



## LEGAL REVIEW OF NARCOTICS ABUSE AND PREVENTION EFFORTS

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Article Info	Abstract
<b>Article History</b> Received: 2025-08-25 Revised: 2025-08-29 Published: 2025-09-05  <b>Keywords:</b> <i>Narcotics, Prevention, Law Enforcement</i>	Drug abuse is a serious problem that impacts not only health but also social, economic, legal, and national security consequences. While narcotics have legitimate uses in medicine and research, they are often misused beyond these purposes, leading to dependency, impaired quality of life, and even threatening the future of the younger generation. This study examines two important aspects: efforts to prevent drug abuse and law enforcement against drug crimes in Indonesia. The method used is normative legal research with a conceptual approach, referring to laws and regulations, legal doctrine, and relevant literature. The results show that preventing drug abuse requires an integrated strategy through promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and repressive approaches. Promotive and preventive approaches serve to provide education and build public awareness from an early age, while curative and rehabilitative approaches play a role in helping addicts break free from dependence. On the other hand, a repressive approach is implemented to take firm action against producers, distributors, and users who violate the law. Furthermore, law enforcement against drug abuse is based on Law Number 35 of 2009, which stipulates severe criminal sanctions, including the death penalty, and requires rehabilitation for addicts. Law enforcement is carried out through penal and non-penal channels, involving law enforcement officials, rehabilitation institutions, and the wider community. Major challenges include internationally organized drug crime networks, weak oversight, and the potential for corruption among officials. Therefore, drug eradication cannot be left to one sector alone but must involve synergy between the government, law enforcement, families, schools, and the community. Comprehensive efforts that combine legal and health aspects are expected to reduce drug abuse rates and protect the nation's future generations from the threat of destruction.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's national development has been designed from the outset to achieve the nation's ideals, as enshrined in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, namely to realize prosperity, justice, and peace for all people. This goal can only be achieved if development is carried out comprehensively and encompasses all aspects of life, including the health sector. Good health is the primary foundation for building a productive and competitive society. Therefore, the provision of health services, the provision of medicines, and medical research are integral parts of national development.(Mawaddah 2016)In this context, narcotics occupy a unique position. While they

offer significant benefits in medicine, pain management, and scientific research, they can also pose significant dangers if misused. The state recognizes narcotics as legal for medical and research purposes, but their misuse has become a serious problem that is damaging society and endangering future generations.(MEDAN, nd)

The phenomenon of narcotics, or dangerous drugs, has become a global issue familiar to Indonesians. The term "drugs" itself is an abbreviation for narcotics, psychotropics, and other dangerous substances, often associated with deviant behavior, particularly among the younger generation. Drug abuse often has detrimental effects, both physically,

psychologically, and socially.(Munandar 2019)Narcotics are derived from plants and non-plants, can be synthetic or semi-synthetic, and have the property of affecting a person's consciousness. These substances can suppress or even eliminate pain, but at the same time, they also cause dependence. Examples of narcotics that are widely known to the public include marijuana, cocaine, morphine, and pethidine. Meanwhile, psychotropics are other substances that are not narcotics but have psychoactive effects because they act on the central nervous system and cause changes in the user's behavior and thought patterns. These psychoactive substances can cause hallucinations, false euphoria, and even a sense of relaxation that makes users addicted.

The problem of drug abuse in Indonesia has reached a very concerning level. Data and facts on the ground show that more than half of the inmates in Indonesian correctional institutions are drug convicts. This situation demonstrates the profound impact of drugs on the country's legal and social systems. The mass media daily reports on drug abuse cases involving various groups. The victims are not limited to certain groups, but are widespread across all levels of society. Students and college students who should be the next generation, artists and public figures who serve as role models, housewives, traders, public transportation drivers, workers, and even street children have all fallen victim to drug abuse. This phenomenon indicates that drugs are no longer difficult to access. Their distribution has become very easy, and they can even be manufactured illegally, making them difficult to detect. Illegal drug factories have also been discovered in Indonesia, indicating that this problem is becoming increasingly serious.(Dewi and Khofifah 2021)

Drug use without medical indication, without a doctor's prescription, and without supervision actually has pathological effects. Drug abusers often experience disruptions in their daily activities. They are unable to function properly at home, school, work, and in their social environments. As a result, their quality of life declines drastically and impacts national productivity. Furthermore, drug abuse leads to dependence. Symptoms of addiction include a strong urge to continue using, increasing the dose to achieve the same effect, and excruciating withdrawal symptoms when use is stopped. This dependence is not only physical but also psychological. Addicts lose control of themselves

and are unable to live normally without the substance.

Drug crime can no longer be viewed as ordinary crime. It has become an international crime, well-organized and known as organized crime. Its networks are extensive, structured, heavily funded, and utilize advanced technology in production, distribution, and covert operations. Drug trafficking infiltrates various countries, crosses borders, and is difficult to eradicate through conventional law enforcement alone. This crime has multidimensional negative impacts. Not only does it damage the physical and psychological well-being of users, but it also causes economic losses, damages culture, weakens national resilience, and disrupts political stability. Countries unable to control drug trafficking face a major threat to their future.

If drug abuse is not addressed promptly and systematically, national destruction will be inevitable. The younger generation, the successors to the nation's ideals, will be destroyed, national competitiveness weakened, and national integrity undermined. Therefore, combating drug abuse cannot rely solely on one party but requires the cooperation of all elements of the nation. The government, law enforcement officials, educational institutions, families, and the community must work together to confront this threat. Prevention efforts can begin with ongoing education about the dangers of drugs, so that the public, especially the younger generation, is aware of the significant risks. Education must be carried out widely, both through schools, mass media, and social media, so that the message about the dangers of drugs reaches all groups.(Herindrasti 2018)

In addition to education, prevention efforts must also be accompanied by motivation for those already trapped in drug abuse to break free from their dependence. Many addicts want to quit, but find it difficult to do so because the addiction is so strong. Therefore, support from family, friends, and the community is essential. Consistent encouragement can be key for addicts to break free from their dependency. Medical and social rehabilitation programs provided by the government and private institutions must also be strengthened to ensure addicts receive appropriate treatment. Personal motivation combined with external support can be an effective combination to rescue those from the drug trap.(Simanungkalit 2012)

Preventing and addressing drug abuse, particularly among the younger generation, can

be achieved through a comprehensive strategy involving various stakeholders. Broad community support is the key to ensuring drug users do not feel isolated and are willing to undergo rehabilitation. The government needs to ensure that rehabilitation services are easily accessible and truly capable of helping addicts. Meanwhile, a repressive approach is still necessary to deter drug producers, distributors, and traffickers. The role of law enforcement officials in this regard cannot be ignored, as they are the frontline in stopping drug trafficking. However, law enforcement must go hand in hand with preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative approaches.(Mulyadi 2012)

The research conducted to examine this issue identified two main questions. First, how can drug abuse prevention efforts reduce the number of users and dealers? This question is crucial because prevention is a strategic initial step in breaking the chain of drug distribution. Effective preventive measures can minimize the number of new addicts. Effective prevention requires cross-sector collaboration, from education and health to social institutions. Second, how can law enforcement be effective in combating drug abuse? Law enforcement is not only about arrests and punishments, but must also ensure legal certainty, human rights protection, and justice for all parties, including addicts, who are ultimately victims.

Thus, this study highlights that the drug problem is a national issue that must be addressed collectively. Drug abuse is not only a criminal offense, but also a health, social, and moral issue. Early prevention can prevent the younger generation from harm. Strict law enforcement against producers and dealers will disrupt supply chains. Meanwhile, rehabilitation and education will rescue victims from the cycle of dependency. All these efforts must go hand in hand to protect the Indonesian nation from the threat of destruction caused by drugs.

## **II. RESEARCH METHODS**

The method used in this research is normative or doctrinal law, meaning that the primary study is legal documents, library materials, or secondary data. In addition to the statute approach, a conceptual approach is also employed.(Indra Utama Tanjung 2024)The conceptual approach is an approach that stems from the views and doctrines that have developed in legal science, particularly in the field of national

law. The data collection technique used in this study was library research, which examined and reviewed a number of national legal provisions, textbooks, legal dictionaries, and legal journals deemed relevant to the research object.

## **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Drug Abuse Prevention Efforts Can Result in a Reduction in Drug Users and Dealers**

The problem of drug abuse is nothing new in Indonesia. This phenomenon has been around for a long time and can be traced back to various government policies that began to address the negative impact of drugs on the nation's life.(Simanungkalit 2012)One of the earliest evidences of the government's seriousness in viewing the narcotics issue as a national problem was the issuance of Presidential Instruction of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 1971, addressed to the Head of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency (BAKIN). The instruction not only highlighted the issue of national security and order, but also included prevention measures for six national problems considered prominent at the time, one of which was the prevention of narcotics abuse. This step demonstrated that since the beginning of the New Order, the government had positioned narcotics as a dangerous threat to national security, even though at that time their circulation was not as massive as it is now.(Saputra and Chalim 2018)

Over time, drug abuse has not only developed but also escalated, with increasingly complex patterns. During the New Order era, this situation prompted the government to issue regulations in the form of Law Number 22 of 1997 concerning Narcotics, which was later updated to Law Number 35 of 2009. This regulatory change reflected the increasingly serious narcotics problem in Indonesia. With this update, the law not only reaffirmed the prohibition of drug abuse but also strengthened criminal penalties, expanded the categorization of criminal offenses, and added rehabilitation mechanisms for addicts and victims of abuse. This demonstrates the government's recognition that drug crimes are not crimes that can be resolved solely through criminal law, but must be addressed through a multidisciplinary approach involving law, health, education, and community participation.(Rinaldo, Eddy, and Sahari 2022)

Preventing drug abuse fundamentally requires integrated, comprehensive, and

sustainable efforts. No single method can address the full complexity of this problem. Therefore, various approaches have been developed to combat drug abuse. The most basic and long-term effort is promotional efforts, often referred to as developmental or preemptive programs. These programs are aimed at the wider community, especially those unfamiliar with narcotics, with the goal of providing them with a sufficient understanding of the dangers of narcotics to prevent them from being tempted to try them. Promotional programs are typically implemented through counseling, seminars, social campaigns, and education in schools. For example, outreach activities among schoolchildren and college students can provide an understanding of the dangers of drugs from an early age, so that the younger generation is better prepared to resist temptations from their social environment.

In addition to promotional efforts, there are also preventive measures aimed at preventing healthy individuals who are unfamiliar with narcotics from being attracted to drug use. These preventive programs typically take the form of intensive public campaigns, outreach through various media, and strengthening youth resilience through character education. Preventive measures can also include the establishment of drug-free communities within schools and the community. By having communities that serve as prevention platforms, it is hoped that the younger generation will have a social environment that supports a healthy lifestyle and keeps them away from narcotics. These preventive efforts are crucial because they work at the very beginning, before anyone comes into contact with drugs.

However, the reality is that some people remain trapped in drug abuse. For those who are already users, a curative approach or treatment is necessary. Curative programs aim to help addicts overcome their dependence. Through these programs, users are directed to undergo medical treatment, either in a hospital or a rehabilitation center, to stop drug use and treat the illnesses that arise from addiction. These programs emphasize not only the medical aspect but also include psychological counseling to help addicts overcome their urges and withdrawal symptoms. Curative treatment is important because without proper treatment, addicts will find it difficult to break free from the cycle of addiction.(Rinaldo, Eddy, and Sahari 2022)

Following the curative program, there is also a rehabilitative approach aimed at users who have undergone treatment. This rehabilitative program

aims to restore the physical, mental, and social condition of addicts so they can return to a normal life. This recovery involves more than just medical therapy, but also social support, such as job skills training, spiritual guidance, and family support. Through rehabilitation, it is hoped that former users can reintegrate into society equipped to live a healthy, drug-free life. This rehabilitation is a more humane approach, as it views addicts not simply as criminals but as victims in need of rescue.(Cape 2022)

However, promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts will not be effective without repressive measures. This repressive approach aims to take firm action against producers, dealers, distributors, and users who clearly violate the law. Repressive programs are carried out by law enforcement officials, such as the police, prosecutors, and the National Narcotics Agency, through investigations, arrests, and prosecutions. The goal is to provide a deterrent effect on perpetrators and break the chain of drug distribution. Repressive measures are the most visible steps in society, as they involve firm legal action. However, repressive measures cannot stand alone but must be combined with other efforts to achieve optimal results.

In addition to these five main methods, drug prevention efforts are also known as primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention is carried out in communities that are completely unfamiliar with drugs. At this stage, activities include counseling about the dangers of drugs, information through the mass media, and formal education about the negative effects of drugs. Primary prevention aims to provide the community with sufficient knowledge to reject drugs from the start.

Unlike primary prevention, secondary prevention targets individuals who have already begun experimenting with drug use. At this stage, prevention activities involve early detection, counseling, and social guidance. For example, children who begin to show signs of drug abuse can be immediately identified by teachers or parents, and then counseled to help them quit before they become addicted. Secondary prevention is crucial because it works in the early stages of abuse, when users still have a good chance of returning to normal life.(Zulkarnain 2016)

Meanwhile, tertiary prevention is aimed at those who are already or former drug users. Tertiary prevention activities typically include rehabilitation, social guidance, and support to



remove them from environments that could potentially lead them back into drug use. These efforts are crucial to prevent relapse. With ongoing support, former users are expected to be able to truly break free from drugs and rebuild their lives.

Drug abuse prevention efforts can also be implemented through community empowerment. This approach emphasizes the importance of community participation in the fight against drugs. Communities can be provided with empowerment modules containing information on the dangers of drugs, how to detect abuse, and preventative measures. Furthermore, establishing anti-narcotics groups in communities, schools, and workplaces can be an effective strategy for creating a drug-free environment. Anti-narcotics groups serve as the vanguard in monitoring their surroundings and providing ongoing education.

With these various programs, it is hoped that drug abuse rates can be reduced. Communities previously vulnerable to drugs will be more vigilant, existing users can receive prompt treatment, and former addicts can receive support to stay clean. However, all of these programs require coordination and consistency from various parties. The government must provide clear regulations, law enforcement officers must carry out their duties professionally, and the community must actively participate in protecting their environment.(Lukman et al. 2021)

Ultimately, preventing drug abuse is not solely the responsibility of the authorities or the government, but a shared responsibility. All parties, from families, schools, communities, and even the state, have a role to play in protecting young people from the dangers of drugs. If all these efforts are carried out in an integrated and sustainable manner, the number of drug users and dealers in Indonesia can be significantly reduced. Effective prevention not only saves individuals but also safeguards the future of the nation from the ravages of drugs.

## **B. Law Enforcement Against Drug Abuse**

Drug abuse is a form of crime that has its own characteristics compared to other crimes in general. Drug crimes are not only related to ordinary criminal acts but also involve social, health, and national security issues. The unique characteristics of drug crimes mean that their prevention cannot be carried out in isolation but must be carried out through an integrated,

comprehensive mechanism involving many parties. This complexity requires increased attention from each drug case, both in terms of law enforcement and rehabilitation efforts, so that handling goes beyond simply punishing the perpetrators and also minimizing the wider negative impact on society.(Iskandar 2019)

In the context of a state based on the rule of law like Indonesia, which adheres to a written legal system, law enforcement against drug crimes requires a clear legal basis and procedures that adhere to the principle of respect for human rights. This means that every form of action must be carried out within the framework of applicable regulations, must not be arbitrary, and must guarantee legal certainty for all parties. This is crucial because, on the one hand, the state has a strict obligation to protect the public from the threat of narcotics, but on the other hand, it must still uphold the values of justice and humanity in every legal process.

Under existing law, drug crime prevention is carried out through two main channels: penal and non-penal. The penal channel is an effort to enforce criminal law using criminal instruments as the primary means. Through this channel, the state takes firm action against perpetrators of drug abuse with the threat of criminal penalties stipulated in the law. Meanwhile, the non-penal channel is an approach that does not use criminal means, but rather other measures such as education, social development, and community empowerment. In other words, the penal channel is repressive and retributive, while the non-penal channel is more preventive and rehabilitative. The two cannot be separated, because drug prevention requires a combination of legal firmness and a humanitarian approach.

In the development of criminal law in Indonesia, particularly in specific regulations outside the Criminal Code, there is a tendency to use a double-track system. This system places criminal sanctions and disciplinary sanctions in a single, regulated entity. A closer look reveals a fundamental difference between criminal sanctions and disciplinary sanctions. Criminal sanctions emphasize retaliation and deterrence, thus orienting toward strict punishment, such as imprisonment or fines. Meanwhile, disciplinary sanctions emphasize community protection and the correction of the perpetrator.(Sitompul 2021)These sanctions are social and rehabilitative in nature, such as medical treatment, counseling, or social rehabilitation. Both types of sanctions, when applied in a

balanced manner, will produce more comprehensive results in combating drug crimes.(Fazizullah, Marlina, and Sahlepi 2022)

Since the enactment of Law Number 22 of 1997, which was later replaced by Law Number 35 of 2009 concerning Narcotics, the threat of punishment for perpetrators of narcotics crimes has been strengthened. The latest law maintains a special minimum penalty that is actually higher than the previous law. This reflects the seriousness of the state in dealing with narcotics crimes, which are considered extremely dangerous. The threat of punishment in this law is cumulative, meaning it can include corporal punishment or restrictions on liberty such as imprisonment, life imprisonment, or even the death penalty, plus a large fine. These provisions are expressly stated in Articles 111 to 148. With the threat of severe penalties, the state hopes to provide a deterrent effect on perpetrators and reduce the prevalence of narcotics crimes in society.(Bastiar 2019)

Law enforcement against drug abuse does not stop at imposing sanctions, but also includes mechanisms for investigation, prosecution, and trial. In Law Number 35 of 2009, narcotics investigators are regulated in Article 73, while the authority of investigators at the National Narcotics Agency (BNN) is regulated in Article 75. This shows that law enforcement against narcotics cases is carried out with a fairly specific system and involves competent institutions. Even in Law Number 5 of 1997, investigators are further regulated in Articles 55 to 58, including the authority affirmed in Article 56 paragraph (2). These detailed regulations show how the state pays serious attention to the problem of narcotics by establishing a legal mechanism that is stricter than that for general crimes.(Bastiar 2019)

Law enforcement in practice encompasses several important aspects. First, enforcing laws governing the use, trafficking, and possession of narcotics. This process typically begins with investigations by authorities, arrests of suspects, evidence collection, and even trials. Second, prosecuting and eradicating organized narcotics networks. Narcotics cases rarely occur in isolation but are part of larger, well-structured networks, requiring authorities to conduct mapping and special operations to dismantle these networks. Third, law enforcement officers often conduct large-scale operations, such as raids on nightclubs or cross-regional operations, with the aim of arresting dealers and seizing evidence.(Isnaini 2017)

Another equally important aspect is developing strong legal evidence to support the prosecution process. In narcotics cases, the evidence presented typically includes not only confiscated goods but also laboratory analysis results confirming the type and content of the narcotics found. This evidence is crucial because it will determine the prosecutor's success in prosecuting the perpetrator in court. Furthermore, law enforcement also demands international cooperation. Given that narcotics is a transnational crime, cooperation between countries in the exchange of intelligence information, extradition of suspects, and coordination of law enforcement operations is key to successfully eradicating cross-border drug trafficking.

However, law enforcement against drug abuse is not without significant challenges. One serious challenge is the potential for corruption or abuse of authority among law enforcement officials. This presents a vulnerable point that could weaken law enforcement itself. Therefore, the implementation of good governance, transparency, and the prevention of corruption among law enforcement officials are essential. The integrity of law enforcement officers is crucial for success in combating narcotics.(Ramadan 2023)

In addition to taking firm action against perpetrators, law enforcement must also address the rehabilitation and recovery aspects of drug users. Users often become trapped in addictions that are difficult to overcome on their own, requiring medical and psychological assistance. Within this framework, law enforcement can be directed not only at punishing users but also at diverting them to rehabilitation programs. This aligns with the spirit of Law Number 35 of 2009, which emphasizes the obligation to rehabilitate addicts. With this approach, law enforcement is not merely repressive but also serves as a means of recovery.

Ultimately, law enforcement against drug abuse is an integral part of a broader national strategy. These efforts are not solely aimed at punishment, but also at creating a safer, healthier, and more productive environment. Despite significant challenges, such as sophisticated international networks and weak public awareness, law enforcement remains a vital component in the fight against drugs. Without consistent and firm law enforcement, all preventive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts will be thwarted. Therefore, the state must continue to

strengthen regulations, increase the capacity of its authorities, and build synergy with the community to achieve the nation's goal of being free from the threat of drugs.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since the issuance of Presidential Instruction in 1971 and Law No. 35 of 2009 concerning Narcotics, the government has taken steps to address this problem through an integrated and comprehensive approach. The methods used include promotive and preventive approaches to prevent the public from becoming familiar with and using narcotics, as well as curative and rehabilitative approaches to help drug users recover and stop using them. In addition, a repressive approach is also implemented to legally prosecute drug producers, distributors, and users. Drug abuse prevention is also carried out at three levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention, with the aim of influencing various stages of the drug abuse process. This effort is carried out through community empowerment through outreach, education, counseling, and the formation of anti-narcotics groups within the community.

Drug abuse is a crime with specific characteristics, so addressing it requires an integrated approach. Law enforcement against drug abuse is carried out through penal (criminal) and non-penal (action) approaches. This includes investigation, arrest, and prosecution of perpetrators of drug crimes. Existing laws, such as Law Number 35 of 2009 concerning Narcotics, stipulate strict penalties such as imprisonment, life imprisonment, and even the death penalty, along with fines. This aims to provide a deterrent effect on perpetrators and prevent drug abuse.

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