoiding behavior that has the potential to violate social norms. Thus, it can be concluded that youth organization-based seminars are an effective strategy in building youth legal literacy and strengthening legal culture in society.

To strengthen the program's impact, similar activities should be implemented routinely and continuously by the Indonesian National Committee (KNPI) as a permanent agenda. Support from local governments, law enforcement officials, and universities is essential to ensure this program is not merely a one-time event but develops into a collective movement to increase legal awareness among youth. Furthermore, seminar participants are expected to be able to share their acquired knowledge and legal awareness with their surrounding communities, thereby extending their impact to the community. Going forward, further mentoring through legal consultations, case studies, and judicial simulations is also needed to strengthen the legal awareness developed and internalize it into youth social behavior.

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