

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Law enforcement is a process aimed at turning the values and goals contained in legal norms into real actions that are followed and respected by the public. The success of law enforcement depends on whether it upholds the main principles of democracy, such as legitimacy, accountability, the protection of human rights, freedom, transparency, the separation of powers, and community participation. In addition, it must be based on the principle of equality before the law, meaning that every individual should be treated equally in the eyes of the law regardless of their social status or background (Hermanto, 2023).

The principle of 'equality before the law', as stated in *Pasal 27 ayat 1 UUD 1945*, emphasizes that every citizen has equal status in law and government. Although being constitutionally guaranteed, this principle has not been fully implemented in the practice of law enforcement in Indonesia (Muhammad, 2024). In many cases, law enforcement officers who should serve as the foundation for upholding justice are instead seen as contributing to discriminatory practices (Prabowo et al., 2020). As a result, the public often feels disappointed when the reports they submit are ignored or not taken seriously by the authorities. This lack of responsiveness has driven many to seek alternative forms of justice, one of which is by turning to social media as a platform to voice their concerns and demand accountability (Dwiyanto, 2021).

The widespread use of social media as a tool to seek justice has given rise to a new phenomenon known as *no viral no justice*. This phenomenon illustrates the growing public perception that law enforcement in Indonesia is ineffective in handling criminal cases, which in turn contributes to a decline in public trust toward legal institutions (Husin, 2020). This concern is supported by survey data showing that 22.6% of respondents believe the state of national law enforcement in Indonesia is poor (LSI, 2023). A clear example of this can be seen in the Ferdy Sambo case, which demonstrated the significant role of social media in driving legal processes. The case became a trending topic on Twitter with 44,200 tweets, reflecting high public attention. The intense public scrutiny and the narrative built on social media are believed to have influenced the court's decision, resulting in a heavier sentence than what the prosecutor had demanded which is the death penalty (Husin, 2020).

This phenomenon also occurs in several viral cases in Makassar City, ranging from cases of thuggery to bullying. Based on data from *Polrestabes Makassar*, in 2024 there were 4 to 10 viral cases handled every month. So that in determining the effectiveness of law enforcement there is a theory of legal effectiveness put forward by Lawrence M. Friedman. This theory includes three main aspects, namely legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture (Friedman, 2019). Therefore, research is needed on legal substance factors related to KUHAP, legal structure related to authorized institutions in law enforcement, and legal culture related to public understanding, knowledge and legal awareness. This will help identify the root causes underlying the emergence of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon.

There is some previous research on law enforcement and viralization of cases through social media that aims to analyze the role of social media in fair law enforcement

(Muhammad, et al., 2022). Research conducted by Agus Triono with the title "The No Viral No Justice" Paradigm In Getting Access To Justice In Indonesian Community" analyzes the impact of the no viral no justice phenomenon on law enforcement (Triono, et al., 2022). Research with the title "The Viral Phenomenon on Social Media is a New Legal Norm-No Viral, No Justice" analyzes the role of social media in law enforcement and reconstructs the need for new laws to solve problems that arise due to the No Viral No Justice phenomenon (Azhari and Rosyad, 2023). The research ""Peran Media Sosial Sebagai Alat Pencapaian Suara Keadilan Dalam Penegakan Hukum di Indonesia: No Viral No Justice"" analyzes the role of social media as a tool for achieving the voice of justice (Sudirman and Antony, 2023).

Therefore, this research aims to examine and analyze the effectiveness of law enforcement using Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory through a mixed-method approach, which combines both qualitative and quantitative methods. This approach is expected to produce more comprehensive and in-depth findings related to the issues being studied. Understanding the underlying causes of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon is essential in efforts to restore public trust in law enforcement authorities. This step is expected to be part of repressive efforts in the implementation of fair law enforcement.

1.2 Identification of Problems

The author has identified several problems which can result in people preferring to seek justice through social media rather than going directly to law enforcement, which has resulted in the emergence of the phenomenon of no viral no justice.

1. Inequality in law enforcement
2. Low public trust in law enforcement officers.
3. *No viral no justice* phenomenon as a form of ineffectiveness of law enforcement.
4. The impact of social media on legal decisions.

1.3 Scope of The Problem

This research aims to explore the *no viral no justice* phenomenon in Makassar City by examining it through the lens of Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory. First, the study seeks to describe the influence of the legal structure in law enforcement, particularly how institutional roles and performance contribute to the emergence of this phenomenon. Second, it aims to explore the legal culture within society, focusing on the public's understanding, knowledge, and legal awareness regarding the issue. Third, the research analyzes the conditions of the legal substance, especially the relevance and effectiveness of existing regulations, such as the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHP), in addressing and responding to viral cases. Through these three aspects, the study intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to the *no viral no justice* phenomenon in Makassar.

1.4 Research Question

Based on the explanation, the researcher intends to formulate problems of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon by the following questions:

1. How does *legal structure* influence law enforcement on the *no viral no justice*

phenomenon in Makassar City?

2. How is the *legal culture* in the community, especially regarding understanding, knowledge, and legal awareness of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon in Makassar City?
3. How does the condition of *legal substance* in law enforcement affect the emergence of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon in Makassar City?

1.5 Objective of The Study

The purpose of the research is to describe the role of mechanisms and rules of law enforcement officials in handling legal cases so that the *no viral no justice* phenomenon emerges. Not only that, the author also examined how the level of understanding, knowledge, and legal awareness of the people of Makassar city influences them to prefer seeking justice through social media. Also, the author will analyze the conditions of the law governing how to handle a legal crime that causes the emergence of the phenomenon of *no viral no justice*.

1.6 Significance of The Study

1. Theoretically

This research contributes to the development of legal scholarship by examining the applicability of Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System theory, which consists of legal structure, legal culture, and legal substance. It investigates how these three components interact and to what extent they can explain the *no viral no justice* phenomenon. Furthermore, the study enriches the literature on the role of social media in law enforcement by highlighting how its influence reveals structural weaknesses within the legal system that enable such a phenomenon to emerge. The findings are expected to serve as a valuable reference for future legal and social research at both local and national levels.

2. Practically

This research is useful for various parties, including law enforcement officials, policy makers, and the community. For law enforcement officials such as police, prosecutors, and judges, this research provides an understanding of the changing patterns of society in demanding justice due to the development of social media as well as weaknesses in the legal structure that can cause inequality in law enforcement. In addition, the results of this study can be the basis for policy reform so that the law can be enforced fairly without having to rely on public pressure on social media.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Studies

The incorporation of existing research aims to emphasize the originality of this research by examining the similarities and differences between the previous research and the current research. In addition, these studies will serve as important reference points and additional data to assist the researcher during the execution of this research project.

First, Muhammad et al. (2022) *Social Justice Warrior Trend: Penegakan Hukum dan Viralisasi Kasus Melalui Media Sosial*. This research discusses how the Social Justice Warrior (SJW) trend on social media contributes to law enforcement in Indonesia. The main focus of this research is to analyze how SJW groups use social media as a tool to pressure law enforcement officials in handling a case. This research found that the presence of SJWs can increase public attention to certain cases, but on the other hand, it also has the potential to cause legal bias, where cases that receive widespread attention are more likely to be taken seriously than cases that do not go viral. This study provides initial insight into the role of social media in influencing legal policy, but does not specifically discuss *no viral no justice* in the context of the effectiveness of the legal system in Indonesia.

Second, Triono et al. (2022) *The No Viral No Justice Paradigm in Getting Access To Justice In Indonesian Community*. This research focuses on how the *no viral no justice* phenomenon affects access to justice in Indonesia. The research found that society increasingly relies on the virality of a case to get legal attention, thus creating gaps in law enforcement. Cases that do not receive social media attention are often ignored or processed more slowly than viral cases. The results of this study show that this phenomenon widens the gap between people who have access to technology and social media and those who do not. Although this study has analyzed the impact of this phenomenon, it has not discussed in depth the factors that have led to the emergence of this phenomenon from the perspective of the legal system.

Third, Azhari & Rosyad (2023) *The Viral Phenomenon on Social Media is a New Legal Norm - No Viral, No Justice*. This research highlights how the viral phenomenon on social media is starting to form a new unwritten legal norm, where virality becomes a factor that affects law enforcement. The research found that public opinion formed through social media can influence the decisions of law enforcement officials, including police, prosecutors, and judges. The study also shows that public pressure often leads to reactive law enforcement, where law enforcement officers are more likely to handle viral cases quickly and seriously compared to other cases. Although this study has linked the *no viral no justice* phenomenon to changes in social norms in law enforcement, it has not used a legal systems theory approach to analyze the causal factors.

Fourth, Sudirman & Antony (2023) *The Role of Social Media as a Tool for Achieving the Voice of Justice in Law Enforcement in Indonesia: No Viral No Justice*. This research analyzes how social media is used as a tool to achieve justice in Indonesia. The research found that people who feel they are not getting justice through formal legal channels turn to social media as a means to seek justice. By sharing their cases widely, people hope to get the attention of law enforcement officials and get faster action. This study also

highlights how the use of social media as a legal advocacy tool has both positive and negative impacts, on the one hand increasing the accountability of law enforcement officials, but on the other hand it can lead to trial by public and pressure that is not in accordance with applicable legal principles.

From the four previous studies, it can be concluded that most research has discussed the role of social media in law enforcement and its impact on the justice system. However, there is no research that specifically identifies the factors that cause the emergence of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon using Lawrence M. Friedman's Legal System theory. Therefore, this research has a unique contribution by analyzing this phenomenon through three main aspects of the legal system: Legal Structure, Legal Culture, and Legal Substance, which is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the causes of the emergence of the *no viral no justice* phenomenon so as to restore public trust and improve the effectiveness of law enforcement in Indonesia.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Theory of Legal Effectiveness

A strong legal system is necessary for successful law enforcement.

According to Lawrence M. Friedman, the legal system consists of three parts:

1. Legal Structure

Friedman argues that the legal structure refers to the institutional framework that gives shape to the law. This includes law enforcement agencies such as the police, prosecutors, courts, and correctional institutions. These institutions are responsible for the creation, interpretation, and enforcement of laws. A well-functioning legal structure ensures that laws are applied consistently and fairly. However, even the best laws will fail if the institutions responsible for implementing them are weak, corrupt, or inefficient. For instance, in several regions of Indonesia, including Makassar, reports have surfaced regarding delayed law enforcement actions or the lack of response to public complaints. These examples highlight structural challenges within the system. The increasing reliance on viral content to prompt legal action further suggests that institutions tend to remain passive unless pushed by significant external pressure from the public.

2. Legal Substance

Legal substance refers to the actual content of the law, which includes the rules, regulations, and norms that govern how society functions. This component includes statutory laws, judicial decisions, and administrative guidelines. These elements help define what is considered lawful or unlawful, as well as the rights and obligations of individuals and institutions. Legal substance is essential in ensuring that the law contains clear standards, just procedures, and meaningful consequences. Nevertheless, if the substance of the law is unjust, vague, or discriminatory, even strong legal institutions may still produce unfair outcomes. In the Indonesian legal context, the instruments necessary to address issues such as violence, discrimination, or abuse are available. However, their application is often inconsistent or delayed, particularly when a case has not received significant public attention. This condition reveals that the presence of

proper legal substance alone is insufficient without effective enforcement and supportive legal culture.

3. Legal Culture

According to Friedman, legal culture includes the social values, perceptions, and behaviors of individuals toward the law. This concept not only reflects how the public perceives the legal system and whether they trust it, but also how they behave in relation to legal norms. In addition, legal culture shapes how legal professionals such as judges, lawyers, and law enforcement officers interpret and apply the law in real-life situations. A healthy legal culture is marked by general public respect for the law, voluntary compliance, and belief in the legitimacy of legal processes. On the contrary, when people view the law as corrupt, unreliable, or disconnected from their daily reality, it becomes difficult for the legal system to uphold justice and maintain order. This is especially true in the Indonesian context, particularly in Makassar, where many citizens feel that justice will only be served if public pressure is strong enough through social media exposure. Rather than relying on formal legal procedures, people feel the need to make their voices heard through digital platforms. This tendency reflects a legal culture that regards formal legal processes as insufficient unless strengthened by public attention.

2.2.2 No Viral No Justice Phenomenon in Indonesia

The phenomenon of *no viral no justice* in Indonesia highlights a growing reliance on social media as an alternative path to justice. Rather than waiting for lengthy and often uncertain legal procedures, victims or their families turn to platforms like Twitter, TikTok, or Instagram to share their stories, hoping to gain public sympathy and push authorities into action. According to Muammar (2023), this term describes a strategy used by the public to ensure cases that might otherwise be ignored still receive fair treatment. When a case goes viral, law enforcement is often seen responding more quickly and decisively, showing that public pressure has become a powerful tool in legal matters.

This trend, however, reveals a deeper problem within the Indonesian legal system. As noted by Ariyani et al. (2023), many people now trust the collective voice of netizens more than official institutions like the police or courts. This shift in trust indicates a lack of confidence in the legal system's ability to act fairly and efficiently on its own. People feel the need to make their problems "loud" on social media just to be noticed by authorities. This behavior creates a dangerous precedent, where justice is no longer based on legal merit, but on digital popularity, leading to inequality in access to justice, especially for those without access to social media or digital literacy.

The digital divide becomes another major concern. Those who are tech-savvy or who have influential online networks are more likely to gain justice than individuals from rural or marginalized communities with limited internet access. This inequality contradicts the principle of legal equality and undermines the credibility of formal institutions. While going viral may provide quick results in some cases, relying on this strategy cannot be a sustainable solution. The *no viral no justice* phenomenon serves as a wake-up call for legal reform and a stronger focus on public accountability. The

legal structure must be improved so that every citizen can feel protected and heard without needing to campaign online. At the same time, public legal education and efforts to rebuild trust between society and law enforcement are essential. Social media should support, not replace, the role of formal legal institutions in upholding justice (Rachmad, 2022).

2.2.3 No Viral No Justice Phenomenon in Makassar City

The *no viral no justice* phenomenon in Makassar underscores a growing reliance on social media to prompt legal action. In 2024, *Polrestabes Makassar* reportedly handled four to ten viral cases monthly, including incidents like thuggery disguised as parking attendants. These individuals demanded parking fees significantly higher than the official rates. Following the viral spread of such incidents, *Perumda Parkir Makassar* responded by regulating parking fees and imposing sanctions on violators. This suggests that enforcement often only occurs when the public exerts pressure through digital platforms. Another notable case involved a bullying incident at MAN 2 Makassar in 2022. A student, NA, was subjected to bullying by peers, but the case only gained attention after a video of the incident went viral on social media. The school was accused of threatening to expel the victim to suppress the issue. This incident highlights the community's dependence on social media to seek justice and points to deficiencies in existing law enforcement and reporting mechanisms.

These cases illustrate a broader trend where social media virality becomes a catalyst for justice, reflecting public distrust in formal legal processes. The no viral no justice phenomenon suggests that without public attention, certain cases may be overlooked, emphasizing the need for systemic reforms to ensure equitable justice irrespective of online visibility. This dependence also risks creating a performative legal system, where actions are taken not based on legal duty but on reputational concern.

2.2.4 Relevance of Friedman's Theory to the No Viral No Justice Phenomenon

Lawrence M. Friedman's theory of legal effectiveness provides a comprehensive lens for analyzing the *no viral no justice* phenomenon in Makassar City. His theory emphasizes three essential components of a legal system, which are legal structure, legal substance, and legal culture. These three components must work together to ensure that the law functions fairly, consistently, and effectively. When one or more of these components are weak, people may lose faith in the legal system and seek alternative ways to obtain justice, such as turning to social media.

In the context of Makassar, the legal structure seems present in form, with police departments, regional law enforcement, and public service agencies actively operating. However, many of these institutions often fail to respond quickly to legal violations unless the cases have attracted public attention through viral content. This situation highlights a structural weakness. Ideally, a legal structure should function independently and professionally in addressing public complaints. For example, when cases of extortion involving unofficial parking attendants became viral, both the Makassar Police and the local parking authority immediately acted by issuing regulations and sanctions. This response shows that the institutions are capable of

taking action, but tend to wait until there is pressure from viral exposure. According to Friedman, this reflects a legal structure that is inconsistent and reactive rather than stable and preventive.

The legal substance in Indonesia is generally sufficient to address the kinds of issues raised in viral cases. There are already laws and regulations that prohibit bullying, corruption, and extortion. However, in many situations, these laws are not applied until there is pressure from the public. For instance, in the bullying case at MAN 2 Makassar, the law should have protected the student even before the case gained attention online. The delay in responding to the case suggests that the substance of the law is being selectively enforced. According to Friedman, legal substance must be applied equally and consistently to ensure justice for all, regardless of whether a case becomes popular on social media or not.

The most critical element related to the *no viral no justice* phenomenon is legal culture. Legal culture involves how society views and interacts with the law. In Makassar, there seems to be a growing lack of confidence in the legal system. Many citizens believe that authorities will not act unless there is a viral push from social media. This perception has created a legal culture where people feel forced to expose their problems online in order to be heard. It is no longer about whether a case is right or wrong in legal terms, but about how much public attention it receives. People now measure the effectiveness of the law based on whether a case goes viral.

Legal culture also shapes how legal actors such as police officers, school administrators, or government officials behave. When they respond only to high-profile cases, they are indirectly reinforcing the idea that justice depends on popularity. This creates an unfair environment for those who do not have access to technology or the ability to make their case go viral. Instead of promoting equal access to justice, it causes new inequalities.

Friedman's framework helps us understand that the problem is not simply a lack of laws or institutions, but a deeper issue related to trust, perception, and behavior. If the people of Makassar no longer trust that the law will protect them unless they make noise online, this means that the legal culture has been seriously damaged. Rebuilding this culture is just as important as improving legal institutions and updating laws. Public education, transparency, and consistent law enforcement are essential steps toward restoring a positive legal culture.

The no viral no justice phenomenon in Makassar reflects a crisis in legal effectiveness as defined by Friedman. It shows how weaknesses in legal structure, substance, and culture can combine to reduce the law's ability to deliver justice. Addressing this phenomenon requires not only institutional reform, but also rebuilding public trust so that citizens no longer feel the need to go viral to be protected by the law.