

The Dynamics of Police Leadership in Facing 'No Viral, No Justice' Phenomenon and the Challenges of Law Enforcement in the Digital Era

Original Article

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Abstract

With the development of digital technology emerges the 'No Viral No Justice' Phenomenon, wherein law enforcement is oftentimes influenced by the virality of a case in social media. The phenomenon gives new challenges for law enforcement institutions especially The Indonesian National Police (INP) which creates a new perspective of the legal process that runs effectively due to the public's spotlight. This research aims to analyze the influence of this phenomenon on law enforcement by INP, the role of police leadership in managing public pressure and social media opinion, and strategic moves to increase transparency, accountability, and public trust. This research uses qualitative methods by focusing on viral case analysis. The research shows that 'No Viral No Justice' influenced the case handling priority, increasing transparency and accountability thanks to public surveillance, conversely emerging hasty investigation, manipulation of opinion, and disinformation. Thus, the INP's leadership needed an effective strategy for public communication and adaptive crisis management. To increase public trust, the INP suggested strengthening open communication, applying an integrated reporting system, utilizing digital communication, creating a special unit for viral cases, and improving training and public collaboration.

Keywords: No Viral No Justice, Law Enforcement, Indonesian National Police, Leadership, Transparency.

1. Introduction

Technology development has brought significant changes in many aspects including law enforcement. One of the phenomena that emerge in the digital era is 'No Viral, No Justice' where the law enforcement oftentimes correlates with case exposure on social media. Nowadays, society is more critical and active in utilizing social media as a medium to utter complaints and demand justice, thus, it seems that the law enforcement process runs more quickly only when the case is viral.

This phenomenon creates new challenges for law enforcement institutions such as the Indonesian National Police (INP). Social media has become an effective tool to promote transparency and accountability in law enforcement. However, public pressure created by case virality causes a perception of how law enforcement occurs because of the media spotlight; thus, it creates a public distrust of the law system (Nuraliza et al., 2024).

The freedom of opinion on social media is one of the most important aspects of the emerging digital era. Social media platforms provide a medium for the individual to express their opinion, share information, and open discussion with a global audience. This freedom makes the society actively participate in public dialogue, debating important issues and



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broadcasting their personal or group point of view without geographic borders (Mayolaika et al., 2021).

Along with the development of the role of social media in shaping the political climate and conveying public aspirations, it is understandable that freedom of opinion on social media platforms can influence the dynamics of communication and decision-making at the government level (Nuraliza, 2024). Social media is the reflection of the rapid development of technology around the world. Initially, social media was only used for self-expression, but now it has improved as an important factor in shaping the political climate of one country. Nowadays, social media is not only utilized as a communication medium but also as a main platform for delivering aspirations and influencing public policy. Thus, realizing that society is more advanced in technology which causes the push of trend on aspiration delivery through social media, the government is required to be adaptive and liable (Hanna, 2018). With the technological development and the spread of social media utilization, information regarding legal cases is spread rapidly and broadly. It causes strong public opinion and a demand for quick action from the authorities. Hadi et al. (2020) explain that the 'Spiral of Silence' theory describes how individual tends to follow domain opinions around them to avoid social isolation which has a significant role in police image. Cobis and Rusadi (2023) added that framing analysis shows how negative news on mass media able to create public opinion significantly and cause pressure for police to respond quickly.

Therefore, to encounter the negative effect of public opinion, police obligate to conduct immediate action, increasing their performance qualities and their public communication. Proactive and transparent responses in dealing with media criticism becoming key to improving police image and reducing the negative impact of negative information circulation (Cobis & Rusadi, 2023). Thus, it creates the phenomenon 'No Viral, No Justice' where the attention and virality of a case on social media is the determining factor in acceleration legal process and decision-making. The pressure that emerges from the public and media spotlight not only influences the way law enforcement institutions work on a case but also influences the priorities and the way justice is made. In other words, if a case has less spotlight or not viral on social media, they are most likely to get less treatment in the legal process which harms the justice and integrity of the law system itself (Affandi et al., 2023).

To respond to the issue, proactive and strategic leadership on the INP is required. It is needed to manage and respond to media criticism with transparency and make sure that the legal process is not disrupted by public pressure. The INP leaders have to implement effective strategy communication to avoid misinformation and assure that every case is treated fairly without the influence of social media virality (Irwanti, 2023). In addition, the INP leaders need to educate society about the legal process and social media's role in public surveillance which will create awareness of the importance of objective and integrity law enforcers (Syahputra & Rofii, 2022).

During this situation, the INP's leader must be able to make quick and precise decisions and maintain the integrity of the legal system. Therefore, effective leadership in managing crises well, maintaining transparent public communication, and ensuring the legal process is working properly within the applicable procedures is needed (Syam & Azman, 2022). Great leadership also involves multi-party coordination such as media to manage the circulating information and avoid speculation that can influence public opinion (Gunitsky, 2015). It is necessary to build public trust by showing them a commitment to transparency and accountability, providing accurate and relevant information that reduces the uncertainty and public's fears (Braithwaite & Levi, 1998). In addition, in managing public pressure, the INP's leadership shall

publish a newsletter, and conducting direct communication with the public helps to manage the public expectation and reduce the tense (Stewart, 1979). The INP must ensure that despite pressure, the legal process remains focused on seeking justice and enforcing the law under applicable standards and ethics.

One of the recent cases that stole public attention is the Vina and Eki murders in Cirebon. This case has significant uniqueness compared to other viral cases mostly because this case happened in 2016 that already proceeds by law (Putri et al., 2024). At that time this case still left 3 perpetrators who had not been caught (Linda, 2024). Thus, this case is made into a film in 2024 and one of the aims is to catch the remaining perpetrators as soon as possible so that the case can be investigated again. After the film is aired, media and public attention towards the case is significantly increasing which causes the law enforcer to review the case. After further investigation, following the release of the film, one of the suspects was found, "Pegi Setiawan", and removed the other 2 suspects. However, at the end of his trial, "Pegi Setiawan" was declared a victim of wrongful arrest (Yoisangadji, 2024).

On the social side, this case triggered controversy and larger debate in society. The uncertainty of truth and an allegation of wrongful arrest creates distrust of the justice system and law enforcement agencies. The public is disturbed by the legal system's potential failure to guarantee justice. This case also shows how the impact of wrongful arrest can be widespread, disrupting the lives of families and local communities, and exacerbating public dissatisfaction with the justice system (ICJR Team, 2024). Apart from that, the Pegi Setiawan case also reflects several fundamental problems in the justice system, including less stringent investigative procedures, potential bias in the legal process, and a lack of effective internal control mechanisms. The inaccuracies in the handling of this case emphasize the need for reform in the justice system, such as increased training for law enforcement, stricter supervision, and increased transparency in the legal process. By mishandling cases, the justice system not only fails to provide justice to affected individuals but also undermines public trust in the integrity and efficiency of the law itself (Abdul, 2024). These various explanations have certainly caused controversy and emphasized the 'No Viral, No Justice' phenomenon, where media and public attention play an important role in encouraging law enforcement and influencing the justice process (Ramadhani, 2024).

Thus, according to the explanation, it is essential to conduct a full reform of the legal system and the INP's leadership to encounter the existing challenge. These reforms should cover an increase in the budget and law enforcer training, the strengthening of anti-corruption mechanisms, and improving transparency on any level of the legal process. By restoring the weaknesses in management, communication, and investigation procedures, and ensuring the existence of tight internal control, the INP and other law enforcement institutions able to increase their effectiveness and credibility. These moves intend to improve public trust, ensure fair law enforcement, and ensure that any case proceeds with high integrity and professionalism. An active involvement in any institution including superintendent ones such as the National Police Commission and Ombudsman shall support the reforms and making sure that the justice system is working optimally to serve the society.

In this instance, the role of the INP leadership is important in addressing the impact of the 'No Viral, No Justice' phenomenon, that most of the time the public attention and virality of a case on social media influenced the way law enforcement conduct. Effective leadership must be able to balance out the emerging public pressure and the need to govern legal process fairly and objectively. Police leaders should show firm leadership that prioritizes justice principles and transparency, and making sure that the response to viral cases is not only

leadership and structure of the justice system must align, thus, law enforcement is running effectively and fair without the influence of social media virality (Wibisono & Fikri, 2024).

Indeed, the INP's leadership is facing a significant dilemma in encountering this phenomenon. How the police leaders should respond to public demands uttered on social media without sacrificing the principle of justice and inclusiveness? Moreover, the leadership should be able to navigate the internal dynamic within the organization therefore every police personnel understand how to adapt to the more complex emerging digital environment. Effective leaders to this extent, must integrate their skills to understand technology, and public communication and continue to uphold professional ethics and legal procedures.

Based on the explanation of facing the phenomenon of 'No Voral, No Justice' It is crucial to implement reforms that not only focus on the leadership but also on integrity and transparency in the justice system as guided by the development of Integrity Zones towards Corruption Free Areas and Clean Serving Bureaucratic Areas, as regulated in the Regulation of the Minister for Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucratic Reform Number 52 of 2014, as well as the Joint Decree between the Indonesian National Police Chief and the Minister for Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucratic Reform No. KB: KB/1/IV/2018 and No. 01 of 2018, provide a framework for increasing accountability and reducing corruption within government agencies, including the National Police. This guideline emphasizes the importance of building integrity and transparency through clear procedures and a strict monitoring system.

Furthermore, to give a comprehensive description of the leadership, it can be evaluated from this research entitled "The Dynamics of Police Leadership in Facing 'No Viral, No Justice' Phenomenon and the Challenges of Law Enforcement in the Digital Era"". This research aims to analyze the influence of the 'No Viral No Justice' phenomenon on the law enforcement process by the Indonesian National Police (INP) in handling cases that go viral on social media, analyze the extent of the leadership role of the INP in managing public pressure and opinions formed through social media, and analyze strategic steps that need to be taken by the INP to increase transparency, accountability and public trust in law enforcement in the digital era.

2. Literature Review

Situational leadership theory is a leadership approach emphasizes that a leader must understand his behavior, the characteristics of his subordinates, and the situation faced before implementing a particular leadership style. This approach requires leaders to have skills in diagnosing human behavior. In addition, according to Ken Blanchard, situational leadership is a leadership style that varies depending on the follower's level of readiness. Robert House states that leader behavior in Situational Leadership influences member motivation, satisfaction, and performance, all of which are influenced by situational factors. Meanwhile, Vroom Yetton argues that situational leadership focuses on the leader's effectiveness in decision-making, which greatly determines the success of important tasks (Hutahaean, 2021)

Moreover, according to Jaka (2020), the situational leadership theory developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard focuses on followers. Thus, a leader's leadership style must be adjusted to the level of readiness of his followers. The basis of this theory is the assumption that there is no best leadership style. Effective leadership depends on the relevance of the task and the unique situation. An effective leader must be able to adapt his leadership style according to the demands of changing situations. According to this theory, effective leadership

3. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with the Qualitative Descriptive method. This approach aims to in-depth understanding and describing a social phenomenon based on qualitative data. This method is used to explore the impact of the 'No Viral No Justice' phenomenon on the law enforcement process by the Indonesian National Police (INP) as well exploring the dynamics of leadership in responding to public pressure and social media in Indonesia based on relevant literature sources. Furthermore, this method was chosen because it allows providing a detailed description of the phenomenon under study without using quantitative generalizations.

3.1. Data Sources

This research relies on secondary data obtained from various sources, including:

1. Scientific Journals and Research Articles: Studies related to social phenomena, social media, and law enforcement.
2. Official Reports: Include reports from international organizations such as INTERPOL and the World Economic Forum.
3. Policy Document: Legal policy related to transparency and accountability of law enforcement.
4. Case Study: In-depth analysis of viral cases on social media, especially in Indonesia. Source selection criteria include articles or reports published in the last five years (2018–2023) to ensure relevance to current conditions.

The selected research should explicitly address trends, patterns, or strategies in leadership dynamics in response to public pressure and social media. In addition, the research focus on the context of the phenomena which only occurring in Indonesia to ensure results that can be compared and are in line with the research objectives.

3.2. Data Collection Technique

Data collection was carried out through the following stages:

1. Identification: Articles and reports were searched using keywords such as 'No Viral No Justice', 'Law enforcement in the digital era', and 'Police Leadership' in databases such as Scopus, and Google Scholar.
2. Selection: Relevant articles and reports are selected based on abstracts, keywords, and their relationship to the research theme.
3. Classification: The selected literature is categorized into topics such as the impact of social media on law enforcement, the role of police leadership, transparency, and prevention strategies.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Research Result

4.1.1. The Influence of the 'No Viral No Justice' to Law Enforcement Process by the INP on Encountering Viral Cases on Social Media

The phenomenon of 'No Viral, No Justice' is used to describe a situation where legal justice seems can be obtained only when the case becomes viral on social media or mass media. In this context, a large public attention (Mostly triggered by the virality of an event or a case) can push the authority to conduct a more serious or quicker move on handling the case. The 'No Viral, No Justice' phenomenon causes the improvement of public participation in

supervised law enforcers; however, it also creates fear of the dependency on social media as the only medium to get justice (Runturambi et al., 2024).

Social media is used as the main platform to enlarge the scale of one's case. When an event such as violations of law or injustice, is uploaded and receives great attention from netizens, then the case becomes the public spotlight. This sudden popularity can increase the pressure on law enforcement to act immediately. The public that noticed the phenomenon tends to feel that law enforcement is not fair and not inclusive. There is a concern that justice is achieved only when the public actively participates through social media to advertise the case. It causes an impression that a law system is only reactive to public opinion rather than upholding consistent principles of justice (Moriearty, 2009).

Viral cases oftentimes have a quicker response from the authorities than similar case that does not have public's eyes. This phenomenon shows the dependency on public pressure to achieve justice. On other words, the non-viral cases most of the time do not have enough attention both from the public and the law enforcer. It causes delay, neglect, or incomplete solution. The factors that influence the occurrence of this phenomenon include:

1. Lack of Public Trust in Law Enforcement Officials

This phenomenon reflects a deficit in public trust in legal processes that are considered slow, unfair, or selective in their handling. The public feels the need to make a case viral to get attention.

2. Social Pressure and Public Opinion

In the digital era, public opinion greatly influences decisions taken by government institutions, including law enforcement officials. Massive pressure through platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram could trigger a quicker response from these institutions.

3. Lack of Transparency and Accountability

A law enforcement system that is not fully transparent makes the public feel the need to monitor via social media. They use virality as a tool to demand accountability (Azhari & Rosyad, 2023).

The 'No Viral, No Justice' phenomenon has a significant influence on the law enforcement process of the Indonesian National Police (INP) especially on encountering social media viral cases. This term shows a tendency for a crime case or other lawlessness action to get serious attention from the law enforcer only when they get a significant spotlight from social media. Amidst the fast flow of information, viral cases most of the time triggered a larger reaction from the public which then demanded immediate law enforcement. It puts pressure on the INP to act faster on working on the cases, and causes some challenges to conduct ideal law enforcement process.

Moreover, the phenomenon brought a positive impact on transparency and accountability. The virality of a case on social media most of the time strengthens the public supervision of the INP move, pushing them to be more open to law enforcement. Social media has become an effective social control tool for the public to ensure that the INPs doing their job correctly without the abuse of authority. Consequently, the INP responded by giving information openly through press conferences, official statements and even giving the information through their social media. However, this transparency must be balanced with caution, thus, the provided information does not cause misunderstandings or trigger an escalation of conflict in society.

Furthermore, another challenge that arises is the potential manipulation of public opinion and disinformation spreaders on social media. The large amount of information circulating, including fake or unverified news, can make it difficult for the INP to maintain a correct narrative about a case. For example, demands to immediately arrest perpetrators

based on viral information that is not necessarily valid can lead to wrong decisions being made, credibility of the Indonesian National Police in public eyes. On the other words, the 'No Viral No Justice' phenomenon brings complex challenges for carrying out the INP's duties. They must be able to balance public demands that triggered by social media and the principles of fair and professional law enforcement (Muammar, 2023).

4.1.2. The Role of Police Leadership in Managing Public Pressure and Formed Opinions through Social Media

The Indonesian National Police's leadership in managing public pressure and opinion that is shaped by social media is complex and needs a management skill, communication, and strategic decision-making. Social media as a platform for the public to interact has created a new dynamic within this enforcement where public opinion has influenced the INP's performance and policy. In this digital era, police oftentimes face high expectations from society that are more critics to transparency and accountability. The challenges that the INP's experienced are:

1. Rapid Information

Social media causes the spread of information within a short time. A piece of news about an incident is easily spread and becomes viral, causing public opinion and speculation even before an official investigation is conducted. It can put pressure on the INP to act hurriedly meanwhile a legal process need a longer time in order to collect valid proof and facts.

2. Transparency and Accountability

Society through social media demands the Indonesian National Police (INP) to act transparently in working on certain cases. The INP is expected to give immediate clarification, the update, and the act that they conducted. The failure to provide information quickly and transparently can fuel distrust and worsen public opinion.

3. A Pressure to Act Quickly

Cases that go viral are often accompanied by demands from the public for immediate action from the police. This can influence the decisions by the INP leaders, where they must balance the public's desire for speedy justice and legal principles that require careful processing.

4. Open Criticism and Negative Comments

Social media often becomes a place for people to openly express their dissatisfaction, which can take the form of harsh criticism, insults, or even slander against the Indonesian National Police. This constant criticism adds pressure on the INP leaders to maintain the image of a professional and fair institution (Grecya & Yahya, 2022).

The INP leadership in managing the public tension and opinion on social media needed to balance between the speed of action, transparency, and the obedience of law procedures. The INP's leaders must be proactive when communicating with the public, responsive to criticism, and remain firm in the principles of justice law. The Indonesian National Police must always be ready to face crisis situations triggered by the virality of a case on social media. The INP's leaders must have a crisis management plan that includes emergency actions, communication strategies, and risk mitigation procedures in order to respond quickly and effectively. Crisis management also includes how the INP handles criticism or slander on social media. Having a strategy to counteract hoaxes or fake news that harms the image of the INP is very necessary to maintain public trust (Olayinka & Odunayo, 2024). With the right strategy, the INP can manage public opinion on social media effectively, increase public trust, and maintain institutional integrity in law enforcement. The leadership role of the INP is very important in managing public pressure generated through social media. They must be able to

act as a bridge between public expectations which are often influenced by virality and a professional, fair, and equitable law enforcement process.

4.1.3. Strategic Steps to Improve the Transparency, Accountability and Public Trust on Law Enforcement in Digital Era

Transparency, accountability and public trust are the important three pillars on law enforcement especially on the digital era which are distinctive by the open information and easy access on social media and technology. These three concept are correlated and has an significant role on maintain the law enforcement integrity including the police, also assuring that law enforced fairly and efficiently (Tirtakusuma & Tirtakusuma, 2024).

Law enforcement institution such as the Indonesian National Police shall provide open access to information related to legal process, ongoing case and the police that are taken. It can be conducted by the press conference, special reporting, or publication of policy on the official web or social media. The law procedure that conducts by the law enforcer must be understandably by the society including explaining on the steps on investigation prosecution, up to sentencing. In the digital era, the use of social media by law enforcement agencies is very important. This allows direct communication with the public, where institutions such as the National Police can provide explanations regarding case handling or significant developments. For example, through the National Police's official Twitter or Instagram, they can clarify news, respond to circulating issues, or announce actions taken (Gani, 2023).

The public wants to see that the law is enforced consistently without discrimination, both to ordinary people and to high-ranking officials. Injustice or favoritism will quickly undermine public trust. Public trust will increase if the INP or other legal institutions respond quickly and wisely to criticism, complaints or reports from the public, including seriously handling cases reported by the public. Openness in communicating about the steps taken in a case, as well as the progress that has been achieved, will increase public trust in the legal system. Success in resolving important or viral cases, as well as handling legal problems professionally, will strengthen public trust in law enforcement institutions (Julia, et al., 2024). To improve the transparency, accountability and public trust on law enforcement on digital era, the INP must implicate a strategic step that is not only respond to the development of technology but also strengthen the relations with a society through integrity and openness.

Some of the strategic stapes that can be conduct by the INP are:

1. The Improvement of Transparent Public Communication

One of the first steps that need to applied by the INP is improving the openness of information to public. On the digital era, society has a rapid access to the news and information through social media. Thus, the INP must have a clear and structured public communication strategy.

2. The Application of Integrated Report System and Supervision

The INP must develop report system and supervision on more integrated and easier to access by public. It includes the making of digital platform that able society to reporting any criminal act directly and able to monitor the status of report.

3. The Utilization of Digital Technology and Big Data

The INP must utilize the digital technology such as big data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) to support the investigating process and law enforcement. These technologies are able to support on quick analysis on data based on public reports, CCTV recording, social media and other digital sources.

4. Develop Special Units for Case Handling on Social Media

With the increasing use of social media as a tool for public monitoring of law enforcement, the Indonesian National Police needs to form a special unit tasked with monitoring dynamics on social media, especially related to viral cases.

5. The Strengthen of Education and Training of Personnel regarding to Ethics and Digital Technology

The improvement on transparency and accountability of INP must start within which by giving the special training for personnel about the ethics of the using of digital technology and social media.

6. Collaborating with Community and Stakeholders

To improve the public trust, the INP should expands the cooperation with local community, civil society organizations and other government institutions.

7. The Implementation of Transparent Rewarding System and Punishment

Other strategies moves is by the strengthen the transparent rewarding system and punishment for police personnel. Personnel that show a great performance and maintain the integrity must give the appropriate award, while the violation on ethic codes must be dealt with strictly.

4.2. Discussion

The suggestion for the INP to increase transparency, accountability, and public trust in law enforcement in the digital era such:

1. The Indonesian National Police needs to regularly provide the latest information on developments in major cases through social media and the official website. Opening communication channels for the public provides the opportunity to ask questions, submit complaints, or provide direct input.
2. Build a digital platform to report crimes and monitor the status of reports in real time. Strengthen internal supervision with a reporting system that enables identification and handling of abuse of authority.
3. Using big data and AI to analyze data from various sources to support crime investigation and prevention. Applying technology to detect and deal with cybercrime and filter disinformation.
4. Form a unit that specifically monitors and responds to issues developing on social media and verifies circulating information.
5. Provide training on the ethical use of social media and digital technology, as well as how to handle public pressure professionally.
6. Involve local communities in discussion forums to obtain input and build better relationships. Cooperate with mass media to disseminate accurate information and overcome fake news.

5. Conclusion

The conclusions of this research highlight several key findings. First, the "No Viral No Justice" phenomenon significantly influences the law enforcement process by the Indonesian National Police (INP), particularly in handling cases that go viral on social media. The INP often prioritizes cases that attract massive public attention, driven by public pressure, which can lead to disparities in law enforcement priorities. While this phenomenon fosters increased transparency and accountability due to heightened public scrutiny, it also poses challenges such as rushed investigations, potential manipulation of public opinion, and the risk of disinformation, all of which can disrupt the ideal legal process. Consequently, the INP must

carefully balance public demands with the principles of objective and fair law enforcement. Second, INP leadership faces the complex task of managing public pressure and opinions shaped by social media.

This requires effective public communication, wise decision-making, and adaptive crisis management strategies. In the digital era, public expectations for speed, transparency, and accountability in handling viral cases are heightened, demanding swift and appropriate responses. Nonetheless, the INP must remain steadfast in adhering to fair legal principles, avoiding reactive decisions driven solely by public pressure. By leveraging social media monitoring technology and involving public figures or influencers, the INP can proactively manage public opinion, uphold credibility, and enhance public trust in its institution. Lastly, to improve transparency, accountability, and public trust in law enforcement, the INP must adopt strategic measures.

These include enhancing open public communication, implementing integrated reporting systems, and utilizing digital technologies such as big data and artificial intelligence. Additionally, establishing a specialized unit to handle viral cases, providing personnel training on ethics and digital technology, fostering collaboration with communities and stakeholders, and implementing a transparent reward-and-punishment system are essential steps to build a responsive, transparent, and trustworthy law enforcement institution in the digital era.

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