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## The Phenomenon of Ngobrok (Palm Oil Fruit Theft) Case Study: Sibak Village Community, Ipuh District, Mukomuko

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**Abstract:** This study describes the findings of researchers that underlie the occurrence of the Ngobrok phenomenon in Sibak Village, most of whose land has been controlled by companies. Palm oil fruit theft often occurs due to limited access to productive land, low levels of community education, and urgent economic needs. The method used in this study is a qualitative approach with in-depth interview techniques. Data obtained from perpetrators and farmers were analyzed using the conflict theory proposed by Karl Max. This theory is used to understand the social and economic inequality that underlies the act of theft, where people who lose access to land become marginalized groups and are forced to take illegal actions to meet their living needs. The results of this study indicate that the dominance of companies in controlling land, low levels of community education, and limited employment opportunities are the main factors that trigger Ngobrok or palm oil fruit theft.

**Keyword:** Ngobrok, economic needs, land ownership, low education.

### INTRODUCTION

Bengkulu Province has quite abundant earth potential, not only the coal mining sector, there are also palm oil and rubber plantation sectors, petroleum, as well as agriculture and even fisheries. Bengkulu has quite a large opportunity in developing the palm oil plantation sector, because of the availability of natural resources of plantation land covering an area of ± 614,223 ha, the number of unemployed human resources is 26,000 people (Central Statistics Agency 2019). Palm oil plantations generate huge profits which make many forests converted into palm oil plantations. Indonesia is the world's number 1 producer of palm oil, beating Malaysia. However, legal problems and land conflicts sometimes become serious obstacles in its development and this problem has quite broad implications for the lives of a group of people.

Plantation land clearing operations, often lead to conflicts, human rights violations against local communities, the existence of discrimination is what often happens, even violence is a bad act that is commonplace so far in an effort to “clean” the company's HGU. It is not uncommon for companies to be assisted by company security forces, and back-up from

the police. As a result, local communities have become victims of violence. This is the origin of the phenomenon of Ngobrok (theft of palm fruit) in Sibak Village, as a result of low economic factors, which then violates the rights of local communities so that the company is responsible. In an effort to reclaim their rights. The community uses various methods, because this is related to their source of livelihood. In the end, they are forced to take the products of plantations that are obviously planted on community land, not only companies, but also private plantations because it is safer than companies that are heavily guarded. In these cases, local people who fight back and try to take back their land that was seized by the company are criminalized and tried as thieves, vandals and provocateurs, this is what happened in sibak village itself. The company does not have a legal right to cultivate land and operate oil palm plantations on it.

The state as the holder of the highest power over agrarian resources, has a legal relationship and authority in regulating the control, ownership and use of land which is then referred to as the state's right to control (Sembiring 2016). In the New Order era, the government gave many concession permits to private plantation companies to control and utilize an area on a large scale (Fauzi 1999). This often gives rise to injustice in land control and becomes the root of agrarian conflict. Therefore, the state's right to control must be beneficial for all groups in society, both capital owners and small farmers, even for those who do not own land.(In, Pilkada, and Dan 2017).

In the records of the Indonesian Green Canopy, there are 9 points of agrarian conflict between farming communities and companies spread across 3 districts in Bengkulu Province. Among others, the conflict between Tanjung Sakti Farmers and PT Daria Dharma Pratama (DDP), Maju Bersama Farmers and PT DDP, Air Sebayur Farmers and PT PN VII, Urai Ketahun Community and PT PN VII, North Bengkulu Community Farmers Struggle with PT Purnawira Dharma Upaya, Air Palik Farmers and PT Bimasraya Sawitindo, Aur Gading and Air Penyengat Farmers.

The impact of foreign investment in the oil palm plantation sector of PT. Agromuko on environmental damage in Bengkulu Province. PT. Agromuko is a palm oil company that has the largest land use rights (HGU) in Bengkulu Province, with a total HGU concession of 28,615 ha. This company, which is part of the SIPEF Group, obtained its first HGU permit in 1989 under the Soeharto regime. In this study, the focus is on foreign investment in the plantation sector and palm oil mill processing, with PT. Agromuko as the subject.

The agricultural sector in Bengkulu Province is still the main source for economic growth, absorbing labor and as a provider of food and industrial raw materials. Based on the RPJMD (Regional Medium-Term Development Plan) of Bengkulu Province 2022-2026, 8 (eight) superior agricultural commodities have been determined as benchmarks for the success of TPHP (Food Technology and Agricultural Products) development, one of which is People's Palm Oil Production. Efforts in the framework of People's Palm Oil have been described in the Five-Year and Annual program, activity and funding plans. Palm oil is the largest commodity cultivated by farmers in Bengkulu province. The area of palm oil in Bengkulu province in 2022 is 319,346 hectares or around 60% of the recorded area of people's plantations. People's palm oil production in Bengkulu province is 1,093,003 tons of Crude Palm Oil (CPO) or around 85% of the total production of people's plantations. Nationally, Bengkulu province ranks 10th as the highest CPO producer in 2022. An area of 3,140 hectares lower than in 2021. An area of 914 hectares lower than in 2021.

The sustainability of the national palm oil industry still faces various challenges, as well as in Bengkulu province. One of the challenges is how to increase the commitment of the parties involved in sustainable palm oil development to synergize the 5P principles (People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and partnership). A palm oil development planning strategy design is needed that takes into account sustainable principles by considering economic,

socio-cultural and ecological aspects. In Mukomuko District, there are 17 companies, having a core plantation area of 62,105 ha, with 46,260 ha of core plantation relations, 3,928 ha of community plantation area and 3,044 ha of community plantation relations. (Source: Processed from the field of large private/national companies, Bengkulu Province TPHP Office, 2023)

The legality of large company land needs certainty and there is no overlapping of permits and designations. Land is a limited resource, monoculture for oil palm needs to be maintained so as not to impact the ecological system. Large companies also need to prioritize the use of local labor and encourage community empowerment around the plantation so that it is socially sustainable. Provision of basic needs for plantation employees and purchase of spare parts need to prioritize local companies, so that the multiplier effect of plantation companies can improve the local economy.

The indigenous people in the northern part of Mukomuko are the Minangkabau tribe, who have similarities in customs, culture, and language with the South Coast region in West Sumatra. Mukomuko used to be included in the West Coast region of the Minangkabau Tribe. In the southern part of Mukomuko, there is the Pekal tribe which is related to the Pekal tribe in the northern part of North Bengkulu Regency.

Mukomuko is part of the Minangkabau region known as the Riak nan Berdebur area, which stretches along the West Coast from Padang to South Bengkulu. However, since the British colonial era, Mukomuko has been included in the Bengkulu administration. This separated them from their kind in West Sumatra and became part of Bengkulu.

During the colonial and independence era, Mukomuko was included in Region Level II with the name of North Bengkulu Regency. In 2003, North Bengkulu Regency was expanded into North Bengkulu Regency and Mukomuko Regency. This expansion was part of the effort to expand regencies and cities that hit almost all provinces in Indonesia, including Bengkulu Province. Mukomuko was not spared from earthquake disasters, such as the one that occurred on September 13, 2007 in Lubuk Pinang District, which caused damage to some of the residents. Transmigration to Bengkulu has been rampant since 1967, and the transmigration policy continues to this day. The majority of transmigrants come from Java and they are generally farmers. Population growth in Mukomuko has become very rapid due to this transmigration program, causing changes in the composition of the population in the area, where the native population has become a minority. The purpose of this research author intends to find out the changes in the social situation, then the background factors and see the problems that arise after the phenomenon of ngobrok (palm fruit theft).

## **METHOD**

Research is defined as a series of activities that are more complex, more detailed, and more comprehensive than something being studied. According to Denzin & Lincoln (1994) stated that qualitative research is research that uses a natural setting with the intention of interpreting the phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods. Erickson (1968) stated that qualitative research seeks to find and describe narratively the activities carried out and the impact of the actions taken on their lives. According to Kirk & Miller (1986; 9) defines that qualitative research is a particular tradition in social science that fundamentally depends on observations of humans both in their area and in their terminology. This identifies things that are relevant to the meaning of both the diverse conditions of the world of human diversity, diverse actions, diverse beliefs and interests with a focus on differences in the forms of things that give rise to differences in meaning.

Qualitative methods are influenced by the post-positivistic naturalistic-interpretive paradigm of the critical theory group and post-modernism as developed by Baidrillard, Lyotard, and Derrida (Cresswell, 1994).

Qualitative research can also be called phenomenological research, naturalistic research because the research is conducted in natural conditions; also called ethnographic research because it is more widely used in the field of cultural anthropology; and can also be called symbolic interactionist research, case studies, interpretive and descriptive (Bogden and Biklen, 1982:3). The application of Qualitative Research Methods, the choice of method does not depend on the type of discipline rigidly, but rather on the purpose of the research or the results to be achieved, how to obtain data and analyze data to achieve the goals. Therefore, before qualitative methods are applied in social and humanities research, important things need to be considered such as, Reasons for using qualitative research, Preparation of a flexible research plan, Constructing a framework of thought, Breaking down parts, validity, Describing various analyzes needed in the research, Explanation of procedures, Not anticipating findings, Correct quantification, Planning entry and exit routes, Careful diversion, and Point of view (Perspective) mention.

By using qualitative research to understand the phenomenon of palm oil fruit theft in depth. This qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore complex and diverse factors that influence the behavior of individuals involved or affected by the theft. The main method in data collection is through in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted to obtain more complete, detailed, and contextual information from various parties involved. This in-depth interview technique was chosen because it can provide an opportunity for respondents to explain their views freely and in depth about the issue being studied. This qualitative research method provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors that cause palm oil theft in Sibak Village. Data obtained from in-depth interviews and field observations revealed that this theft was influenced by economic needs, low levels of education, and inequality of access to natural resources caused by land control by companies.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Definition of the Ngobrok Phenomenon**

Sibak Village is a village located in Ipuh District, Mukomuko Regency, Bengkulu Province, Indonesia. Here is some information about its location: Sibak Village is located in the western coastal area of Sumatra Island, close to the Indian Ocean. Ipuh District itself is known for its beautiful coastal landscapes, as well as several rivers that cross this area. Sibak Village can be accessed by land. The main roads connecting various villages and districts in Mukomuko are quite adequate, although in some parts it may require extra attention, especially during the rainy season. Sibak Village has a close-knit community and a variety of local cultural traditions that are still maintained to this day. Mutual cooperation and various traditional activities are often part of the daily lives of the community. Although not as popular as some other tourist destinations in Bengkulu, this area has quite a lot of tourism potential, especially with the natural beauty of the beaches and the potential for ecotourism that can be developed. Overall, Sibak Village in Ipuh District is one of the villages that offers the natural beauty of the coast and a community life that is still close to local culture.

“Ngobrok” as the people of Sibak Village call it, is an activity or activity of launching palm oil products using motor vehicles, while Obrok is a tool made of wooden baskets and used tires, Obrok is used as a tool to launch palm oil products belonging to other people (theft of palm fruit). This is a form of theft or violation of property rights that is detrimental to the owner of the palm oil plantation. This phenomenon often occurs in the context of the palm oil industry, where palm fruit is a high-value commodity produced from plantations. People involved in taking other people’s palm fruit may do so for economic interests, with the aim of gaining profit from the harvest without having to plant and care for their own plantations. The theft of palm oil products in Muko-Muko and the conflict between the company and the community regarding the palm oil harvest have negative impacts on the

community. Taking other people's palm fruit without permission is an illegal act that violates the law and ethics. This can harm palm oil plantation owners, both financially and emotionally, because they have spent time, energy, and resources to care for the plants and produce the palm fruit. In addition, the act of taking other people's palm fruit can also create social conflict among farmers or palm oil plantation owners in a particular community. This can disrupt relationships between neighbors and damage cooperation in the management and utilization of natural resources.

### **Background and Factors Causing the Ngobrok Phenomenon**

Changes in social situations, such as economic, political, and social changes, can affect the phenomenon of "ngobrok" or palm oil fruit theft. Palm oil fruit theft can occur due to economic factors, such as lack of income and poverty, as well as social factors, such as lack of education and injustice. Most of the residents of Sibak Village depend on agriculture and fisheries as their main source of livelihood. Palm oil and rice farming are the main commodities cultivated by local residents. In addition, with the proximity of this village to the sea, some residents are also involved in fishing activities. Economic pressure is the main factor driving palm oil theft in Sibak Village. This village is an area where the majority of the population works in the agricultural sector, especially palm oil. However, the income from this work is often insufficient to meet basic needs, especially when the price of palm oil commodities fluctuates. In conditions like this, many people feel forced to find shortcuts, one of which is by stealing palm fruit from plantations, especially those belonging to large companies. They see theft as a quick way to get money without requiring too much capital or effort, even though the legal risks are high. The low level of education of the people of Sibak Village is another cause of the rampant palm oil theft. Many villagers only have basic education or have not even finished school. This is due to limited educational facilities in the village and the high dropout rate due to poverty. Children often have to help their parents work in the fields rather than continue their education. Lack of education means that people do not have sufficient skills or knowledge to find better jobs outside the agricultural sector. In addition, low levels of education also affect people's understanding of legal and moral values. Many do not realize that theft is a criminal act that can damage social relationships and have serious consequences. This low level of education also prevents people from demanding justice or participating in dialogue with companies, which often have a more dominant position in managing village resources. This imbalance of power further exacerbates the sense of injustice among the community, who feel that their rights to land and crops are not recognized. Sibak Village faces a major challenge in terms of providing employment for its residents. As a village that relies on palm oil farming as its main income, people tend to rely on jobs in this sector. However, the available job opportunities are often insufficient to accommodate the entire workforce. Many people only work as casual laborers with low wages and no guarantee of continued employment.

In addition, companies that manage palm oil plantations in Sibak Village often prefer to use labor from outside the village. This leaves local people without many job options, especially those who do not have formal education or skills. The lack of job opportunities in the formal sector and dependence on the informal sector makes many people feel they have no other choice but to steal to meet their living needs. From the results of the interview, brother HM, one of the perpetrators of the ngobrok activity, said that:

*I do this job because of economic demands such as daily needs, children's school fees, and others. I also do this because the land that I want to work on is no longer available, I want to find another job but the job vacancies are very minimal, especially with my low school graduation, it will be difficult to get a job, so I have no choice but to do this job. Actually, my family did not allow it and my family was also*

*angry when they found out, but what else can I do because the economic pressures that must be met must still be done. (Mr. HM, May 9, 2024).*

Inequality in land ownership is one of the main causes of social conflict and palm oil theft in Sibak Village. Most of the productive land in this village is controlled by large companies, while local people only have limited access to land for farming or other businesses. In fact, palm oil is the main income of the village community, and the presence of companies is considered to reduce their opportunities to directly utilize natural resources. The company's dominance over this land creates a sense of injustice among the community. They feel that the land that should be theirs is now being managed by outsiders for the benefit of the company. The absence of a fair distribution mechanism between the company and the local community further exacerbates the situation. As a result, theft is often seen as a form of resistance or a way to take back what they consider to be their rights. Because palm oil is the main income of the Sibak Village community, problems in this sector have a major impact on their lives. High dependence on one type of commodity makes the community vulnerable to various pressures, both economic and social. When income from palm oil is insufficient, the community has no other alternative to support their living needs. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of diversification of income sources, which makes the community increasingly trapped in a cycle of dependence on the palm oil sector. In addition, the presence of large companies that manage most of the palm oil land in Sibak Village makes the community lose control over their main source of income. They only act as laborers or even just as spectators of the plantation activities that dominate the village. This inequality creates frustration and dissatisfaction, which often triggers illegal actions, such as theft of palm fruit. The results of an interview with AB, one of the perpetrators of Ngobrok, said that:

*I do this job because of economic factors that are not yet sufficient, there is no work, we want to garden or farm but we no longer have land, our land has been taken by the company. So whether I like it or not I have to do this job. Always thinking about quitting but what will I do after this, there are very few jobs. My education is also low so it is difficult to find a job.*

### **Impacts arising from the Ngobrok phenomenon**

As a result, there are significant impacts for companies and individual plantations. Companies and private plantation owners suffer financial losses due to lost harvests which reduce expected income. Palm oil theft can also create tensions between companies and local communities. Communities feel that they are not getting benefits from the presence of the company, this can trigger conflict and dissatisfaction, which can ultimately affect social stability in the area, the phenomenon of "ngobrok" (palm oil theft) has a broad and complex impact, affecting economic, social, and operational aspects for both large companies and private plantation owners. Palm oil theft has a direct impact in the form of significant financial losses for plantation owners, both individuals and companies. Stolen palm fruit reduces the amount of harvest that should be legally harvested, thereby reducing expected income. For smallholders, palm oil theft can have a more serious impact because they depend entirely on the harvest to meet their daily needs. When palm oil fruit is stolen, their income is drastically reduced, and they have difficulty paying for operational costs such as fertilizer, labor, and agricultural equipment. In the long term, these financial losses can lead to greater economic decline in local communities, as farmers are unable to survive or invest in increasing the productivity of their land. From the interview with Mrs. TM, a victim of palm fruit theft, she said that:

*We lost about 500 kg of our harvest, which was stolen directly from the tree. We were disappointed and angry that the results we had been waiting for were taken by*

*someone, while that was my main income as a palm oil farmer. (Mrs. TM, May 2, 2024)*

Tensions caused by palm oil theft can damage social relations between local communities, farmers and companies. In many cases, local communities feel that companies are too aggressive in dealing with theft, for example by involving security forces or imposing heavy sanctions. Conversely, companies feel that communities do not respect their ownership rights to land and crops. These tensions often give rise to open conflicts that are difficult to resolve without good mediation. In addition, this damage to social relations also affects trust between local communities themselves. When individuals or groups are involved in theft, communities may feel disturbed or even indirectly harmed. This can create divisions within communities, worsening social conditions and inhibiting cooperation to find common solutions.

### **Public Response and Reaction Due to the Ngobrok Phenomenon**

The theft of oil palm fruit in Sibak Village has elicited various responses from the community, reflecting their views on the act and its impact on village life. Some people feel disturbed and angry because this theft not only harms the company or plantation owner, but also tarnishes the reputation of the village community. They are concerned that this criminal act will worsen relations between the local community and the company, which in turn could affect job opportunities and assistance programs from the company for villagers. On the other hand, there are groups of people who are more neutral, even secretly supporting this theft. They see the theft of oil palm fruit as a form of resistance against large companies that are considered not to provide sufficient benefits for local residents. This group believes that theft is a way for the community to regain some of their "rights" to village resources, especially since most of the oil palm land is controlled by the company. This kind of response is often based on frustration with the economic and social inequality felt by the community. However, many Sibak Village residents are also worried about the long-term impacts of the theft of oil palm fruit. They are concerned that this action could trigger a bigger conflict, both between residents and between the community and the company. Some residents who work as laborers in plantation companies also feel caught in the middle of this situation. They are worried about losing their jobs if the company decides to reduce operational activities due to the losses suffered. This concern creates a moral dilemma among residents, who on the one hand understand the reasons for the theft, but on the other hand do not want the action to harm the community as a whole. The theft of oil palm fruit also affects social relations in Sibak Village. Some residents began to suspect each other and accuse certain people of being the perpetrators of theft, which eventually triggered internal conflict within the community. This tension caused divisions, especially between groups that supported the theft as a "fight for rights" and groups that opposed the action because it was considered illegal and detrimental to many parties. This division has the potential to reduce the solidarity of the village community in facing common problems. Some residents of Sibak Village responded to the theft of oil palm fruit by urging the government and the company to take firm action. They asked for stricter supervision in the plantation area and law enforcement against perpetrators of theft. However, they also expected the company to pay more attention to the welfare of the local community, such as creating decent jobs or providing support to small farmers. This response reflects the views of the community who want a fair solution that does not only prioritize the company, but also pays attention to the socio-economic conditions of the villagers. Traditional leaders also paid attention to the ongoing ngobrok phenomenon, where the results of an interview with Mr. HP said that:

*Since ancient times, the main livelihood in Sibak village has been oil palm plantations, and in the past there was also theft of oil palm fruit, but as technology advances, there are more and more ways for them to steal. At present, the most famous is called ngobrok (oil palm theft) where ngobrok uses a motorbike equipped with a basket made of wood or rubber tires. We often discuss with the government in Sibak village, one of which is creating jobs, we have submitted to a large oil palm company in Sibak to prioritize the Sibak community to work on the company's land, but there has been no clear response from the company. (Mr. HP, May 10, 2024)*

### **The Role and Enforcement of Law in Handling the Phenomenon of Ngobrok**

To prevent and overcome this act, it is important to improve security and supervision around oil palm plantations, as well as strengthen the legal system and law enforcement to punish perpetrators involved in illegally taking other people's oil palm fruit. Article 362 of the Criminal Code states, "Anyone who takes something, which is wholly or partly owned by another person, with the intention of possessing the item against his/her rights, shall be punished for theft, with a maximum imprisonment of five years or a maximum fine of Rp. 900,-. In addition to Article 362, the Supreme Court circular regulated in Article 364 of the Criminal Code is also used to handle the ongoing ngobrok problem called minor theft which states that if the loss is below Rp. 2,500,000. However, in practice, the legal settlement of oil palm theft that occurred on the plantation of PT. Daria Dharma Pratama and plantations owned by residents is resolved amicably, and until now the crime of oil palm theft continues to occur on the plantation of PT. Daria Dharma Pratama and plantations owned by residents. In addition, education and public awareness about the importance of respecting property rights and maintaining justice in the management of natural resources are also very necessary. From the results of the interview with the Police in Sibak Village, Mr. TA said that:

*The problem we are currently dealing with is the case of palm oil theft in Sibak Village, where every reason they are forced to do it is because of economic pressure, low employment opportunities, they have no choice but to do it and the stolen goods they take amount to less than Rp2,500,000 which can be resolved by the perpetrator and the victim amicably. This is included in the provisions of the Supreme Court circular which is regulated in Article 364 of the Criminal Code concerning minor theft. (Mr. TA, May 15, 2024)*

The theory used by researchers in analyzing this study is Conflict Theory, developed by Karl Marx and expanded by sociologists such as Max Weber and Ralf Dahrendorf, focusing on tensions and conflicts that arise from inequality in the distribution of resources, power, and status in society. This theory highlights how social and economic structures create injustice and trigger conflict between different groups. Conflict is part of the social dynamics that are common in the order of everyday social interaction in society. Conflict can act as a trigger for the process towards creating social balance. In the context of research on the impact of changes in social situations due to the Ngobrok phenomenon or palm oil theft, the use of conflict theory provides a framework for understanding the social and economic dynamics that encourage people to engage in these criminal acts. The following is an explanation of the use of conflict theory in this study and its relationship to the Ngobrok phenomenon: Conflict theory emphasizes that inequality in the distribution of economic resources is the main source of social conflict. In this study, land grabbing by the company PT DDP created a large inequality between large companies and local communities. This injustice drives communities that have lost their livelihoods to engage in palm oil theft as a form of resistance against economic injustice. Large companies such as PT DDP have significant power in the community, both economically and politically. This dominance



marginalizes local communities and deprives them of access to important resources such as agricultural land. Conflict theory helps explain how this imbalance of power causes tension and conflict, which manifests itself in acts of theft. Collective Action as a Form of Resistance: The Ngobrok phenomenon can be seen as a form of collective resistance against oppressive social and economic structures. Marginalized communities use theft as a way to express their dissatisfaction and to survive. Conflict theory suggests that this act is not only criminal but also a form of protest against structural injustice. Social Marginalization: Economic inequality and land grabbing lead to social marginalization. Communities that lose access to land and jobs become marginalized and lose their voice in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. Conflict theory highlights how this marginalization exacerbates social conflict and drives communities to take drastic action. Difficult economic conditions, coupled with unemployment and land loss, create great tension within communities. Conflict theory explains that these tensions are the result of an unfair economic structure that benefits a few and harms many. PT DDP exploits local resources for the company's benefit, while local communities suffer losses. Conflict theory highlights that resistance, such as theft of palm oil fruit, is a response to exploitation and an attempt to regain control over resources that they feel should belong to them. Land grabbing and unemployment reflect structural injustices in society. Communities' inability to access power and change their conditions through legitimate channels creates a sense of dissatisfaction and hopelessness. Conflict theory explains that when formal channels are closed, communities tend to seek alternative, albeit illegal, means to assert their rights.

## CONCLUSION

Palm oil theft in Sibak Village is not only influenced by one factor, but is the result of the interaction of various interrelated problems, such as economic pressure, low education, limited employment opportunities, and inequality in land ownership. As a village that relies on palm oil as its main source of income, this problem must be addressed with a comprehensive approach. Solutions that can be implemented include empowering the community's economy, improving education, opening up job opportunities, and distributing economic benefits more evenly between companies and local communities. Research shows that difficult economic conditions force people to find ways to survive. One of the main reasons for involvement in theft is the lack of available job opportunities. When individuals are unemployed, they tend to look for alternative ways to earn income. Unemployment not only affects individuals economically but also negatively impacts the social and psychological structure of the community. High levels of desperation can drive people to take greater risks, including committing criminal acts. Loss of Access to Agricultural Land: Land grabbing by large companies such as PT DDP causes communities to lose their main livelihoods. Without access to agricultural land, they cannot plant and harvest crops to meet their needs. This situation reflects the agrarian conflict that often occurs when large companies take over land previously used by local communities. This creates tension between local residents and companies, which can lead to acts of resistance such as palm oil theft. The Ngobrok phenomenon can also be seen as a form of forced resistance from communities who have lost their rights. This is not only a criminal act, but also an expression of frustration and dissatisfaction with their social and economic situation. This phenomenon also reflects the social injustice felt by the community. They feel marginalized and have no other choice, so theft becomes a way to reclaim what they perceive as their rightful rights. The involvement of communities in theft and other illegal activities can erode social trust and community solidarity. This can negatively impact social cohesion and hinder the development of harmonious communities. Overall, this study underscores the importance of addressing economic issues, providing employment, and ensuring equitable access to natural

resources for local communities. Addressing the root causes of phenomena such as Ngobrok requires a holistic approach that includes inclusive economic policies, protection of agrarian rights, and improvement of overall social welfare.

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