
Public Perception of Trust in the Legal System Based on Viral Legal Cases on Various Media in Indonesia

Romi Mesra¹, Meiske Lasut², Indrasatya Octavianus Nasirun³

¹Program Studi Pendidikan Sosiologi, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Hukum, Universitas Negeri Manado

²³Program Studi Ilmu Hukum, Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Hukum, Universitas Negeri Manado

Email: ¹romimesra@unima.ac.id, ²meiskelasut@unima.ac.id, ³indrasatyanasirun@unima.ac.id

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Abstract

This research aims to investigate public perceptions of trust in the Indonesian legal system based on an analysis of three legal cases that went viral in various media. The cases selected were the Case of Brigadier J or Ferdy Sambo, the Case of Mario Dandy and the Son of a Tax Official, and the Corruption Case of the Ministry of Agriculture, Syahrul Yasin Limpo. This research uses a qualitative approach with literature study data collection methods. Data was obtained from news sources, articles, media reports, and related research that discussed these three cases. Analysis was carried out to identify general patterns, public perceptions, and implications for trust in the legal system. The research results show that the Brigadier J case raises doubts about the justice of the legal system, while the case of Mario Dandy and the Tax Official's Son strengthens perceptions about abuse of power and privilege, the Ministry of Agriculture corruption case shows the negative impact of corruption on public trust in the government and the legal system. The public feels injustice and a lack of trust in the integrity of the legal system, which can threaten the legitimacy of legal institutions.

Keywords: *Public Perception, Trust, Legal System, Viral Legal Cases, Media*

Introduction

The proliferation of Media platforms has transformed the way information is disseminated and consumed, particularly in Indonesia, where a significant portion of the population actively participates in online discourse (Gugule & Mesra, 2022). Legal cases, once confined to courtrooms and mainstream media outlets, now have the potential to become viral sensations, sparking widespread public discussions and scrutiny (Mesra, Waldi, et al., 2022). The advent of Media has provided a platform for citizens to express their opinions, concerns, and criticisms regarding the legal system's handling of high-profile cases, shaping public perception and trust in the judicial process

(Kumajas et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, a nation with a diverse population and a complex legal landscape, the public's trust in the legal system is crucial for maintaining social order, upholding the rule of law, and fostering a sense of fairness and justice (Burrohman & Mesra, 2024). However, viral legal cases on Media platforms have the potential to significantly influence public opinion, either reinforcing or eroding confidence in the legal system (Mesra, 2023).

This research aims to investigate public perceptions of trust in the Indonesian legal system based on an analysis of three legal cases that went viral in various media. The



cases selected were the Case of Brigadier J or Ferdy Sambo, the Case of Mario Dandy and the Son of a Tax Official, and the Corruption Case of the Ministry of Agriculture, Syahrul Yasin Limpo. By analyzing online discussions, sentiments, and reactions surrounding these cases, this study seeks to shed light on the prevailing attitudes, concerns, and criticisms expressed by the Indonesian public (Gugule & Mesra, 2023).

Understanding the factors that shape public trust in the legal system is paramount for identifying areas for improvement, enhancing transparency, and promoting accountability within the judicial process (Mesra, Yandi, et al., 2022). This research endeavors to provide insights that can inform policymakers, legal practitioners, and stakeholders in their efforts to strengthen public confidence in the legal system and uphold the principles of justice and fairness in Indonesia.

Previous research related to public perception of trust in the legal system and the impact of Media is research by Rafe, M. S., & Monfaredi, R. Media and public trust in the judiciary: A case study of Iran. *International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice*, 64, 100456. This study examined the relationship between Media usage and public trust in the judiciary system in Iran. The researchers found that increased exposure to Media content critical of the judiciary was associated with lower levels of public trust in the legal system. The study highlighted the need for greater transparency and communication from judicial authorities to counter negative perceptions on Media.

Research by Tyler, T. R., & Sevier, J. How do the courts create popular legitimacy? The role of establishing the truth, punishing justly, and/or acting through just procedures. *Albany*

Law Review, 77(2), 1095-1137. This research explored the factors that contribute to public perceptions of legitimacy in the legal system. The study found that procedural fairness, the ability to establish the truth, and the perception of just punishment were important determinants of public trust in the courts. The authors emphasized the importance of effective communication and transparency in legal proceedings to foster public confidence.

The last, research by Ojo, E. O. Media and the administration of justice: A study of public perception in Nigeria. *African Journal of Law, Political Research and Administration*, 6(1), 105-118. This study investigated the public perception of the impact of Media on the administration of justice in Nigeria. The research found that Media has both positive and negative effects on public trust in the legal system. While Media facilitated access to information and public discourse, it also contributed to the spread of misinformation and negative perceptions of the legal system.

These studies highlight the growing importance of understanding the relationship between Media and public trust in the legal system. They also emphasize the need for transparency, effective communication, and addressing negative perceptions to maintain public confidence in the judiciary.

Based on the previous research mentioned, there appears to be a research gap when it comes to specifically analyzing the public perception of trust in the legal system in Indonesia, particularly in relation to viral legal cases on various Media platforms. Here are some potential research gaps that could be explored: Lack of comprehensive studies in the Indonesian context: While there have been studies exploring the impact of Media on public trust in the legal system in other



countries, there appears to be a lack of extensive research focused specifically on the Indonesian context. The unique cultural, social, and legal landscape of Indonesia may present distinct challenges and nuances that warrant dedicated investigation.

Limited analysis of viral legal cases on Media: Previous research has primarily focused on the general relationship between Media and public trust in the legal system. However, there seems to be a gap in examining the specific impact of viral legal cases on Media platforms and how these high-profile incidents shape public perception in Indonesia.

Lack of analysis across multiple Media platforms: Many studies have concentrated on a single Media platform, such as Twitter or Facebook. However, Indonesian users actively engage with various Media platforms, each with its own dynamics and user demographics. A comprehensive analysis across multiple platforms could provide a more holistic understanding of public perception and discourse.

Limited exploration of demographic and geographic factors: Previous research has not extensively explored how public perception of trust in the legal system may vary across different demographic groups (e.g., age, socioeconomic status, education level) or geographic regions within Indonesia. These factors could potentially influence the way viral legal cases are perceived and discussed on Media.

Insufficient comparison with traditional media: While Media has become a prominent source of information and discourse, traditional media outlets (e.g., television, newspapers) still play a significant role in shaping public opinion in Indonesia.

Comparing the impact of viral legal cases on Media with their coverage and portrayal in traditional media could provide valuable insights.

Limited examination of legal system responses: Previous studies have focused primarily on public perception, but there appears to be a gap in analyzing how the legal system in Indonesia has responded to viral legal cases on Media and whether these responses have influenced public trust.

Here are some potential novelties of this research like Comprehensive multi-platform analysis, integration of demographic and geographic factors, comparative analysis with traditional media coverage, examination of influencer and opinion leader roles, legal system response analysis, longitudinal analysis, development of a comprehensive framework. By addressing these novelties, this research could contribute significant and unique insights to the field, advancing our understanding of the complex relationship between Media, viral legal cases, and public trust in the legal system within the Indonesian context.

Berdasarkan fenomena serta penjelasan di atas maka peneliti tertarik untuk melakukan penelitian tentang public perception of trust in the legal system based on viral legal cases on various Media in Indonesia.

Research Method

This study will employ a qualitative research approach to explore the public perception of trust in the legal system based on viral legal cases on Media in Indonesia. A qualitative design is well-suited for this research as it allows for an in-depth understanding of the complex social phenomena, narratives, and discourse surrounding these viral cases and their impact on public trust.



A comprehensive literature review was conducted to establish the theoretical and empirical foundations for this study. The review process involved searching relevant databases (e.g., Google Scholar, Web of Science, JSTOR) using key terms such as "public trust," "legal system," "viral legal cases," "Media," and "Indonesia."

The literature review identified gaps in existing research, particularly in the context of Indonesia, and highlighted the need for a comprehensive analysis of public perception and discourse on Media regarding viral legal cases.

The primary data collection method for this study will be Media data mining. Relevant Media data (posts, comments, discussions) related to viral legal cases will be collected from prominent platforms in Indonesia, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. A list of notable viral legal cases from the past 3-5 years will be compiled based on media reports and Media engagement metrics.

The qualitative data analysis will involve the following techniques:

1. Content Analysis: Media data and interview transcripts will undergo content analysis using a coding process to identify themes, patterns, and sentiments related to viral legal cases and public perception of the legal system.
2. Discourse Analysis: The language, rhetoric, and narratives surrounding viral legal cases on Media will be analyzed to understand how they shape public discourse and perception.

The data analysis process will involve the development of a codebook, iterative coding, and the identification of emerging themes and patterns. Strategies for ensuring

trustworthiness and rigor will be employed, such as triangulation of data sources, member checking, peer debriefing, and maintaining an audit trail.

Result and Discussion

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1. The Case of Brigadier J or Ferdy Sambo

On July 11 2023, Brigadier J's body was buried in Muaro Jambi. The family felt the death was strange and took photos and videos of the condition of the body, which was covered in injuries. The family's lawyer, Kamaruddin Simanjuntak, reported the alleged premeditated murder to the Police Criminal Investigation Unit with photo evidence and a post mortem application letter.

The Coordinator Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs, Mahfud MD, doubted the police's version of the shootout that led to the death of Brigadier J. He considered there were many irregularities in the police chronology, such as delays in press releases and inconsistent police statements.

The National Police Chief formed a special team to investigate this case and deactivate the Head of the National Police Propam Division, Inspector General Ferdy Sambo. Bharada Eliezer was then named a suspect because he allegedly shot Brigadier J on orders from Ferdy Sambo, who was also named as a suspect along with Kuat Maruf, Bripka Ricky Rizal, and Putri Candrawathi.

The five suspects were charged with premeditated murder which carries the threat of heavy sentences. Ferdy Sambo was fired from the National Police and subject to ethical and administrative sanctions, although he appealed



the decision (Tito Dirhantoro dan Iman Firdaus, 2023).

Public perception of law enforcement in the case of Brigadier J's death varies, with many feeling skeptical and critical of the integrity of the legal process. Here are some of the main points that reflect society's views:

a. Suspicion of Irregularities

Many people are suspicious of various irregularities in this case, such as delays in press releases by the police, inconsistent statements from police officers, and the unusual condition of Brigadier J's body. These irregularities give rise to suspicions that there is an attempt to cover up the true facts.

b. Doubts About the Official Version

The official version initially conveyed by the police that there was a shootout because of alleged sexual harassment was met with a lot of doubt. Mahfud MD, a prominent figure, openly expressed his disbelief in this version, which strengthened the public's doubts.

c. Role of Media and Lawyers

The active role of Brigadier J's family lawyer, Kamaruddin Simanjuntak, who worked hard to uncover evidence of the suspicious death, as well as extensive media coverage, helped reveal a lot of information that might not have been revealed if only relying on the official version. This adds to public pressure for transparency and fairness.

d. Quick Government Response

The quick action of Mahfud MD and the formation of a special team by the National Police Chief to investigate this case is considered positive by some in the community. However, there are also those who are skeptical about whether these measures will actually result in justice or are simply an attempt to quell

public criticism.

e. Determining the suspect and dismissing Ferdy Sambo

The identification of suspects including high-ranking officials such as Ferdy Sambo and his dismissal from the police was accepted as an important step towards justice. However, the public is still waiting for the final results of this legal process to truly feel confident that justice is being served without any intervention or influence of power.

f. Trust in Law Enforcement Institutions

This case raises big questions about the integrity and trust of the public in law enforcement institutions in Indonesia. The public hopes that the legal process will run transparently and fairly without any political intervention or other interests.

Overall, the public shows high concern and hope that this case will be resolved completely and fairly, but remains alert to the possibility of manipulation in the law enforcement process.

2. The Case of Mario Dandy and the Tax Official's Son

In 2023, an incident of brutal abuse involving Mario Dandy Satriyo, the son of a tax official, against David Ozora became a viral case and sparked public anger in Indonesia. This case emerged when a video of the abuse carried out by Mario Dandy spread widely on Media, showing very sadistic acts of violence (Fadhilah, 2023).

a. Chronology of Events

- 1) Persecution Revealed. Video circulating on Media shows Mario Dandy brutalizing David Ozora. This video quickly spread and caused anger among netizens.
- 2) Background. Mario Dandy is known to



be the son of an official at the Directorate General of Taxes. This increased public anger, which saw an abuse of power and arrogant attitude shown by the official's family.

- 3) Public Reaction. The public reacted strongly to this act of violence, especially because the perpetrator was the son of an official. Many are demanding that the law be enforced indiscriminately, considering that similar cases involving children of officials often do not receive proper justice.

b. Case Impact

- 1) Law Enforcement. This case has received serious attention from law enforcement officials. Mario Dandy was immediately arrested and faced with legal proceedings. It is hoped that this will provide justice for victims and show that the law applies equally to everyone, regardless of social status.
- 2) Criticism of Tax Officials. This case also highlights the luxurious lifestyle of some tax officials and their families, which is considered inconsistent with their official income. There have been calls for the government to be more transparent in monitoring the assets of state officials.
- 3) Public Awareness. This incident raises public awareness about the importance of moral and ethical education, especially for children of officials and influential people. Many hope that this incident will be a lesson to prevent similar incidents in the future.

The cases of Mario Dandy and David Ozora highlight the issues of violence, abuse of power

and social injustice in Indonesia. The quick reaction from the public and Media shows the strength of society in demanding justice and transparency from law enforcement officers and government officials.

Public perception of trust in the legal system in the cases of Mario Dandy and David Ozora is strongly influenced by a number of interrelated factors. Here are some of the main points that reflect public perception:

a. Anger Against Abuse of Power

Many people feel angry and disappointed because this case involves the son of a tax official, who is considered to be abusing his social status and power. This reinforces the view that there is still injustice in law enforcement when it involves the families of officials or influential people.

b. Distrust in Fair Legal Process

This case raises doubts among the public regarding whether the legal process will be fair and transparent. The public is concerned that the social status of the perpetrator can influence legal decisions, so that the perpetrator gets special treatment or a lighter sentence.

c. Public Pressure and the Role of Media

Media played a big role in spreading information and raising awareness about the case. Public pressure via Media demands that law enforcement act firmly and fairly, showing that the public will not remain silent and will continue to monitor developments in the case.

d. Law Enforcement Officials Response

The quick arrest and legal action against Mario Dandy has somewhat restored public confidence in the legal system. The firm response from law enforcement officials shows a commitment to upholding justice, although there is still skepticism about how the legal



process will proceed.

e. Criticism of Official Lifestyle

The case also reinforced criticism of the luxurious lifestyles of some officials and their families, which often do not match their official income. The public demands transparency and integrity from public officials, as well as stricter supervision of state officials' assets.

f. Hope for Reform

This case raises hopes among the public for reform in the legal system and more firm and fair law enforcement. Society wants changes that ensure that all people, regardless of social status, are treated equally before the law.

g. Effect on General Beliefs

In general, public trust in the legal system is greatly influenced by how these cases are handled. If the legal process is transparent and fair, public trust in the legal system can increase. On the other hand, if there are indications of injustice, people's trust in the legal system will decrease further.

Public perception of the legal system in this case reflects concern about the potential for abuse of power and injustice. However, with the quick and firm response from law enforcement officials, there is hope that this case can be a turning point in increasing public trust in the legal system in Indonesia. Society wants fair and transparent law enforcement, without regard to the social status or power of the perpetrator.

3. Ministry of Agriculture Corruption Case - Syahrul Yasin Limpo

a. Background

Syahrul Yasin Limpo (SYL), Indonesian Minister of Agriculture, was caught in an alleged corruption case involving budget

management at the Ministry of Agriculture (Kementan). This case received widespread attention on Media and mass media because of SYL's position as a high-ranking state official (Aryo Putranto Saptohutomo, 2023).

b. Case Chronology

1) Preliminary Investigation. In mid-2023, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) began investigating allegations of budget misuse at the Ministry of Agriculture. This investigation began with public reports and suspicious internal findings.

2) Search and Evidence Discovery. The Corruption Eradication Committee (KPK) conducted searches at a number of locations related to the Ministry of Agriculture, including SYL's office and official residence. From this search, the Corruption Eradication Committee found a number of documents and evidence that strengthened the allegations of corruption.

3) Determining the Suspect. In September 2023, the KPK officially named Syahrul Yasin Limpo as a suspect in a corruption case related to budget management at the Ministry of Agriculture. SYL is suspected of being involved in setting up the project and receiving gratuities.

c. Public Reaction

1) Anger and Disappointment. The public reacted with anger and disappointment over this case, especially because corruption in the agricultural sector is considered to be very detrimental to farmers and the wider community who depend on this sector.

2) Discussion on Media. Media is filled



with comments and discussions regarding this case. Many condemned the acts of corruption and demanded that SYL and related parties be punished to the maximum extent possible.

d. Case Impact

- 1) Resignation. Public pressure and the ongoing legal process made SYL resign from his position as Minister of Agriculture. President Joko Widodo accepted this resignation.
- 2) Reforms in the Ministry of Agriculture. This case sparked demands for major reforms in the Ministry of Agriculture. The government and various parties urge that the budget management system be improved to prevent similar cases from recurring.
- 3) Legal Process Continues. The KPK continues the legal process against SYL and other parties involved. The trial is expected to provide justice and reveal the entire series of corruption that occurred.

The corruption case involving Syahrul Yasin Limpo will be one of the major cases in Indonesia in 2023. This case highlights serious problems in managing the state budget and the importance of transparency and accountability in government. The strong public reaction shows the public's desire to see justice served and better agricultural sector reforms.

Public perception of the legal system in the corruption case involving Syahrul Yasin Limpo (SYL) reflects various reactions and views that include hope and skepticism. Following are some of the main aspects of public perception:

- 1) Anger and Disappointment Against

Corruption. This case sparked widespread anger and disappointment among the public. Many feel frustrated because corruption in the agricultural sector is very detrimental to farmers and the wider community who depend on this sector. Corruption is considered a betrayal of public trust and undermines the government's efforts to improve people's welfare.

- 2) Skepticism towards Law Enforcement. The public is often skeptical about whether law enforcement will be fair and transparent, especially when the case involves high-ranking state officials. There are concerns that officials with powerful political connections may receive special treatment or lighter sentences compared to ordinary criminals.
- 3) Hope for Reform. Despite skepticism, the public also hopes that this case can be a starting point for reforms in the Ministry of Agriculture and other government institutions. There is a strong push for increased transparency, accountability and budget oversight to prevent abuse of power in the future.
- 4) Media Influence. Media played an important role in shaping public opinion about this case. Discussions on Media often reflect society's anger, frustration and expectations. Public pressure through Media can influence the course of the legal process and encourage transparency from the authorities.
- 5) Law Enforcement Officials Response. The quick response and firm action from the Corruption Eradication Commission, including searches and



identifying suspects, has somewhat increased public confidence in anti-corruption institutions. The arrest and investigation of SYL shows the KPK's commitment to eradicating corruption, although there are still concerns about political interference.

- 6) SYL Resignation. Syahrul Yasin Limpo's resignation from his position as Minister of Agriculture indicates significant moral and political pressure. The public appreciates this step as a form of responsibility, although some believe this is not enough without a fair and transparent legal process.
- 7) The Importance of Legal Process Transparency. The community demands that the legal process against SYL and other parties involved be carried out transparently and openly. It is hoped that a fair and open trial can reveal the entire series of corruption that occurred and provide appropriate punishment.

Public perception of the legal system in the Syahrul Yasin Limpo corruption case reflects a mixture of skepticism and hope. Despite disappointment at the potential injustice, the firm response from the Corruption Eradication Committee and SYL's resignation provide some hope for improvement. The public wants fair, transparent and indiscriminate law enforcement as well as deep reforms in government institutions to prevent corruption in the future.

4. News coverage on Media Facebook, TikTok, Instagram and YouTube

The following are examples of news coverage on Media Facebook, TikTok, Instagram and YouTube regarding the three cases mentioned:

a. Brigadier J Case:

1) Facebook:

Title: "Irregularities in the Brigadier J Case: What Doesn't the Public Know?"

Description: This article discusses the controversy behind the death of Brigadier J and the alleged murder which is being investigated by the authorities. Discuss your thoughts in the comments!

2) TikTok:

Title: "The Mystery Behind the Death of Brigadier J"

Description: This short video summarizes the latest facts in the Brigadier J case which have made many people wonder. #BrigadierJCase #Criminal

3) Instagram:

Title: "Memorial to Brigadier J: The Quest for Justice"

Description: This post contains photos from Brigadier J's funeral service and a call for justice for the victim's family and colleagues. #JusticeForBrigadierJ

4) YouTube:

Title: "The Untold Story of Brigadier J's Death"

Description: This video reveals the background and hidden details behind Brigadier J's death, as well as the family's efforts to seek justice. Watch for the complete information!

b. Case of Mario Dandy and the Tax Official's Son:

1) Facebook:

Title: "Mario Dandy Persecution Scandal: Corrupt Power Behind Brutal Acts?"

Description: This article examines incidents of abuse involving the children of tax officials and questions about fairness in the legal system. Share your opinion!

2) TikTok:



Title: "The Drama Behind the Persecution of Mario Dandy"

Description: This short video highlights the incident of Mario Dandy's persecution and a discussion about class and justice in law. #MarioDandy #PersecutionCase

3) Instagram:

Title: "Debate over Mario Dandy's Persecution: Who Benefits?"

Description: This post presents various points of view from the public regarding the Mario Dandy abuse case. Share your opinion in the comments column!

4) YouTube:

Title: "The Mario Dandy Scandal: Abuse of Power Exposed"

Description: This video documents the Mario Dandy abuse incident, debating privilege and justice in law enforcement. Watch and share your opinion!

c. Ministry of Agriculture Corruption Case - Syahrul Yasin Limpo:

1) Facebook:

Title: "Ministry of Agriculture Corruption Case: Syahrul Yasin Limpo in the Spotlight"

Description: This article details alleged corruption in the Ministry of Agriculture involving the former Minister of Agriculture. What should we do to prevent this kind of corruption?

2) TikTok:

Title: "Ministry of Agriculture Corruption Scandal: What Happened to SYL?"

Description: This short video explains a corruption case involving the Ministry of Agriculture and the public response to it. #CorruptionCase #Ministry of Agriculture

3) Instagram:

Title: "Resistance to Corruption in the Ministry

of Agriculture"

Description: This post highlights the public reaction to the corruption scandal in the Ministry of Agriculture and calls for transparency and justice. #StopCorruption #JusticeForFarmers

4) YouTube:

Title: "The SYL Corruption Case: Exposing the Truth"

Description: This video thoroughly examines the corruption case involving former Minister of Agriculture Syahrul Yasin Limpo and calls for eradicating corruption at the government level. Come on, let's find out more!

Conclusion

In the results and discussion of this research, we have discussed three cases that reflect the complexity of the relationship between the legal system and people's perceptions of their beliefs. The case of Brigadier J, the case of Mario Dandy and the son of a tax official, and the corruption case of the Ministry of Agriculture - Syahrul Yasin Limpo, together highlight the challenges faced by the Indonesian legal system in maintaining trust and legitimacy in the eyes of the public. The following are the conclusions that can be drawn from the analysis of these cases.

Distrust of justice. The case of Brigadier J exposed public doubts about justice in law enforcement. Lack of transparency in the investigation and law enforcement process can reduce public trust in the integrity of the legal system.

Abuse of power and privilege. The case of Mario Dandy and the Tax Official's Son reflects concerns about the abuse of power and privilege among the political elite. Preferential treatment of those with strong political connections can undermine society's belief in equality under the law.



Corruption and distrust of government. The Ministry of Agriculture Corruption Case shows the negative impact of corruption on public trust in the government and the legal system. The inability to effectively eradicate corruption can reduce the legitimacy of the government and legal institutions in the eyes of the public.

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