The Institutionalization Of The Judicial Commission Liaison In Indonesia To Optimize The Oversight Of The Code Of Ethics And Code Of Conduct For Judges

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Abstract

The authority of the Judicial Commission, as stated in the Third Amendment of 2001 to Article 24B paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, emphasizes its role in safeguarding the honor, nobility, dignity, and behavior of judges. However, the current performance of the Judicial Commission Liaison, or PKY (Penghubung Komisi Yudisial), in assisting the Judicial Commission with supervising the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Judges, is considered passive. This issue is evident in Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017 concerning the Formation, Structure, Data, and Working Procedures of Judicial Commission Liaisons in the regions, which primarily assigns administrative tasks to Judicial Commission Supervisors and focuses on matters related to administration, enforcement, and legal protection to safeguard the dignity of judges within the regions. This study adopts a juridical-normative research approach, utilizing primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials to examine the subject matter. The aim is to establish definitive institutionalization of the PKY within a rule of law framework, optimizing its role in regional-level supervision of the Code of Ethics for Judges. Presently, reports received by the Judicial Commission Supervision are merely recorded and forwarded to the Judicial Commission, leading to the perception that the PKY functions as a mere post office without authority. By enabling the PKY to fully supervise the behavior of judges, it can effectively fulfill the community's expectations as both a reporter and a supervisor of an independent judiciary.

Keywords: Institutionalization, Judicial Commission Liaison, Judicial Commission, Progressive Law

Introduction

The Third Amendment of 2001 to Article 1, paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia clearly states that Indonesia is a constitutional state. Within the framework of a constitutional state, the separation of powers among the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary branches is crucial for the functioning of a democratic government. Each of these institutions plays a significant role in

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governing the state in accordance with the principles of functional separation of powers. The executive branch serves as the executor of governmental power, the legislative branch is responsible for lawmaking, and the judiciary acts as a state institution with the function of adjudicating and administering judicial power.

Judicial power is regulated by the Third Amendment of 2001 to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, specifically in Article 24, paragraph (1), which states, "Judicial Power is an independent power to administer justice in order to uphold the law and justice". Furthermore, according to the Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power, judicial power is an independent state power entrusted with the responsibility of administering justice to uphold the law and justice based on the Third Amendment of 2001 to the Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, for the implementation of Indonesian laws. These legal provisions imply that judicial power is a state power that must be separate and free from the influence or intervention of other powers. This aligns with the viewpoint of Jimly Asshiddigie, who posits that one of the principles of a rule of law state is "the guarantee of an independent judicial power, free from the influence of other powers, in order to administer justice and uphold the law" (Asshiddigie, 2010, p. 512).

Judicial power, characterized by its freedom and independence, must be accompanied by accountability, which is achieved through the supervision of judges. According to Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power, the supervision of judges is conducted through two methods: internal supervision and external supervision. Internal supervision is carried out by the Supreme Court, which serves as the highest authority in overseeing judicial violations within all judicial bodies under its jurisdiction. Additionally, the Supreme Court also supervises administrative and financial matters. On the other hand, external supervision is conducted by the Judicial Commission, which aims to preserve and uphold the honor, dignity, and conduct of judges.

The authority of the Judicial Commission is outlined in the Third Amendment of 2001 to Article 24B, paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. It states that the Judicial Commission is an independent body with the power to propose the appointment of Supreme Court justices and exercise other powers to uphold the honor, dignity, and conduct of judges. The authority of the Judicial Commission is further elaborated in Law Number 18 of 2011, which amends Law Number 22 of 2004 concerning the Judicial Commission. Article 13 of Law Number 18 of 2011 explains the

authorities of the Judicial Commission, which include: a) Proposing the appointment of Supreme Court justices and ad hoc judges at the Supreme Court to the DPR (People's Consultative Assembly) for approval; b) Preserving and upholding the honor, dignity, and conduct of judges; c) Establishing the Code of Ethics and/or Code of Conduct for Judges in collaboration with the Supreme Court, and d) Ensuring the implementation of the Code of Ethics and/or Guidelines for Judge Behavior is upheld.

As previously explained, the authority of the Judicial Commission in Indonesia lies in the supervision and enforcement of the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Judges. In other words, the Judicial Commission is not a law enforcement agency but rather an agency responsible for ensuring adherence to ethical standards (Asshiddiqie, 2009, p. 100). The Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Judges are regulated by the Joint Decree of the Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia and the Chairperson of the Judicial Commission of the Republic of Indonesia No: 047/KMA/SKB/IV/2009 jo. 02/SKB/P.KY/IV/2009.

The authority of the Judicial Commission in Indonesia shares some similarities with judicial commissions in other countries, such as the United States and France. In France, the Judicial Commission serves as a balancing institution for judicial power and functions as a supervisor of judicial activities. Consequently, the Judicial Commission in France possesses more authority and exercises significant control over the strategic functions of the judiciary. One of its authorities is related to the careers and promotions of judges, which serves as a form of recognition for their performance (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2011, p. 46). Similarly, in the United States, the Wisconsin Judicial Commission divides its authority into two parts: investigation and adjudication. The Judicial Commission investigates potential errors or misconduct and determines whether there is sufficient cause for further action. Furthermore, the Judicial Commission initiates and demands a judicial process against judges in the Wisconsin Supreme Court (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2011, p. 46).

The establishment of the Judicial Commission is aimed at ensuring the proper functioning of the judicial system in upholding the law and promoting justice. The Judicial Commission plays a fundamental role in achieving an independent judiciary and upholding the honor, dignity, and behavior of judges to uphold the law and promote justice. To carry out its duties effectively, the Judicial Commission is supported by a liaison unit. The formation and responsibilities of the liaison unit are outlined in Article 1(3) of the Judicial Commission Regulation of the

Republic of Indonesia, Number 1 of 2017, which states, "The Judicial Commission Liaison is a unit that assists the Judicial Commission in carrying out its duties in the regions". The Judicial Commission Liaison, also known as the PKY (*Penghubung Komisi Yudisial*) assists the Judicial Commission in regional areas and is formed to address the existing deficiencies and adapt to evolving needs. The primary function of the liaison unit is to assist the Judicial Commission in supervisory duties to preserve and uphold the honor, dignity, and behavior of judges.

The supervision of judges' conduct through the enforcement of the Code of Ethics and/or Code of Conduct is essential in creating a judicial institution that is independent and free from the influence of other powers. This serves to fulfill the aspirations and expectations of the community in seeking justice within the judicial system. This perspective aligns with the progressive legal theory, which prioritizes the true essence of justice over rigid rules. The idea of progressive law is based on a concern for the quality of law enforcement in Indonesia, particularly since the reformation movement in 1997. The current reality and circumstances in Indonesia stand in contrast to the ideals of the law, as the function of law ideally should contribute to solving societal problems (Rahardjo, 2011, pp. 3–5).

The role of the Judicial Commission Liaison in assisting the Judicial Commission of the Republic of Indonesia in supervising the Code of Ethics and/or the Code of Conduct for Judges appears to be passive. The Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017 concerning the Formation, Structure, Data, and Working Procedures of the Judicial Commission Liaison in the regions assigns tasks to Judicial Commission Supervisors mainly in the areas of administration, enforcement, and legal protection to safeguard the dignity of judges. The Liaison for the Judicial Commission primarily receives, analyzes, and forwards reports from the public to the Judicial Commission. This has created the perception that the Liaison functions merely as a post office without real authority.

The passive role of the Judicial Commission Liaison has generated dissatisfaction within the community and has led to criticism that the Judicial Commission is not fully committed to fulfilling its duties, exercising its powers, and effectively overseeing the code of ethics of judges through the Judicial Commission Liaison.

Given the discussion on the external supervisory authority of judges conducted by the Judicial Commission, the differences between the Judicial Commission in Indonesia and other countries, an overview of progressive law, and the observations regarding the performance of the Judicial Commission Liaison, this study proposes the following research question: "How does the concept of the Liaison for the Judicial Commission in Indonesia align with a Progressive Legal Perspective?"

Methodology

Research method serves as the foundation for reaching final propositions in a specific field of knowledge (Nasution, 2008, p. 13). It can be understood as a scientific or scholarly study related to research activities (Teguh, 2001, pp. 7–8). In this study, the chosen research method is juridical-normative research, which aims to examine legal principles, legal systematics, legal history, and legal synchronization (Soekanto, 1986, p. 50). This approach aligns with the perspective of Soerjono Soekanto, who defines normative legal research or library legal research as research conducted primarily by examining literature or secondary data (Soekanto, 1990, p. 15). The juridical-normative approach employed in this study involves analyzing and studying library materials or secondary sources as the primary basis for the research (Soekamto & Mamudji, 2015, pp. 13–14).

Discussion

Indonesia is recognized as a constitutional state, as stated in the Third Amendment of 2001 to Article 1, paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. In the context of a constitutional state, the separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judiciary is crucial for effective governance. The executive branch is responsible for administering the state, the legislative branch is tasked with enacting laws, and the judiciary functions as the institution that carries out judicial power and adjudication.

The concept of judicial power is regulated in the Third Amendment of 2001 to Article 24, paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which states that "judicial power is an independent power to administer justice in order to uphold the law and justice". A free and independent judicial power must also be accompanied by accountability, which is achieved through the supervision of judges. The supervision of judges is explained in Article 39 and Article 40 of Law Number 48 of 2009 concerning Judicial Power. This supervision consists of two types: internal supervision and external supervision.

Internal control of the judiciary is conducted by the Supreme Court, focusing on the behavior of judges. External supervision, on the other

hand, is carried out by the Judicial Commission with the aim of preserving and upholding the honor, nobility, and behavior of judges. The notion of noble dignity is closely connected to ethical conduct. In other words, the Judicial Commission oversees the behavioral aspects of judges, rather than their technical judicial performance (Moch Ikhsan et al., 2018, pp. 10–17). Judges are expected to uphold a code of conduct not only in their professional lives but also in their social lives.

The Judicial Commission in Wisconsin, a state in the United States of America, shares similarities with its counterpart in Indonesia, as both emphasize their roles in supervising and enforcing the code of ethics (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2014, p. 76). The Wisconsin Judicial Commission was established in 1971 as an ethical institution originally known as the Judicial Conduct Organization. The primary responsibility of the Wisconsin Ethics Institute is to discipline and address the behavior of judges involved in activities that could negatively impact the administration of justice and undermine public confidence in the judicial system and its processes. The Wisconsin Judicial Commission is recognized as the oversight body for judicial conduct in the state of Wisconsin (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2014, p. 76).

The primary responsibility of the Wisconsin Judicial Commission is to address and handle complaints regarding violations committed by judges under the Code of Ethics. The commission has the authority to enforce disciplinary measures, which encompass violations of the Code of Ethics and Permanent Records. The enforcement of discipline by the Wisconsin Judicial Commission occurs in two stages:

- Investigation Stage: The Judicial Commission of Wisconsin conducts investigations to examine potential errors or records and determines whether there are grounds for possible causes.
- 2. Adjudicative Stage: The Wisconsin Judicial Commission proactively initiates and demands a legal process against the judge in the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

In France, the Judicial Commission operates under the name *Conseil Superieur De La Magistrature* and shares similar functional characteristics with the Judicial Commission in Indonesia. The *Conseil Superieur De La Magistrature* is positioned under the President or specifically assists the President in safeguarding the independence of the judiciary. This institution was established to address concerns regarding judicial accountability and protect the judiciary from interference by the executive branch (Autheman & Elena, 2004, p. 1).

The Conseil Superieur De La Magistrature is regulated in the Chapter on Judicial Power of the 1958 French Constitution, specifically Article 64 and Article 65. Article 64 primarily focuses on the guarantees provided by the President to ensure judicial independence. Article 65, on the other hand, pertains to the authority of the Conseil Superieur De La Magistrature, which includes considerations in the appointment of judges and the ability to impose disciplinary measures (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2014, p. 76). It is important to note that judges in France do not hold the same status as judges in other countries. The French judicial system follows strict disciplinary regulations and maintains a hierarchical structure (Suparto, 2019, p. 28). The Conseil Superieur De La Magistrature possesses the authority to impose disciplinary sanctions. Disciplinary measures can be imposed on members of the Sitting Magistrature, ranging from warnings to the withdrawal of pension rights and restrictions on specific judicial duties. Disciplinary sanctions issued by the Conseil Superieur De La Magistrature are not subject to appeal (Bahar, 2018, p. 392).

The Judicial Commission in Wisconsin shares similarities with the Judicial Commission in Indonesia in terms of their responsibility to handle and follow up on complaints related to violations committed by judges based on the Judges' Code of Ethics. However, there are differences in the enforcement and examination processes in the disciplinary procedures. The Wisconsin Judicial Commission employs two stages, namely investigation and adjudication, to enforce judge discipline. In contrast, the Judicial Commission in Indonesia conducts investigations into alleged violations of the Code of Ethics and/or the Code of Conduct for Judges, as well as requests for clarification from judges suspected of misconduct.

The Judicial Commissions in France and Indonesia have commonalities as they were established to address concerns regarding judicial accountability and to protect the judiciary from interference by the executive branch. Both commissions are involved in career development for judges and have the authority to impose sanctions. However, there is a slight difference in the application of sanctions by the Judicial Commission in France compared to Indonesia. In France, the imposition of sanctions on judges can be easily carried out by the Judicial Commission, as its members consist of career judges who have a deep understanding of the challenges and obligations faced by judges (Azhar et al., 2017, p. 29). In Indonesia, when alleged violations of the Code of Ethics and/or the Code of Conduct for Judges occur, the Judicial Commission proposes sanctions against judges suspected of

misconduct to the Supreme Court for further action (*Law Number 18* of 2011 Concerning Amendments to Law Number 22 of 2004 Concerning Judicial Commissions, 2011, Chapter 22D).

The Judicial Commission carries out supervision based on the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct for Judges, which are jointly established by the Supreme Court and the Judicial Commission. In 2009, they issued Joint Decree No. 047/KMA/SKB/IV/2009 jo. 02/SKB/P.KY/2009 regarding the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct for Judges. This decree outlines the fundamental principles and guidelines for judges' behavior, encompassing ten key behaviors: fairness, honesty, wisdom, independence, high integrity, responsibility, upholding self-esteem, discipline, humility, and professionalism.

The Judicial Commission is headquartered in the capital of the Republic of Indonesia (Law Number 18 of 2011 Concerning Amendments to Law Number 22 of 2004 Concerning Judicial Commissions, 2011, Chapter 3). It consists of seven members, including a chairman, a deputy chairman who is also a member, and five additional members. With this limited number of human resources, the Judicial Commission establishes liaison units to assist in its duties at the regional level. The formation and operation of these Judicial Commission Liaison units are regulated by the Judicial Commission Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 1 of 2017, concerning the Establishment, Structure, and Work Procedures of the Liaison of Judicial Commissions in the Regions.

The Judicial Commission Liaison, also known as PKY, serves as a unit that supports the implementation of the Judicial Commission's duties in the regions (Regulation of the Judicial Commission of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2017 Concerning the Formation, Structure, and Working Procedures of Liaison of Judicial Commissions in the Regions, 2017, Chapter 1). The PKY is located in the provincial capital and its jurisdiction covers the province. However, it may also carry out tasks beyond its working area if assigned by the Judicial Commission. The establishment of PKY aims to assist in various aspects of the Judicial Commission's responsibilities, as specified in Article 4 of Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017. The tasks assigned to PKY include: (1) Monitoring and supervising the behavior of judges; (2) Receiving reports from the public regarding alleged violations of the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct for Judges (KEPPH - Kode Etik dan Pedoman Perilaku Hakim); (3) Conducting closed verifications of reports on suspected violations of KEPPH; (4) Taking legal and/or other

appropriate actions against individuals, groups, or legal entities that undermine the honor and dignity of judges; and (5) Undertaking other tasks assigned by the Judicial Commission.

According to Article 4 of the Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017, the tasks of PKY primarily revolve around the administration of reports related to violations of KEPPH. These duties involve receiving and recording reports, verifying the completeness of administrative requirements, requesting additional data or requirements for alleged violation reports, receiving supporting evidence, providing information and advisory services on reports, supporting the examination process of alleged violations, and providing updates on the progress of the reports.

Furthermore, the PKY has the authority to take legal steps and/or other appropriate actions against individuals, groups, or legal entities that undermine the honor and dignity of judges. The specific legal steps are outlined in Article 7 of Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017, which pertains to the Formation, Composition, Data, and Working Procedures of Judicial Commission Liaisons in the regions. These steps include receiving and recording reports of alleged acts that humiliate the honor and dignity of judges, conducting preliminary reviews of such reports, and gathering relevant information related to these reports.

Apart from the aforementioned tasks, there are other significant programs carried out by the PKY as part of their duties. One of these programs involves transmitting the information acquired by the PKY to the Judicial Commission. Article 5 of the Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017 emphasizes that while monitoring and supervising the actions of judges, the PKY receives requests for trial monitoring, records and analyzes these requests, conducts trial monitoring, and prepares reports on the outcomes of trial monitoring to be submitted to the Judicial Commission.

Based on the described PKY program in fulfilling its duties, it can be perceived as having a passive role since its main function is to receive reports from the public and forward them to the Judicial Commission. Essentially, the primary examination is based on community reports (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2015). The hierarchical relationship between the PKY and the Secretary General further reinforces this passivity. With only 20 offices, the PKY's limited number of locations contributes to its perceived passivity. Initially consisting of 12 offices, the PKY expanded to 20 offices by 2022 (Purwadi, 2022, p. 4). Mukti Fajar Nur Dewata, the Chair of the Judicial Commission,

expressed his commitment to advocating for the establishment of Judicial Commission liaison offices in all provinces(Purwadi, 2022, p. 4).

During the first three months of 2023, a total of 566 public reports and 360 copies of letters were received regarding alleged violations of the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct for Judges (KEPPH). The reports were predominantly from major cities in Indonesia, with DKI Jakarta having the highest number of reports at 97, followed by East Java with 52 reports, West Java with 51 reports, North Sumatra with 43 reports, Central Java with 31 reports, South Sulawesi with 28 reports, Banten with 25 reports, Lampung and North Sulawesi with 20 reports each, and Riau with 19 reports (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2023). In the recapitulation of community reports received through liaisons in 2021, there were 259 reports (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2022a, pp. 18-19). Analyzing the location of complaints, Riau had the highest number of complaints at 35, followed by South Sumatra with 19 complaints, Central Java with 25 complaints, East Java with 28 complaints, West Nusa Tenggara with 23 complaints, East Nusa Tenggara with 19 complaints, East Kalimantan with 30 complaints, North Sulawesi with 18 complaints, South Sulawesi with 25 complaints, Maluku with 11 complaints, North Sumatra with 20 complaints, and West Kalimantan with 6 complaints. Out of the total reports received in 2021, 259 reports were received through liaisons out of a total of 1,481 reports. It is evident that the number of community reports received through liaisons is not comparable to the overall number of community reports.

Amzulian Rifa'i, the Head of the Inter-Agency Relations and Information Services Division of the Judicial Commission, stated that the PKY has been perceived as a post office without authority (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2022b). The PKY faces challenges in meeting the expectations of the community as both a reporter and a supervisor of the judiciary. Strengthening the PKY could involve positioning it as the front line for the Judicial Commission in the regions when addressing the needs of justice seekers (Komisi Yudisial Republik Indonesia, 2022b). This aligns with progressive legal theory, which emphasizes the genuine value of justice over strict adherence to rules.

The concept of progressive law is built upon two fundamental components of law: rules and behavior. It recognizes law as both a set of regulations and a reflection of societal behavior (Mujahidin, 2006, p. 72). These two aspects are interconnected and closely intertwined.

This sets progressive law apart from other legal theories that prioritize strict adherence to binding rules, as it seeks to go beyond rules and access the true value of justice.

Progressive law rejects the notion that legal institutions are fixed and absolute entities. Instead, it views legal institutions as constantly evolving and improving. Sutjipto Rahardjo explains that progressive law does not perceive law as an ultimately rigid institution, but rather as an institution that is shaped by its ability to serve humanity (Rahardjo, 2004, p. 72). In other words, law is a dynamic institution that continually strives for improvement and perfection. The measure of legal perfection lies in factors such as justice, welfare, and concern for the well-being of society. This reflects the essence of the idea that "law is always in the process of becoming" (Rahardjo, 2004, p. 72).

According to Satjipto Rahardjo, the enforcement of progressive law involves not only according to the letter of the law but to the very meaning and broader implications of the law. It encompasses not only intellectual intelligence but also spiritual intelligence. In other words, law enforcement is carried out with utmost determination, empathy, dedication, and commitment to addressing the suffering of the nation. It requires the courage to explore alternative approaches beyond conventional methods (Rahardjo, 2009, p. xiii).

In light of the progressive law concept, which emphasizes the importance of both rules and behavior, it is essential to establish regulations that optimize the role of the PKY as an assistant to the Judicial Commission in the permanent supervision of the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct for Judges. This can be achieved by enacting specific laws that explicitly define the role of the PKY in supporting the Judicial Commission, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the supervision of judges' ethical standards. Such regulations are necessary to fulfill the expectations of the community as both reporters and supervisors of an independent judicial institution. By strengthening the legal framework, the PKY can effectively contribute to the integrity and accountability of the judiciary in meeting the needs and expectations of the community.

Conclusion

The role of the Judicial Commission Supervisor (PKY) in assisting the Judicial Commission of the Republic of Indonesia in supervising the Code of Ethics for Judges and/or the Code of Conduct for Judges is currently characterized as passive. This passivity is evident in Judicial Commission Regulation Number 1 of 2017, which assigns administrative tasks to the PKY. Reports submitted by the public to the

PKY are merely received and recorded, without any further action taken or knowledge of the subsequent handling of these reports. This stands in contrast to the enforcement of judge discipline carried out by the Wisconsin Judicial Commission, which involves investigation and adjudication stages.

In line with the principles of progressive law, which consider law as both regulation and behavior, the authors propose optimizing the role of the PKY as an Assistant to the Judicial Commission in supervising the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct for Judges. This can be achieved by establishing a legal system or rule that specifically governs the duties and functions of the PKY in overseeing the ethical conduct of judges, based on amended legal regulations. By doing so, the PKY would be able to meet the expectations of the public as reporters and contribute to the effective supervision of Judicial Institutions in Indonesia. This would require the creation of legal regulations that elevate the PKY to the status of an external institution supporting the Judicial Commission's supervisory function.

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