

## The Problematic of Economic Inequality in Criminal Cases of Theft Criminality in Medan City (Study Decision 974/Pid.B/2022/PN Mdn)

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### Abstract

*The crime of theft is in Article 362 of the Criminal Code (KUHP) which states that anyone who takes an item, which wholly/partially belongs to another person, with the intention of possessing the item unlawfully, shall be punished for stealing with imprisonment for a lifetime. five years or a fine of up to nine thousand rupiah, but in fact there are many incidents of criminal acts in society, including cases of thieves in Decision Study 974/Pid.B/2022/PN Mdn). Crime cases in the city of Medan require exploratory handling to be minimized. Several factors that cause high crime rates include poverty, unemployment, lack of education, and low quality of life in society. Crime prevention in the city of Medan can be done through various efforts, including improving community welfare through economic empowerment programs, creating jobs, increasing access to education, and promoting rehabilitation and reintegration programs for former prisoners. Apart from that, strengthening the security system and law enforcement also needs to be done to reduce the rate of crime in this province. With comprehensive prevention efforts, it is hoped that criminal cases in the city of Medan can be reduced, and the community can live in a safe and peaceful environment.*

**Keywords** | Crime, Society, Environment.

### INTRODUCTION

One type of deviant attitude that always exists and is embedded in all types of society is crime or criminal acts. The case of a thief is one of the crimes regulated in the Criminal Code (KUHP). Theft is a widespread problem in the neighborhood. Criminal acts pose a threat to public safety and national peace.

The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) report shows the number of actions crimereported throughout Indonesia throughout 2022 were 372,965 incidents. This figure jumped sharply by 55.73% from the previous year (year-on-year/yoy). Throughout 2021, there were 239,481 incidents of crime reported in the country. In terms of trends, the number of crimes in Indonesia has tended to increase in the last two decades. The highest level was recorded in 2022, while the lowest level was in 2002 with 184,359 incidents. However, if you look at the last decade, crime in Indonesia has tended to decrease, except in 2022, which will actually increase. This is as seen in the graph above. The increase in the number of crime incidents makes the crime clock faster, namely to 84 seconds in 2022. This means that last year a crime occurred every 1 minute 24 seconds. This figure is the fastest compared to the last two decades. As in 2021, a crime occurs every 131 seconds (2 minutes 11 seconds). This figure is also faster than 2002 where a crime occurred every 171 seconds (2 minutes 51 seconds). According to BPS, the decrease in the crime clock interval in 2022 indicates an increase in the intensity of crime incidents. With the increase in the number of crimes, the risk of being exposed to a crime (crime rate) will also increase to 137 per 100,000 population in 2022. The risk of being exposed to a crime is higher than the previous



year which was 90 per 100,000 population.

The pressure of daily needs and environmental conditions that encourage individuals or groups of people to commit crimes as an alternative way to fulfill their needs causes criminal acts to continue to increase. Theft is a criminal act that often occurs around us. The crime of theft is an evil behavior that is always the most frightening incident in society. Anxiety about thieves causes everyone to make every effort to avoid theft. Avoiding theft can be done by hiding valuables that could possibly be stolen, and can be prepared by installing security for places where goods/money are stored or residences/houses, such as installing locks. If something is difficult to damage, this method also often doesn't work because the perpetrator of the theft has learned various ways to carry out the action successfully in even very difficult situations.

Economic inequality or disparity within a country is normal as long as it is within normal limits (Anwar et al., 2019). The level of economic inequality is measured using the Gini ratio index which has a value between 0 and 1. A value of 0 indicates a perfect level of economic equality, while a value of 1 indicates a perfect level of inequality (DPR-RI, 2019). There are three criteria used to assess the level of inequality in a country, namely a Gini ratio index value of  $<0.35$  indicating low inequality,  $0.35-0.5$  indicating moderate inequality, and  $>0.5$  indicating high inequality (Utami, 2020).

Data shows that the Gini ratio index figure in Indonesia from 2015 to 2019 continues to experience a downward trend (BPS, 2020a). In line with this, the crime rate in Indonesia during the same period has also decreased (BPS, 2018; BPS, 2019; BPS, 2020b). Even though it decreased, the national Gini ratio in Indonesia during that period was in the index range of 0.35 to 0.5 so it was still classified as moderate/moderate inequality. The following is complete data on the comparison between the Gini ratio index and crime rate in the 2015-2019 period.

Year	Semester	Gini Ratio	Crime Rate
2015	1	0.408	140 people/100 thousand population
	2	0.402	
2016	1	0.397	140 people/100 thousand population
	2	0.394	
2017	1	0.393	129 people/100 thousand population
	2	0.391	
2018	1	0.389	113 people/100 thousand population
	2	0.384	
2019	-	0.380	103 people/100 thousand population

Source: Processed from BPS (2020)

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the crime rate in Indonesia has had a consistent downward trend from 2016 to 2019. 2019 was the year with the lowest crime rate involving crime victims of 1.01 percent of the total population of Indonesia (BPS, 2020b). Crime itself is defined as actions that can harm other people so that they conflict with human morals,

and violate the law and criminal statutes (Sari, Hasyim, & Nurmalisa, 2015). Crime can arise as a result of interactions between phenomena that influence each other (Gosita, 2004). In semester 1 of 2020, the Gini ratio index figure in Indonesia experienced a slight increase from 0.080 to 0.081 (BPS, 2020b). In fact, the pandemic which had an impact on economic activity during 2020 made many parties predict that economic inequality in the second semester of 2020 would widen further (Anwar, 2020; Putra, 2020).

In line with the increase in economic inequality, the Indonesian Police (in Koran Tempo, 2020) explained that in July 2020 there had been an increase in crime from 5,282 cases to 5,656 cases or 7.08 percent. In August 2020 it also increased by 4.49 percent from 4,449 cases to 4,649 cases. The existence of economic inequality can have a direct or indirect impact on crime rates (Bourguignon, 2001).

Becker (1968) stated that a person will commit a criminal act when the income obtained from the activity is greater than the income obtained from legal economic activities.

There are various research results that prove that economic inequality can have an impact on the occurrence of crime. These studies have been conducted by Arisna (2020); Masfiatun (2019); Hardiawan (2018); Aulia (2014); Herpandi (2017); Satriananta (2016); Harahap (2014); Hendri (2014); Hairani and Syahputri (2016). Overall, this research shows that economic inequality has a positive and significant effect on the emergence of crime.

Economic factors have a tendency with economic inequality to influence high rates of crime. Crime can also be linked to unemployment. Work is an activity carried out by someone so that they can earn income to meet their living needs. Limited employment opportunities mean someone has to be unemployed. assume that someone who has a job as is, even if he is unemployed, can develop an evil personality or moral illness to achieve his desires. There is strong pressure from psychological factors among criminals due to not having the income to meet their daily living needs. If unemployment is not resolved it can cause new problems, including poverty.

The city of Medan has the potential for considerable economic progress. Economic inequality is not only in the city of Medan, but also in the province of North Sumatra, which is also quite high, which then has an impact on high levels of crime in each district/city. This economic inequality can be seen from the varying levels of people's income, as well as uneven development in various regions in North Sumatra. This can be seen from the amount of poverty that still exists in this area, especially in rural areas.

One of the factors that causes economic inequality is the gap between urban and rural areas. In big cities like Medan, people's income levels tend to be higher compared to rural areas. This can lead to injustice in the distribution of wealth and resources, which then triggers crime in rural areas that are still poor. Apart from that, the low level of education in this area is also one of the factors causing economic inequality. People in the city of Medan do not have access to proper education, so it is difficult for them to get decent work.

This can then trigger criminal acts, because when opportunities to access decent work are limited, some people may tend to take shortcuts by committing crimes. The vast and



diverse geographical conditions of the city of Medan, North Sumatra are also one of the factors causing economic inequality in this area.

There are still remote areas in the city of Medan that are difficult to access, so economic development in these areas tends to lag behind compared to urban areas. This can then trigger economic inequality which can have an impact on high crime rates in the area. Apart from internal factors, external factors such as central government policies can also influence economic inequality in the city of Medan. If the allocation of government funds is uneven, it will be difficult for regions that are still lagging behind to experience significant economic growth. In this way, economic inequality in this area will also further widen the gap between urban and rural areas, which can then have an impact on high crime rates in this area. From these various factors, it can be concluded that economic inequality in the city of Medan is one of the main factors for the high crime rate in this area. Therefore, overcoming the causes of economic inequality in Medan, North Sumatra needs to be a serious concern for related parties, both government, society and other relevant stakeholders. By reducing economic inequality, it is hoped that it can also reduce the crime rate in Medan, North Sumatra.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Economic inequality and crime are two social phenomena that are often interrelated in the context of society. Economic inequality occurs when there are significant differences in the equal distribution of wealth and economic opportunities among members of society. This can lead to large portions of the population living in poverty and increasing economic inequality, while a smaller portion of the population enjoys great wealth and profits. On the other hand, crime refers to unlawful behavior that occurs in society. This phenomenon covers various types of crime, from petty theft to serious crimes such as robbery, kidnapping, drugs and organized crime.

There is a complex relationship between economic inequality and crime. Many research and studies have stated that high economic inequality can be the main driving factor for crime in society. Economic inequality can create dissatisfaction and social injustice among the population, which in turn can trigger criminal acts. People who feel economically marginalized tend to look for ways to improve their economic situation, and often take shortcuts by engaging in criminal practices.

In addition, economic inequality can create an unstable and unsafe social environment, which can produce conditions that facilitate the emergence of crime. In environments with high levels of economic inequality, people tend to feel frustrated and hopeless, making them more susceptible to negative influences that can push them to engage in criminal behavior.

Apart from that, economic inequality can also affect the population's access to education, health services and decent work opportunities. Inequalities in access to social and economic resources can trigger people's reluctance to comply with laws and regulations, and increase opportunities to engage in criminal behavior.

Empirical evidence also supports the relationship between economic inequality and

crime rates in society. Various studies have shown that areas with high levels of economic inequality tend to have higher crime rates compared to areas with low levels of economic inequality. Meanwhile, research shows that reducing economic inequality can have a positive impact in reducing crime rates in society.

To address the relationship between economic inequality and crime, many social intervention policies and programs have been proposed and implemented by governments and community institutions. For example, efforts to create economic equality through economic empowerment of poor communities, increasing access to education and health services, and creating fair and decent work opportunities can help reduce the factors that encourage crime.

## **METHOD**

According to Soerjono Soekanto, research is analyzing and constructing methodologically, which means it is carried out using certain methods and methods systematically (consistent and carrying out certain steps).

This research method explains how to complete legal research. Legal research is carried out to develop law and answer legal questions that arise in society. Thus, it is hoped that scientific papers produced in a systematic and focused manner can provide new arguments, theories and concepts that are in line with current developments.

The type of research used is normative juridical, this type of research analyzes a problem that is a legal issue by referring to the application of positive legal norms or legal rules. The normative juridical concept is research that is used to examine and analyze the substance of statutory regulations on legal subjects or issues in their consistency with existing principles. Normative legal research essentially examines laws that are conceptualized as norms or rules that apply in society and become a reference for everyone's behavior.

Normative Legal Research (legal research) is a study of documents, namely using legal sources of material in the form of statutory regulations, court decisions/decisions, legal theory, and opinions of scholars. Normative legal research or doctrinal legal research which tends to be qualitative (not in the form of numbers) based on secondary data and sociological or non-doctrinal legal research which tends to be quantitative (in the form of numbers), based on primary data.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Problem of Economic Inequality in Cases of Criminal Theft in the City of Medan (Study Decision 974/Pid.B/2022/PN Mdn)**

Decision 974 /Pid.B/2022/PN Mdn Convicting Hendrik Andika Simanjuntak of committing the crime of theft accompanied by aggravation and being sentenced to sentence the defendant to imprisonment for 2 (two) years. Circumstances that aggravate the defendant's actions because they disturb the community. The defendant used to work as an internet clerk. There are many factors that cause this to happen, for example because of the economy and circumstances that put pressure on committing this criminal act.



Economic inequality is one of the factors that can influence the crime rate in an area. North Sumatra is one of the provinces in Indonesia which has quite significant economic inequality, where the majority of the population lives in urban areas which are relatively more prosperous, while a small portion lives in rural areas with high levels of poverty. There is a direct relationship between economic inequality and crime rates. Areas with high levels of economic inequality tend to have higher crime rates. This can happen because economic injustice often causes frustration and dissatisfaction among poorer people, which can then encourage them to commit crimes.

Apart from that, other research conducted by Ningsih (2018) shows that economic inequality in the city of Medan, North Sumatra also contributes to high levels of poverty. A high level of poverty can cause people to be encouraged to commit crimes as a means of fulfilling their unmet needs in life.

Data from BPS (Central Statistics Agency), poverty level in the city of Medan, North Sumatra.

<b>CITY DISTRICT</b>	<b>Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) Population Aged 15 Years and Over According to District/City (Percent)</b>		
Medan	10.81	8.89	8.67

This shows that the economic conditions in this province are still uneven, with the majority of the population still living in conditions of poverty. A high unemployment rate can also be a factor that influences the crime rate in the area, because unemployed people tend to have a greater opportunity to be involved in crime due to unmet living needs. Economic inequality has an impact on social injustice and harms people at the bottom, which can then encourage them to commit crimes.

Economic inequality can trigger social conflict in society, which can then lead to crime. Economic injustice felt by some people can cause tension and division in society, which can then trigger criminal acts. That economic inequality can also have an impact on the quality of education in an area. The level of quality of education is low, where the majority of people are only able to access primary and secondary education. This can cause a gap in knowledge and skills between rich and poor people, which can then result in unequal opportunities in the world of work and trigger crime.

Economic inequality in an area can also have an impact on the level of health and welfare of the community. The city of Medan is recorded as having a low level of public health and welfare, where the majority of its people do not have access to proper health and sanitation services. This can lead to inequality in access to health between rich and poor communities, which can then trigger crime.

Economic inequality can be one of the factors that contributes to the high crime rate in the city of Medan, North Sumatra. The significant difference between the income and economic capabilities of people in big cities such as Medan and small towns in the interior can be seen from the differences between urban and rural areas. Large cities such as Medan have developed economic centers, while rural areas still face significant economic obstacles, such as limited access to employment opportunities and inadequate access to

education. This causes social and economic disparities between people in cities and people in rural areas.

Economic inequality can also be seen from differences in income between different groups in society. People from middle to upper economic groups usually have better access to education, health and better employment opportunities. Meanwhile, people from lower economic groups tend to experience difficulties in terms of access to adequate education and health. This causes social and economic disparities between the two groups of society.

Economic inequality can also occur between different ethnicities in the city of Medan, which has rich ethnic and cultural diversity, but this also causes differences in terms of meeting economic needs and access to existing resources. This can lead to inter-ethnic conflicts and increased crime rates in the region.

Economic inequality also has an impact on the crime rate in the city of Medan. Communities that experience economic inequality tend to have higher levels of needs but relatively low access to resources. This can lead to criminal acts such as theft, robbery and other acts of violence. Apart from that, economic inequality can also cause people to become vulnerable to the influence of criminal groups and make them more vulnerable to committing crimes.

Apart from that, economic inequality can also cause psychological and social pressure among people who experience economic inequality. This pressure can cause frustration and anger which can then be triggered into criminal acts. Economic inequality can also cause social divisions between different communities and increase levels of violence in society. This can also cause social divisions and increase crime rates in the area. Economic inequality can also cause widespread drug and illegal drug abuse among communities experiencing economic inequality. This can lead to an increase in crime rates related to drug abuse and illegal drugs in the area.

Economic inequality can also be a trigger for criminal acts related to the exploitation of natural resources. The city of Medan has quite large natural resource potential, but the management of these natural resources also tends to be uneven. This causes conflict between communities and companies that have access to these natural resources, which can then lead to criminal acts.

Economic inequality can also be a factor that influences the occurrence of crime in the region. Economic inequality can cause an increase in unemployment and poverty levels among society, which can then encourage crime. Apart from that, economic inequality can also cause an increase in the level of alcohol and drug abuse among communities experiencing economic inequality, which can then lead to criminal acts related to this abuse. Economic inequality can also be a factor that influences the occurrence of criminal acts related to the use of violence. People who experience economic inequality tend to experience high levels of psychological and emotional stress, which can then encourage them to commit crimes using violence. This can lead to increased levels of violence in communities experiencing economic inequality. Apart from that, economic inequality can also be a factor that influences the occurrence of criminal acts related to human trafficking. Economic inequality makes people vulnerable to human trafficking practices because they



seek better economic opportunities. This could lead to an increase in the level of human trafficking in the region.

## CONCLUSION

Medan City, North Sumatra, which has a fairly high level of economic inequality. There is a significant economic gap between urban and rural areas in the province. Unemployment and poverty rates in rural areas are generally higher than in urban areas. This can be one of the factors that contributes to high levels of crime.

High levels of economic inequality can result in social and economic injustice in society. People living in conditions of poverty and social injustice tend to have more limited opportunities to obtain quality education, access to adequate health care, and stable employment. This can encourage people to commit crimes to fulfill their living needs.

From this analysis, it can be concluded that the high level of economic inequality in North Sumatra province has a significant contribution to the high level of crime in society. Economic inequality can create social and economic injustice, unequal access to justice, social tension, dissatisfaction, jealousy, a non-conducive environment, unequal access to economic resources and opportunities, low quality education, limited access to health services and opportunities. limited work. All of these factors can encourage crime in society.

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