



Review Article

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIALIZATION OF BASIC AGRARIAN LAW IN THE LAND REGISTRATION PROCESS AT THE VILLAGE LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

Background. The issue of agrarian reform in Indonesia has long been a central theme in the country's legal, political, and social development. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the amended Basic Agrarian Law in the land registration process at the village level, particularly in Ngarum Village, Lamongan, and to evaluate the effectiveness of socialization programs in improving community legal awareness regarding land registration.

Research method. Employing a qualitative socio-legal approach, the research explores how legal norms interact with local institutions and community practices. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and legal document analysis.

Findings. The implementation of land registration under Law Number 14 of 2024 still encounters obstacles such as limited community legal awareness, weak village administrative capacity, and the lack of data integration with land agencies. Nevertheless, supporting factors such as improved public interest in land certification and the strategic role of village leaders have been identified. The evaluation of socialization activities indicates a significant increase in awareness levels, although this improvement does not always translate into actual registration practices due to structural and cultural barriers. The analysis highlights a gap between the legal framework and its implementation, emphasizing the need for strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing community legal education.

Conclusion. Successful implementation requires multidimensional strategies that involve legal, institutional, cultural, and technological support tailored to rural contexts.

Keywords: Land Registration; Agrarian; Village Governance; Legal Implementation; Rural Development.

BACKGROUND

The issue of agrarian reform in Indonesia has long been a central theme in the country's legal, political, and social development. Land, as a vital resource, has consistently played a pivotal role in the livelihood of rural communities. The promulgation of Law Number 5 of 1960 concerning Basic Agrarian Principles (commonly known as UUPA) was a historic milestone aimed at decolonizing the national land system and establishing legal certainty for land tenure. The 2024 amendment to this law, through Law Number 14 of 2024, reaffirms the state's commitment to improving land governance, particularly in ensuring that all land ownership is properly registered.

However, despite the progressive vision of the UUPA and its recent amendments, the reality in many rural areas, including Ngarum Village in Lamongan Regency, shows that land registration remains problematic. Prior studies have shown systemic challenges in land registration, especially at the village level. For instance, Siregar (2023) found that out of 422

land parcels in Desa Nagasaribu, only 102 had valid certificates, indicating a widespread gap between policy and implementation [1]. Similarly, Choiriyah (2023) observed that in Desa Kampung Baru, low legal awareness and limited state outreach hindered the land registration process [2]. These findings are echoed by Tarfi et al. (2023), who emphasized the critical need for capacity building at the local level to support national land policy [3]. The tension between the formal legal framework and local customary practices often undermines land policy implementation [4,5].

The gap between national law and rural practice highlights an important research problem: Why does land registration, mandated under a robust legal framework, continue to face barriers at the village level? This issue becomes more urgent in the context of Indonesia's commitment to national digitalization of land systems, where the inclusion of remote and rural areas is crucial for equity and sustainability. Land registration is not merely an administrative obligation; it is a foundational step toward land tenure security, access to credit, reduced land conflicts, and rural economic development [6,7].

This study addresses a critical gap in existing literature: while many studies focus on macro-legal analyses or BPN (National Land Agency) administrative constraints, few have examined how village-level governance, institutional readiness, and community perceptions influence the success or failure of land registration efforts. The research conducted in Ngarum Village aims to fill this void by offering an in-depth empirical analysis rooted in local realities. It evaluates how Law Number 14 of 2024 is implemented in practice, identifies structural and cultural challenges, and explores the synergy (or lack thereof) between village authorities and land institutions.

By integrating normative and socio-legal approaches, this study seeks to explore the implementation of land law not only as a regulatory mechanism but also as a sociocultural process. The research rests on the hypothesis that weak institutional capacity and low legal awareness at the village level significantly hinder the success of land registration programs, despite adequate legal infrastructure. Furthermore, the novelty of this research lies in its attempt to contextualize agrarian law implementation within a micro-political and cultural landscape, offering new insights into how local dynamics shape legal outcomes.

The urgency of this research is underscored by the broader goals of the Indonesian land reform agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which emphasize inclusive access to land and legal empowerment of rural communities. Without a nuanced understanding of on-the-ground implementation, top-down legal reforms risk being ineffective or even counterproductive.

In reviewing the existing body of literature, this study draws on multiple perspectives. Emphasized that land registration is a crucial component for realizing the right to land [8]. Rahardjo (2006) and Wignjosoebroto (2014) argued that law must operate within the lived realities of society, necessitating a participatory and culturally sensitive approach [9,10]. Meanwhile, legal anthropologists such as Suhadi et al. (2024) have long emphasized the need to recognize local land traditions in formal policy-making [3].

From this review, it is evident that there is a lack of empirical studies focusing on the role of local institutions in implementing land law at the grassroots level. This research seeks to bridge that gap by focusing on Ngarum Village, a semi-agrarian, administratively significant locality that exemplifies the practical challenges of land law implementation. It is through this case that we can better understand the mechanisms, limitations, and opportunities in operationalizing agrarian law in rural Indonesia.

The originality of this study lies in its focus on the micro-level dynamics of land

registration, which has been relatively underexplored in prior research that tends to emphasize national policy or institutional capacity at the central level. Unlike most previous studies, this research not only analyzes the legal and administrative aspects of the implementation of Law Number 14 of 2024 but also evaluates the role of community socialization in shaping legal awareness at the village level. The novelty of this study is the integration of a qualitative socio-legal approach with an empirical assessment of awareness-raising activities, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how law operates within rural contexts. By combining institutional analysis with behavioral perspectives, this article contributes new insights into the interaction between law, governance, and society and proposes context-sensitive strategies for improving land registration outcomes in Indonesia. Based on the above rationale, the objective of this research is to analyze the implementation of Law Number 14 of 2024 in land registration practices in Ngarum Village and to identify the institutional, legal, and sociocultural factors that affect its effectiveness.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative socio-legal research approach to explore the implementation of agrarian law in village land registration, focusing on both the legal framework and its application within a social context. The normative dimension examines the textual substance of Law Number 5 of 1960, as amended by Law Number 14 of 2024, along with supporting regulations such as Government Regulation Number 24 of 1997 on Land Registration and ministerial directives concerning the land certification process. Meanwhile, the empirical dimension emphasizes field research conducted in Ngarum Village, located in Sekaran Subdistrict, Lamongan Regency, to investigate how these legal provisions operate in practice. The object of this research is the implementation of land registration policies as mandated by the amended agrarian law. This includes evaluating how the policy is interpreted by local institutions, how it is operationalized, and how it is perceived by the rural community.

The operational focus of this study is defined around the dynamics between the legal mandate, institutional readiness, and community engagement in the land registration process. Specifically, the research examines the consistency between regulatory frameworks and local practices, the effectiveness of the village government in carrying out administrative functions, and the level of awareness and participation among residents regarding land registration procedures. Ngarum Village was purposefully selected as the research site due to its agrarian character and ongoing challenges related to land tenure security and legal documentation. Despite its relative proximity to the district center, many residents in Ngarum have not yet registered their land, making the village an ideal location for observing the disconnect between policy and practice.

The study population consists of all actors directly or indirectly involved in the land registration process in Ngarum Village. A total of 15 key informants were selected purposively for in-depth interviews, including 5 village officials responsible for land administration, 3 staff from the Lamongan Land Office (BPN), 2 community leaders familiar with traditional land arrangements, and 5 residents who had registered or attempted to register their land. In addition, the study involved a broader survey of 40 villagers who were selected purposively to represent different socio-economic backgrounds. These 40 respondents participated in a community awareness level questionnaire designed to assess their knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions regarding land registration.

The questionnaire was adapted from the legal awareness measurement model developed further operationalized using a 4-point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate greater legal

awareness (7,11). Respondents' scores were categorized into four levels: Very High (120–150), High (90–119), Low (60–89), and Very Low (30–59). This instrument covered dimensions such as knowledge of land law, understanding of registration procedures, perceived benefits of certification, and willingness to participate in formal registration. The questionnaire was administered in combination with field observations and was validated through expert review and pilot testing with a small group of respondents before data collection. Archival materials such as land certificates, village letter C books, land block maps, and official correspondence related to PTSL implementation were also collected and reviewed to triangulate findings and strengthen the validity of data interpretation.

Data were gathered through three primary techniques: in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis. Interviews provided nuanced insights into institutional procedures and community perspectives. Observations allowed the researcher to witness administrative interactions, community meetings, and local decision-making processes. Legal and administrative documents were analyzed to compare written rules against actual practices in the field. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive qualitative methods, guided by the model of Miles and Huberman (2014), which involves three main steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. This framework was chosen because it allows systematic organization and interpretation of complex field data, facilitating the identification of patterns and relationships between legal norms, institutional practices, and community behavior. A normative legal analysis was also conducted to assess how field practices align with existing legal standards. To ensure validity and credibility, data triangulation was applied by cross-referencing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentary sources. This methodological framework facilitates a comprehensive and contextual understanding of how agrarian laws are implemented at the village level, particularly in light of local institutional limitations and sociocultural realities.

FINDINGS

The fieldwork in Ngarum Village, Sekaran Subdistrict, revealed significant disparities between the legal framework for land registration as outlined in Law Number 14 of 2024 and its actual implementation at the village level. Data were collected from in-depth interviews, participant observations, and administrative records. The findings are organized into themes reflecting institutional readiness, community perception, administrative constraints, and policy implementation outcomes.

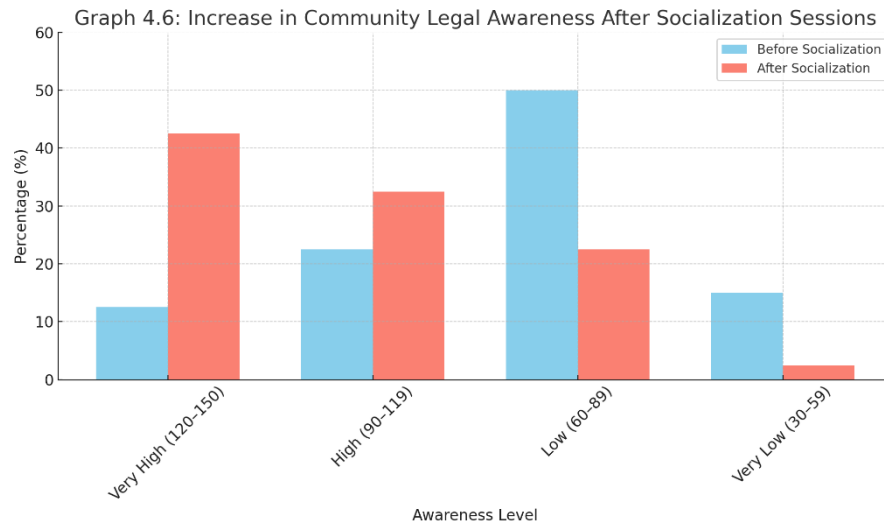
Table 1. Change in Community Awareness Toward Land Registration

| Awareness Level | Before Socialization | | After Socialization | |
|---------------------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| Very High (120–150) | 5 | 12.5% | 17 | 42.5% |
| High (90–119) | 9 | 22.5% | 13 | 32.5% |
| Low (60–89) | 20 | 50.0% | 9 | 22.5% |
| Very Low (30–59) | 6 | 15.0% | 1 | 2.5% |
| Total | 40 | 100% | 40 | 100% |

The primary data showed that village officials acknowledged the importance of land registration but lacked the technical capacity and legal knowledge to guide the process

independently. Most community members were still unaware of the procedures, benefits, and legal implications of formal land registration. Table 1 illustrates the change in awareness and participation before and after informal socialization conducted by the research team and local leaders.

The data suggest that a simple intervention through participatory discussion and field assistance can significantly improve community understanding. However, this improvement did not automatically translate into actual registration practices due to cost perceptions, fear of legal scrutiny, and incomplete historical land records.



Graph 2. Increase in Community Legal Awareness After Socialization Sessions

The graph above confirms that although knowledge levels rose considerably, registration outcomes remained modest. In many cases, villagers hesitated due to procedural uncertainty and a general distrust of formal institutions. This aligns with [4] Findings that legal pluralism and community reliance on informal norms frequently obstruct the reach of formal legal processes in agrarian matters. Furthermore, Legal empowerment is only effective when supported by active and accessible local institutions, a condition not fully met in Ngarum [3].

Interviews with village officials also confirmed administrative bottlenecks. The absence of a digital cadastral map and limited coordination with the Lamongan Land Office (BPN) made the validation of land claims difficult. Informants explained that they relied heavily on informal documents and oral histories, which often led to overlapping claims. Legal formalism in rural agrarian administration tends to fail when local customs are not integrated into state procedures. [7].

An important gap revealed by this study is the mismatch between central policy expectations and local capacities. National initiatives such as PTSL (Systematic Land Registration) have been designed for rapid certification, yet their success depends on community participation and institutional readiness. In Ngarum, both of these variables are insufficiently developed. This echoes the criticism by [12], who argued that without addressing “law in action,” legal reform is doomed to be symbolic at best. Internationally, studies by [13] also showed that land registration in developing countries often fails when rolled out uniformly without adapting to local conditions.

The novelty of this study lies in its micro-level perspective on policy implementation, emphasizing not just legal or administrative constraints but also sociocultural barriers. The

research demonstrates that rural communities perceive land registration as a secondary need unless faced with direct conflict or development incentives. Thus, contrary to the formalistic assumption of legal compliance, community behavior is guided more by necessity than legal obligation.

From a theoretical standpoint, the findings validate the socio-legal framework's utility in examining agrarian governance. Legal instruments must be viewed not only as prescriptive texts but as dynamic systems influenced by institutional, cultural, and historical factors. The study contributes to the discourse by providing empirical evidence that implementation failures in land registration stem more from institutional and behavioral asymmetries than from the lack of regulation itself.

In summary, the findings highlight the importance of simplifying procedures, enhancing village institutional capacity, and integrating local customs into land registration protocols. National policies must be operationalized through tailored, community-specific strategies, including legal literacy campaigns, collaborative mapping, and accessible dispute resolution mechanisms. This approach would bridge the gap between "law on the books" and "law in practice," thereby making land reform not only legitimate but truly effective.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reinforce the persistent gap between the legal mandates of national agrarian policy and the reality of its implementation in rural communities. Despite the comprehensive legal framework provided by Law Number 5 of 1960 and its amendment through Law Number 14 of 2024, the implementation process in Ngarum Village remains partial and inconsistent. This reflects a broader challenge echoed in prior studies by Siregar (2023) and Choiriyah (2023), both of which noted low certificate ownership and limited institutional support in rural land registration initiatives [1,2]. These parallels confirm that the issues faced in Ngarum are not isolated but part of a structural pattern in rural Indonesia.

One of the major gaps identified in this study is the lack of institutional readiness at the village level. While the UUPA mandates the facilitation of land registration through local institutions, the village government in Ngarum lacks the human resources, technical capacity, and infrastructural support to fulfill this mandate. This is consistent with the argument of Tarfi et al. (2023), who emphasized that successful land policy implementation requires decentralized coordination and technical empowerment at the lowest administrative levels [3]. International research on land tenure in developing countries underscores the importance of tailoring registration systems to local capacity rather than relying on top-down policies [13].

The discussion also reveals a cultural and psychological barrier within the community. Many villagers do not perceive land registration as urgent or necessary unless a dispute arises. A law cannot function effectively without societal recognition and internalization [7]. Similarly, in a legally plural society like Indonesia, the legitimacy of formal law often competes with the authority of customary practices [4]. In the case of Ngarum, informal agreements and community recognition often override legal documentation, reducing the perceived value of formal registration.

A significant contribution of this study is its illumination of the "implementation gap" between the formal legal structure and village realities. While regulations stipulate precise administrative processes, these often assume a uniform level of institutional capacity and legal awareness, which rarely exists in rural contexts. The study supports the notion articulated by [12] that legal reforms can fail when "law in the books" does not translate into "law in action." This observation is further strengthened by the empirical work of [14] Who documented that

formal land titling schemes in sub-Saharan Africa produced limited impact when not backed by local engagement and administrative feasibility.

What distinguishes this study from existing literature is its micro-sociological perspective, focusing not just on policy or law but on the village as a political and cultural arena. In this regard, it responds to Rahardjo's (2006) call for a socio-legal approach that integrates legal norms with social realities [9]. The study also advances the academic conversation by highlighting that implementation is not merely a technical problem but a matter of trust, identity, and interaction between law and society. The residents of Ngarum do not reject registration outright; rather, they remain ambivalent due to limited exposure to its benefits and the lack of direct facilitation.

In comparing these findings with international frameworks, particularly the World Bank's "Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration" model, it is evident that flexibility, community involvement, and simplicity are essential for successful land governance in rural settings [15]. The model promotes incremental formalization through participatory mapping and adaptable legal tools, which are largely absent in Ngarum's current approach. Adopting such community-based strategies in Indonesia could bridge the implementation gap and increase the legitimacy of legal instruments.

This study also provides evidence supporting the theory of legal empowerment. Effective access to justice in land matters requires more than formal access to courts or bureaucratic processes; it necessitates knowledge, participation, and agency among the population [16]. The experience in Ngarum suggests that building community trust in the registration system, through education, dialogue, and practical facilitation, is just as important as regulatory reform.

The novelty of this research lies in its localized, empirical approach to the challenges of land registration under national agrarian law. It goes beyond theoretical or legalistic analyses by documenting the lived experiences, perceptions, and structural limitations of rural communities. In doing so, it contributes to a more grounded understanding of how legal reforms can be made more inclusive, participatory, and context-sensitive. The study's findings suggest that national land policy must evolve from being uniform and administrative to becoming adaptive and community-oriented.

In conclusion, this research bridges a critical knowledge gap in Indonesian agrarian law by presenting a detailed, field-based understanding of implementation barriers and suggesting practical, culturally embedded solutions. It highlights that law alone cannot guarantee change; only through integrated legal, institutional, and social interventions can policy objectives be realized at the grassroots level.

Based on the findings of this research, it is recommended that the government, particularly through the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning/National Land Agency, design a more context-sensitive land registration program for rural areas. This includes simplifying registration procedures, providing training and technical assistance to village officials, and implementing community-based mapping initiatives. Legal literacy programs should be intensified to educate citizens about the benefits and obligations of formal land ownership. Furthermore, integrating local customary practices into the formal legal framework can enhance the legitimacy and acceptance of land policy at the grassroots level. For future research, it is advisable to conduct comparative studies across multiple rural regions to capture a broader range of implementation dynamics and to explore the role of non-governmental actors in facilitating land rights formalization.

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that the implementation of Law Number 14 of 2024, which amends the Basic Agrarian Law of 1960, in the context of land registration in Ngarum Village is still far from effective. The research demonstrates that while the legal framework exists and the policy mandates are clear, the local implementation faces several institutional, technical, and sociocultural challenges. The village government lacks sufficient administrative capacity, and the community generally exhibits low legal awareness, which hinders participation in formal land registration processes. Furthermore, the absence of reliable documentation, limited digital infrastructure, and weak coordination with the National Land Agency exacerbate these challenges. Despite some improvement in awareness following community engagement efforts, actual registration outcomes remain limited due to persistent structural barriers.

The research confirms the hypothesis that successful land registration under agrarian law is not determined solely by legal infrastructure but also by the readiness of local institutions and the legal consciousness of rural communities. The findings provide critical insights into how law and policy must be adapted to the unique contexts of rural society. This study contributes to the academic discourse by offering a grounded, empirical analysis that integrates legal, institutional, and cultural dimensions. It highlights the need for a participatory, decentralized, and flexible approach in future agrarian law implementation strategies to ensure broader accessibility and social legitimacy.

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