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Contestation of Public Discourse on The New Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) in The Digital Public Sphere

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Abstract
The enactment of Indonesia's revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) has intensified public debate across digital communication platforms, transforming the digital public sphere into a contested arena where competing interpretations of legal legitimacy are continuously negotiated. This study investigates how public sentiment, discursive narratives, and interactions among state institutions, civil society, and online communities shape perceptions of the revised KUHAP within Indonesia's digital public sphere. Adopting a qualitative descriptive design, the research combines digital sentiment analysis with critical discourse analysis using publicly available data visualized through the Drone Emprit social media analytics platform. The findings demonstrate that digital discourse is characterized by competing narratives rather than a unified public response. Critical sentiment is predominantly associated with concerns over the expansion of law enforcement authority, the protection of human rights, and the perceived lack of meaningful public participation during the legislative process, whereas institutional narratives primarily emphasize legal certainty, procedural reform, and the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. These competing discourses illustrate that the legitimacy of the revised KUHAP is constructed not only through formal legislative procedures but also through communicative contestation within the digital public sphere. The study argues that digital media has become a significant arena in which legal legitimacy is continuously produced, challenged, and renegotiated, reflecting broader tensions between state authority, democratic participation, and public accountability in contemporary legal governance.

Keywords: *Digital Public Sphere; Discursive Contestation; Legal Legitimacynew KUHAP; Sentiment Analysis;*

1. Introduction

The promulgation of Law Number 20 of 2025 on the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP), replacing Law Number 8 of 1981, marks a fundamental transformation in Indonesia's criminal justice framework (setneg, 2026). However, the significance of this reform extends beyond procedural legal change, as it has also generated substantial debate over the democratic legitimacy of the legislative process. Within a rule-of-law framework, the legitimacy of legislation depends not only on compliance with formal legal procedures but also on the extent to which the policymaking process is perceived as transparent, participatory, and publicly accountable (Pollack & Shaffer, 2012; Hasibuan et al., 2025). Accordingly, legislative reforms that are viewed as excluding meaningful public participation are more likely to encounter social resistance and declining public trust (Morales, 2020; Reuter & Szakonyi, 2015). These dynamics became particularly visible following the circulation of the final draft of the Criminal Procedure Code Bill (RUU KUHAP) in mid-November 2025, when online discussions increasingly focused on controversial provisions concerning expanded law enforcement authority and the limited opportunities for civic engagement during the legislative process. Public opposition intensified after the House of Representatives (DPR) formally enacted the bill on 18 November 2025, prompting widespread criticism from students, human rights advocates, and civil society organizations across Indonesia. Consequently, the enactment of the revised KUHAP came to be widely perceived as an expedited legislative process that inadequately accommodated public aspirations, reinforcing concerns about the protection of human rights and the potential expansion of discretionary state power in criminal law enforcement.

The existing body of scholarship characterizes legislative formulation and amendment in Indonesia, including the revision of the Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP), as a constitutional and political process shaped by the interaction of legal power, democratic governance, and public participation. From this perspective, legislation extends beyond its regulatory function and is understood as an institutional mechanism through which the state responds to evolving social, economic, and technological developments while securing democratic legitimacy through inclusive lawmaking (Widjaja, 2025). Nevertheless, empirical and conceptual studies indicate that legislative decision-making frequently reflects prevailing configurations of political power, enabling dominant actors and organized interests to exercise disproportionate influence over the policymaking process and generating persistent concerns regarding representation, distributive justice, and institutional accountability (Malik et al., 2024). Within the specific context of KUHAP reform, normative-juridical scholarship consistently advocates responsive legislation based on transparency and meaningful public participation, particularly through strengthening Article 96 of the Law on the Formation of Legislation and implementing the participatory standards articulated in Constitutional Court Decision No. 91/PUU-XVIII/2020. Despite these normative commitments, the literature also

identifies a substantial gap between legal ideals and legislative practice, demonstrating that public participation in Indonesia often remains procedural, elitist, and symbolic rather than genuinely deliberative, thereby undermining popular sovereignty and substantive justice (Anggono & Firdaus, 2020; Asmarudin et al., 2024; Nurdin & Sugianto, 2025; Sholikhah & Cholik, 2024; Wardana & Bachtiar, 2022). These structural shortcomings are further reinforced by persistent information asymmetries and limited public legal literacy, both of which reduce citizens' capacity to engage effectively with the technical complexity of legislative processes and statutory regulation (Daniel & Habsari, 2019).

The reform of Indonesia's Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) illustrates the continuing challenge of reconciling effective criminal law enforcement with the protection of fundamental human rights. Although the revised legal framework seeks to accommodate both objectives, its implementation remains vulnerable to institutional tensions, discretionary abuse of authority, and conflicts among law enforcement agencies (Setyadi & Masyhar, 2025). Recent scholarship has begun to acknowledge the growing role of digital technologies in legislative participation through mechanisms such as crowdsourcing, interactive platforms, and big-data applications. However, these contributions remain largely normative and prescriptive, offering limited empirical evidence regarding how citizens actually engage in legal debates within digital communication environments (Wardana & Bachtiar, 2022). At the same time, studies in media and political communication increasingly conceptualize the digital public sphere as a contested communicative arena in which civic participation, public oversight, and collective mobilization coexist with affective polarization, misinformation, emotional discourse, algorithmic amplification, and the delegitimization of public actors (Esau et al., 2025; Le et al., 2023; Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2023; Muliyati & Maharudin, 2025; Murtadlo & Saputra, 2025; Rahayuningsih et al., 2025; Tukina et al., 2025). Despite these parallel developments, existing research has yet to integrate normative legal inquiry with digital discourse analysis and conversation network mapping to explain how the legitimacy of the revised KUHAP is constructed, negotiated, and polarized through the real-time interactions of state institutions, civil society organizations, media actors, and citizens within Indonesia's digital public sphere.

Within the framework of Habermas's public sphere theory, the legitimacy of law is understood as the outcome of rational, inclusive, and participatory communication between state institutions and citizens rather than as a consequence of formal legislative enactment alone (Duke, 2024; Nangi et al., 2024). This perspective highlights the importance of communicative processes in shaping public acceptance of legal reform. Nevertheless, existing scholarship on Indonesia's criminal procedure law reform remains predominantly anchored in doctrinal, normative, and institutional analyses, providing only limited empirical insight into how legal legitimacy is negotiated through digitally mediated public discourse (Bedner, 2013). As social media has become a central arena for legal and political deliberation, the absence of studies employing sentiment analysis to investigate patterns of public opinion and communicative legitimacy represents

a significant gap in the literature, leaving the discursive construction of legitimacy surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) insufficiently explored (Ismail, 2024). Addressing this limitation, the present study develops an interdisciplinary analytical framework that integrates Habermas's public sphere theory with digital sentiment analysis to examine the social legitimacy of criminal procedure law reform, thereby extending contemporary debates on legal legitimacy within the context of digital democracy.

This study is grounded in the proposition that patterns of public sentiment expressed in digital environments provide an important indicator of the social legitimacy of the newly enacted Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). From the perspective of public sphere theory, legal legitimacy is strengthened when public communication is characterized by inclusiveness, rational deliberation, and equal opportunities for participation, whereas the predominance of negative sentiment reflects communicative distortions that undermine confidence in legal institutions (Jongeling et al., 2017). Accordingly, the widespread criticism, polarization, and narratives of institutional distrust observed in online discussions following the enactment of the revised KUHAP suggest that digital sentiment constitutes a meaningful proxy for evaluating perceptions of legal legitimacy. Building upon this premise, the present study investigates how the revised KUHAP is debated within Indonesia's digital public sphere and how these debates shape the polarization of its legal legitimacy. To achieve this objective, the study addresses three research questions: (1) What dominant issues emerge in digital discussions concerning the enactment of the revised KUHAP? (2) What patterns of public sentiment characterize online responses to the Criminal Procedure Code? and (3) Which actors occupy the most influential positions within the digital public sphere surrounding the KUHAP debate?

2. Method

This research is situated within an interpretivist paradigm, which conceives social reality as being continuously produced through processes of symbolic interaction, interpretation, and discursive meaning-making rather than as an objective and fixed phenomenon (Bertrand & Hughes, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The selection of this paradigm reflects the study's objective to generate an in-depth understanding of how the legitimacy and controversy surrounding the newly enacted Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) are socially constructed, contested, and negotiated across the digital public sphere, instead of establishing or testing causal relationships among variables (Creswell, 2014).

Figure 1 presents the overall research design, illustrating the logical sequence of methodological stages undertaken throughout the study. The research process began with the identification of the research problem and the synthesis of previous literature to establish the research gap, which subsequently informed the formulation of research objectives, research questions, methodological approach, and data collection strategy. Empirical evidence was then systematically gathered through the retrieval and documentation of digital data sources and supporting documents before being examined using thematic

and discourse analysis. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, the analytical process incorporated both data triangulation and methodological triangulation in accordance with established qualitative research principles (Denzin & Lincoln, 2019). Methodological triangulation was achieved by integrating quantitative analyses of digital sentiment trends with descriptive qualitative interpretation derived from the literature, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of public debate surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Accordingly, the research flowchart demonstrates the coherence and continuity of the entire methodological framework while ensuring alignment between each research stage, the research objectives, and the analytical questions guiding the study.

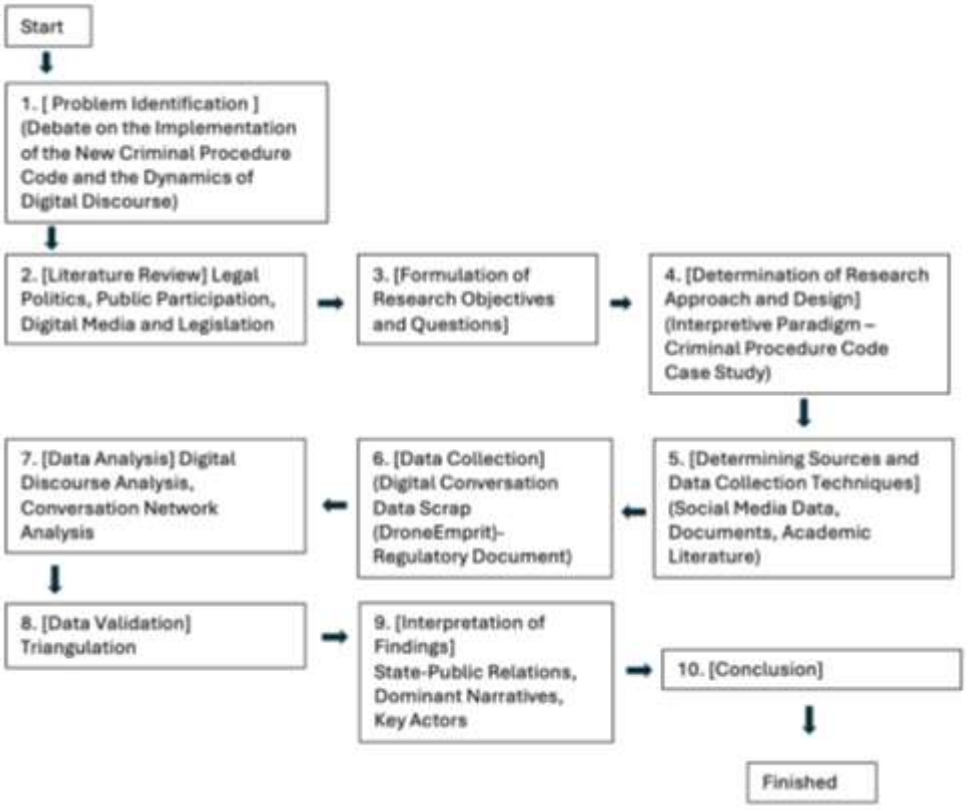


Figure 1. Research Design Flowchart

The empirical scope of this research centers on digital public communication surrounding the enactment of Indonesia's new Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Specifically, the study investigates the public controversy triggered by the dissemination of the final draft of the Criminal Procedure Code Bill (RUU KUHAP) and its subsequent approval by Commission III of the House of Representatives (DPR RI) in mid-November 2025. Rather than being confined to a particular geographical location, the analysis encompasses Indonesia's nationwide digital public sphere, where legal

and political discussions increasingly unfold through online communication platforms. Accordingly, the study examines the evolving patterns of public discourse, sentiment, and societal responses expressed across digital and social media throughout the critical stages of the bill's deliberation and formal enactment.

This research integrates quantitative descriptive analysis with interpretive qualitative inquiry to examine digital public discourse on the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Miles et al., 2014). Secondary data were obtained from publicly accessible social media and online news platforms (Johnston, 2014) and systematically processed using the Drone Emprit analytics platform, which supports real-time big-data monitoring of online conversations. The quantitative component measured discussion volume, sentiment distribution, and temporal communication trends, whereas the qualitative analysis interpreted dominant narratives and the discursive meanings underlying emerging sentiment patterns, providing a comprehensive understanding of public responses to the revised KUHAP.

Unlike conventional social research that relies on predefined sampling procedures, this study defines its unit of analysis as the entire population of publicly accessible digital accounts that generated, shared, or amplified content concerning the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) throughout the observation period (Standlee, 2024). Accordingly, the dataset encompasses a diverse range of online actors, including ordinary citizens, civil society activists, academics, journalists, public figures, and official institutional accounts participating in discussions related to the KUHAP (García & Oleart, 2024). Consistent with the concept of the digital public sphere, these users are treated as communicative actors whose interactions collectively produce, negotiate, and influence public opinion and sentiment within online environments (Balaban & Mustățea, 2019).

The study commenced with the development of research questions designed to examine dominant issues, communication trends, public sentiment, and the overall structure of digital conversations concerning the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) (Shayaa et al., 2018). Empirical data were subsequently retrieved through a social media listening approach that systematically captured publicly available content from X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and online news platforms. To ensure analytical consistency, data collection was confined to the period between 18 and 24 November 2025 (23:59 WIB) and employed a comprehensive set of search terms, including *KUHAP*, *RUU KUHAP*, *TolakKUHAP*, *TolakRUUKUHAP*, *#SemuaBisaKena*, and related keyword variations to maximize data coverage.

Data analysis combined three complementary techniques: sentiment classification, temporal trend analysis, and discourse network mapping to generate a comprehensive understanding of public communication surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Sentiment analysis categorized online responses into positive, negative, and neutral orientations toward the legislation (Shayaa et al., 2018), whereas trend analysis examined fluctuations in

discussion intensity across the observation period. Discourse network mapping further identified influential actors, recurring themes, and the relationships among issues emerging within digital conversations (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). The analytical findings were subsequently interpreted through the perspectives of legal and communication studies to evaluate the social legitimacy of the criminal procedure law reform (Ghofur, 2016).

3. Results

Public conversations surrounding the enactment of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (UU KUHAP) were monitored using the Drone Emprit social media analytics platform, drawing on content published across online news outlets and social media between 18 and 24 November 2025. As presented in Table 1, the issue generated substantial digital visibility, comprising 1,965 online news articles, 6,245 media mentions, and 13,516 social media conversations (sample mentions). The magnitude of this communication activity demonstrates that the enactment of the revised KUHAP evolved into a highly salient legal and political issue, stimulating extensive public engagement and widespread discussion across Indonesia's digital public sphere.

Table 1 . Summary of Exposure of the Criminal Procedure Law Issue in the Media

Indicator	Quantity
Number of news articles	1.965 artikel
Total mentions (media online)	6.245 mentions
Sample mentions media sosial	13.516 mentions
Monitoring period	18–24 November 2025

Table 2 demonstrates notable differences in sentiment patterns across online news media and social media platforms. Sentiment expressed in online news was relatively balanced, consisting of 39% positive, 33% negative, and 28% neutral coverage, suggesting a predominantly informational and comparatively moderate framing of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). By contrast, social media conversations were characterized by a strong predominance of positive sentiment (70%), followed by negative (20%) and neutral (10%) responses. These contrasting distributions indicate that digital public discourse on social media was more participatory, emotionally driven, and susceptible to opinion polarization than discourse disseminated through online news media.

Table 2. Distribution of Public Sentiment on the Criminal Procedure Law

Media	Positive	Negatives	Neutral
Media Online	39%	33%	28%
Media Sosial	70%	20%	10%

The substantive content of public sentiment reveals contrasting narratives regarding the enactment of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). As summarized in Table 3, positive sentiment primarily emphasized the necessity of replacing the outdated Criminal Procedure Code, the perceived responsiveness of the new legislation to public aspirations, and official claims by the House of Representatives that allegations concerning expanded law enforcement authority were unfounded. In contrast, the negative narratives presented in Table 4 focused on concerns over increased law enforcement powers, threats to privacy and human rights, the potential criminalization of citizens, and criticism of a legislative process perceived as opaque, expedited, and insufficiently participatory. Collectively, these findings reflect a divergence between formal procedural legitimacy and the social legitimacy negotiated within the digital public sphere.

Table 3. Categories of Positive Sentiment Narrative

Aspects	Description
Representation of public aspirations	Claims that the Criminal Procedure Law absorbs 99.9% of the people's aspirations
Justice Paradigm	Upholding corrective, rehabilitative, and restorative justice
Clarification of the House of Representatives (DPR)	Hoax rebuttals related to wiretapping, confiscation, and police authority
The urgency of regulation	The old Criminal Code is considered no longer relevant

Table 4 Negative Sentiment Narrative Categories

Aspects	Description
Authority of the apparatus	Concerns about the expansion of authority and threats to privacy
Democracy	Ratification is considered a setback for democracy
Criminalization	The Potential for Criminalization of Civilians
Implementation	Fears of chaos due to the absence of a transition period
Legislation process	Criticism of the rushed, lack of participation, and lack of transparency

The analysis generated through the Drone Emprit platform demonstrates that public responses to the enactment of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) were shaped not only by the substantive provisions of the legislation but also by official communication strategies adopted during the policy debate. Negative sentiment intensified as government institutions and the House of Representatives characterized public concerns regarding surveillance and asset seizure as misinformation or hoaxes rather than engaging with the underlying criticisms. From a communication perspective, this response diminished

discursive legitimacy by limiting deliberative engagement, while from a legal standpoint, many of the public objections were grounded in the textual content of contested provisions, including Articles 124 and 132A.

The analysis of digital public discourse indicates that concerns over privacy protection and civil liberties constitute one of the most prominent themes in the debate surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). A substantial proportion of online discussions centered on provisions authorizing surveillance, data confiscation, and restrictions on digital content without prior judicial approval under circumstances classified as "urgent," particularly Articles 105, 112A, 124, and 132A. Within the digital public sphere, these provisions were widely interpreted as expanding the coercive authority of the state beyond acceptable legal safeguards, thereby raising questions about compliance with the principles of due process and the protection of fundamental human rights. Consequently, negative sentiment was predominantly shaped by concerns that routine digital activities could be subject to broad legal interpretation, increasing the perceived risk of arbitrary investigation, arrest, and criminal prosecution.

Digital conversations revealed widespread concern over the concentration of investigative authority within the National Police (Polri), particularly under Articles 5, 7, and 8, which were perceived as expanding coercive powers while weakening institutional checks and balances and the role of Civil Servant Investigators (PPNS). Public discourse frequently characterized these provisions as creating opportunities for arbitrary law enforcement. Drone Emprit monitoring further indicated that criticism extended beyond the substance of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) to the legislative process itself, which was widely viewed as expedited, opaque, and lacking meaningful public participation. Concerns intensified following reports that the academic manuscript was uploaded only hours before deliberation and that 11 members of the KUHAP Working Committee (Panja) were reported to the House Honor Council (MKD) for alleged ethical violations.

Public discourse also highlighted concerns regarding the absence of detailed operational guidelines to support the implementation of several new provisions introduced by the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Discussions frequently emphasized the lack of standardized procedures governing restorative justice, corporate crime enforcement, and the application of the *living law* concept, creating uncertainty over their practical implementation. This perceived procedural ambiguity generated broader concerns about the consistency and predictability of law enforcement, as officials could be required to rely extensively on discretionary judgment in the absence of clear regulatory guidance. Consequently, many participants viewed these institutional gaps as posing potential risks to legal certainty, accountability, and the uniform application of criminal procedure.

Temporal analysis of digital conversations revealed a short-lived but highly intensive cycle of public attention surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Discussion activity reached its highest level on 18 November 2025, declined steadily over the following days, and experienced a renewed increase on 24 November 2025. Throughout this period, public debate converged

around two dominant policy demands. First, many participants urged the President to issue a Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perppu) to revoke or postpone the implementation of the revised KUHAP. Second, online discourse emphasized the need for a sufficient transitional period before the law's scheduled enforcement on 2 January 2026 to ensure legal certainty and institutional preparedness.

Table 5 presents an integrated summary of the dominant issues and communication patterns that emerged throughout the observation period. The synthesized findings capture the principal dimensions of public discourse, including criticism of the legislative process, shifts in the intensity of digital conversations over time, and debates concerning the operational and technical implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Taken together, these thematic patterns illustrate how public communication evolved during the enactment process and provide a comprehensive empirical representation of the narratives that shaped societal perceptions of Indonesia's criminal procedure reform.

Table 5 List of issues and patterns of public conversation

No.	Discovery Code	Focus on Key Issues	Brief Description of Findings
1	Findings	Criticism as a "Hoax" vs Validation of Problematic Articles	The government and the House of Representatives responded to public concerns related to wiretapping and confiscation by labeling it as a hoax and misinformation. The public refers to the text of the draft Criminal Code Bill, including Articles 124 and 132A, as a basis for criticism.
2	Findings	Threats to Privacy and Civil Liberties	The public conversation highlighted Articles 105, 112A, 124, and 132A which govern the wiretapping, seizure of data, and blocking of digital content without court permission under

No.	Discovery Code	Focus on Key Issues	Brief Description of Findings
			certain conditions. Public concerns are widely expressed on social media.
3	Findings	Police "Superbody" Concerns	The public highlighted Articles 7 and 8 which place the National Police as the sole investigator and supervisory coordinator, as well as Article 5 related to the authority of coercive efforts from the investigation stage. The issue of checks and balances and the role of PPNS was also discussed.
4	Findings	Legislation and Ethics Reporting Process	The public criticized the legislation process which was considered hasty, lacked participation, and was not transparent. It was stated that the draft academic manuscript was uploaded about two hours before the meeting. The criticism led to the reporting of 11 members of the Criminal Procedure Code Bill Committee to the Honorary Assembly of the House (MKD).
5	Findings	Dynamics of Conversation Trends and Public Demands	The public conversation peaked on November 18, 2025, decreased to November 21, 2025, and increased again on

No.	Discovery Code	Focus on Key Issues	Brief Description of Findings
			November 24, 2025. The focus of the conversation included the insistence on the issuance of the Perppu and the request for a transition period before January 2, 2026.
6	Findings	Vacancy of the New Criminal Procedure Code	The public discussed the absence of technical operational procedures for the new Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) related to restorative justice, corporate crimes, and *living law*. This gap is associated with the potential use of discretion by the authorities in law enforcement practices.

The empirical patterns summarized in Table 5 are further clarified through conversation network analysis, which illustrates how issues related to the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) were distributed, interconnected, and amplified across the digital public sphere. Figure 2 depicts the communication network on platform X as a decentralized structure composed of several interacting clusters, including non-governmental organizations, activist groups, media organizations, grassroots communities, and individual citizens connected through mentions and reposting activities. The network configuration reflects an intense process of discursive contestation, with civil society organizations and activist networks serving as the primary sources of criticism concerning civil liberties, human rights, expanded police authority, and perceived deficiencies in legislative transparency and public participation. These critical narratives were subsequently disseminated by grassroots users through accessible language, protest hashtags, and everyday digital interactions, thereby extending the visibility and circulation of the debate throughout Indonesia's online public sphere.

In contrast, media organizations primarily functioned as information intermediaries by disseminating reports on the legislative timeline, protest activities, and official statements issued by the government and the House of

Representatives, thereby connecting institutional narratives with broader public discussions. The resulting communication network exhibited a decentralized structure in which no single actor exercised dominant influence over the flow of information. Instead, the digital public sphere surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) operated as a dynamic arena of discursive contestation, characterized by polarized sentiment, competing interpretations, and the simultaneous construction and erosion of policy legitimacy through continuous interaction among diverse online actors.



Figure 2. Screenshot of DroneEmprit Netizen Map X regarding the Criminal Procedure Code

Drone Emprit identified statements from several prominent national figures regarding the enactment and implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP), which are summarized in Table 6 according to the speakers, institutional affiliations, key quotations, and substantive positions. The statements illustrate differing institutional perspectives on the implementation of the legislation. Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs Yusril Ihza Mahendra emphasized that the law had "…*baru disahkan dan dalam proses untuk pengundangan. dan saya kira lebih baik dijalankan dulu, kecuali Pak Presiden berpendapat lain…*" (regional.kompas.com, 24 November 2025). Meanwhile, Minister of Human Rights Natalius Pigai stated that the government could "…*melakukan koreksi kalau di dalam KUHAP tersebut tidak mewadahi aspek-aspek yang beririsan dengan hak asasi manusia*" (nasional.kompas.com, 21 November 2025).

Additional statements from senior state officials further illustrate the institutional narratives surrounding the enactment of the revised Criminal

Procedure Code (KUHAP). Speaker of the House of Representatives Puan Maharani argued that the previous KUHAP had become outdated after 44 years and that the revision had involved broad stakeholder participation (nasional.kompas.com, 19 November 2025). Chairman of Commission III Habiburokhman emphasized that coercive measures under the new law would be implemented under stricter safeguards than the previous code (antaranews.com, 19 November 2025). Likewise, National Police Chief Listyo Sigit Prabowo acknowledged that the revised KUHAP requires institutional reforms and organizational adjustments within the Indonesian National Police (nasional.kompas.com, 24 November 2025).

Table 6 further documents perspectives expressed by representatives of research institutions, state agencies, academia, legal aid organizations, and student movements concerning the enactment and implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). The table presents each speaker's institutional affiliation, representative statement, and the substantive position conveyed, illustrating the diversity of viewpoints within Indonesia's legal and civic landscape. Iqbal Muharam Nurfahmi argued that *"Pengesahan RUU KUHAP adalah bentuk kemunduran reformasi hukum di Indonesia"*(tempo.co, 18 November 2025), reflecting concerns over the direction of legal reform. Similarly, Anis Hidayah warned that *"Catatan terhadap KUHAP ini dapat mengganggu kondisi yang kondusif bagi pelaksanaan HAM dan upaya perlindungan dan penegakan HAM di Indonesia"* (Kompas.tv, 18 November 2025), emphasizing potential implications for human rights protection. Representing the legal aid community, Muhammad Isnur urged the President to issue a Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (*Perppu*), stating, *"Kami … mendesak Prabowo untuk segera menerbitkan Perppu, batalkan segera KUHAP ini karena ini membahayakan penegakan hukum"* (tempo.co, 21 November 2025). In contrast, Febby Mutiara Nelson viewed the revised provisions as strengthening judicial oversight, arguing that *"Dasar penahanan menjadi lebih dapat diuji atau justiciable, baik oleh penasihat hukum, jaksa, maupun hakim pemeriksa pendahuluan. Ini memperkuat asas legalitas dan due process"* (antaranews.com, 23 November 2025). Meanwhile, Rafa Al Gatran maintained that the legislative process lacked democratic legitimacy, observing that *"Dengan per hari ini masih banyak penolakan terhadap RUU KUHAP, artinya dalam proses belum demokratis dan memuaskan banyak orang, karena dalam prosesnya tidak demokratis"* (Tempo.co, 18 November 2025). Collectively, these statements demonstrate the coexistence of competing legal, institutional, and civic interpretations, reflecting the contested nature of the revised KUHAP within Indonesia's digital public sphere.

Table 6. Opinions of Figures

No	Figure	Institutions	Live Quotes	Opinion
1	Yusril Ihza Mahendra	Coordinating Minister for Law and Human	"...baru disahkan dan dalam proses untuk pengundangan. Dan saya kira lebih	Stating that there is no urgent reason to

No	Figure	Institutions	Live Quotes	Opinion
		Rights (Menko Kumham)	baik dijalankan dulu, kecuali Pak Presiden berpendapat lain..." (regional.kompas.com , 24 November 2025).	issue a Perppu on the new Criminal Procedure Law.
2	Natalius Pigai	Minister of Human Rights **(**HAM)	"...melakukan koreksi kalau di dalam KUHAP tersebut tidak mewadahi aspek-aspek yang beririsan dengan hak asasi manusia." (nasional.kompas.com, 21 November 2025).	Stating the readiness of the Ministry of Law and Human Rights to encourage correction of the Criminal Code Law if it does not meet human rights standards.
3	Puan Maharani	Chairman of the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR RI)	"UU KUHAP yang lama sudah berusia 44 tahun dan perlu menyesuaikan kebutuhan zaman..." (nasional.kompas.com, 19 November 2025).	Explained that the update of the Criminal Code Law was carried out because it was obsolete and needed adjustments.
4	Habiburokhman	Chairman of Commission III of the People's Representative Council of the Republic of Indonesia	"Penangkapan, penahanan, penggeledahan harus dilakukan dengan sangat hati-hati..." (antaranews.com, 19 November 2025).	Highlighting the tightening of the requirements for coercive action in the new Criminal

No	Figure	Institutions	Live Quotes	Opinion
				Procedure Law.
5	Listyo Sigit Prabowo	National Police Chief	"...Polri harus segera melakukan perbaikan maupun perubahan..." (nasional.kompas.com, 24 November 2025).	Stating the need for the National Police to improve to face changes in the rules of the Criminal Code.
6	Iqbal Muharam Nurfahmi	ICJR researcher	"Pengesahan RUU KUHAP adalah bentuk kemunduran reformasi hukum di Indonesia." (tempo.co, 18 November 2025).	Considering the Criminal Procedure Law as a setback for legal reform.
7	Anis Hidayah	Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission	"Catatan terhadap KUHAP ini dapat mengganggu kondisi yang kondusif bagi pelaksanaan HAM..." (Kompas.tv, 18 November 2025).	Highlighting potential interference with the protection and enforcement of human rights.
8	Muhammad Isnur	Chairman of YLBHI	"Kami ... mendesak Prabowo untuk segera menerbitkan Perppu..." (tempo.co, 21 November 2025).	Urging the President to issue a Perppu to cancel or postpone the Criminal Procedure Law.
9	Febby Mutiara Nelson	Lecturer of Procedural Law of FH UI	"Dasar penahanan menjadi lebih dapat diuji atau justiciable..."	Assessing that the new Criminal Code Law

No	Figure	Institutions	Live Quotes	Opinion
			(antaranews.com, 23 November 2025).	clarifies the requirements for detention and strengthens due process.
10	Rafa Al Gatran	Coordinator of the Student Executive Board (BEM) of the University of Indonesia (UI)	"...masih banyak penolakan terhadap RUU KUHAP, artinya dalam proses belum demokratis..." (tempo.co, 18 November 2025).	Stating that the process of forming the Criminal Procedure Law is not yet democratic.

The findings reveal contrasting perspectives between state institutions and civil society regarding the enactment of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Government representatives generally framed the legislation as a necessary modernization of criminal procedure, emphasizing its immediate implementation, the possibility of subsequent revisions to address human rights concerns, and institutional adaptation to the new legal framework. Conversely, academics, legal aid organizations, and civil society actors questioned both the substance and legislative process of the law, describing it as a regression in legal reform, warning of risks to human rights protection, advocating the issuance of a Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (*Perppu*), and criticizing the drafting process as insufficiently democratic and lacking broad public acceptance.

4. Discussion

Unlike the study by Wenando (2023), which primarily employs the Naïve Bayes Classifier to quantify public sentiment toward the enactment of the Criminal Code, and the work of Widjaja (2025), which examines legislative reform through a normative-conceptual perspective emphasizing responsiveness, public participation, and constitutionalism, the present research adopts an interdisciplinary empirical approach that integrates legal, communication, and digital media perspectives. Rather than limiting the analysis to sentiment classification or normative principles of lawmaking, this study investigates how the legitimacy and delegitimization of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) are socially constructed, negotiated, and contested through interactions among state institutions, civil society, media organizations, and citizens within digital communication networks. By combining normative legal analysis, digital discourse analysis, sentiment analysis, and conversation network

mapping, this research advances both conceptual and methodological contributions to the study of legal legitimacy in the digital era. Specifically, it reconceptualizes the controversy surrounding the revised KUHAP as a multidimensional legal-political phenomenon that unfolds simultaneously across formal legislative institutions and the digital public sphere. Accordingly, the principal novelty of this study lies in its capacity to bridge the normative dimension (*das Sollen*) with the empirical dimension (*das Sein*), while revealing how power relations, competing narratives, and public sentiment collectively shape the production and contestation of legal legitimacy within contemporary digital democracy.

The findings generated from Drone Emprit demonstrate that public discourse surrounding the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) is characterized by substantial diversity rather than a unified pattern of interpretation. Digital conversations reveal multiple and often competing perspectives reflected in social media interactions, quantitative communication metrics, and empirical evidence derived from public discussions. The observed fluctuations in conversation volume and sentiment distribution correspond closely with key stages of the legislative process, while qualitative analysis identifies a plurality of narratives without indicating the predominance of a single interpretive frame. Furthermore, the statements presented in Table 6 illustrate that government representatives and civil society actors articulated parallel yet contrasting positions regarding the revised KUHAP. Taken together, these findings provide a comprehensive empirical representation of how public and institutional responses coexisted and evolved within Indonesia's digital public sphere, without privileging any single normative interpretation.

The findings suggest that public debate surrounding the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) is characterized by pronounced polarization within Indonesia's digital public sphere. This polarization is reflected in the contrasting sentiment profiles across communication platforms: online news exhibited a relatively balanced distribution of positive (39%), negative (33%), and neutral (28%) coverage, whereas social media interactions were dominated by positive sentiment (70%), followed by negative (20%) and neutral (10%) responses. These contrasting patterns indicate that digital communication platforms constitute heterogeneous deliberative environments with distinct modes of expression and engagement. Such evidence is consistent with the concept of affective polarization, whereby public attitudes toward policy are shaped not only by substantive policy preferences but also by emotional attachment, identity, and affective evaluations (Esau et al., 2025). As summarized in Table 5, narratives expressing concern, distrust, justification, and institutional defense emerged as central emotional frames that reinforced symbolic divisions between supporters and opponents of the revised KUHAP (Angelopoulou et al., 2024). Rather than representing isolated individual opinions, these sentiments collectively evolved through continuous interaction and the circulation of digital content, producing dynamic patterns of public opinion across online networks (Murtadlo & Saputra, 2025; Wenando, 2023). Consequently, both online news media and social media should be understood

not merely as channels for reflecting public opinion but also as communicative arenas that actively shape polarization and influence the quality of democratic deliberation concerning the implementation of the revised KUHAP.

The empirical evidence demonstrates that public legitimacy surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) remains contested rather than uniformly accepted, as digital conversations simultaneously express support, conditional acceptance, and rejection (Lafont, 2015). These patterns suggest that the legitimacy of legal reform extends beyond formal legislative approval and depends substantially on its recognition within broader social and cultural contexts. Institutional actors sought to reinforce legitimacy by emphasizing legal modernization, regulatory adaptation, and the possibility of subsequent revisions to strengthen human rights protections. In contrast, academics, human rights organizations, legal aid institutions, and student groups consistently emphasized the importance of meaningful public participation, the protection of fundamental rights, and maintaining proportionality between state authority and individual liberties. Such findings support the argument that enduring legal legitimacy is rooted in collaborative policymaking, public participation, and the alignment of legal norms with prevailing societal values of justice (Erfain, 2025). Moreover, digital public discourse illustrates that social media functions not only as a channel for expressing public opinion but also as a mechanism through which legitimacy is continuously reinforced, challenged, and renegotiated through collective online interaction (Rahayuningsih et al., 2025). Consequently, the social legitimacy of the revised KUHAP should be understood as a dynamic and evolving process shaped by the interplay of public sentiment, institutional narratives, and societal evaluations of the relationship between state power and citizens' rights within the criminal justice system (Jannah et al., 2025).

From the perspective of Jürgen Habermas's public sphere theory, the empirical patterns reported in Tables 5 and 6 illustrate how legal legitimacy is continuously negotiated through public communication rather than being established exclusively through formal legislative procedures. The debates surrounding the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) demonstrate that social media has evolved into a contemporary arena in which citizens, civil society organizations, and state institutions publicly articulate competing interpretations of criminal justice policy. This communicative process reflects the critical function traditionally associated with the bourgeois public sphere, where public opinion emerges through the contestation of power and competing arguments (Nangi et al., 2024; Zeeuw, 2024). At the same time, the prevalence of fragmented narratives, emotionally charged interactions, and polarized sentiment indicates that the digital public sphere departs from Habermas's ideal model of rational-critical deliberation. Instead, online communication increasingly exhibits characteristics of segmented publics, echo chambers, and semi-public interactions that constrain inclusive deliberation and consensus formation (Zeeuw, 2024). Consequently, the controversy surrounding the revised KUHAP demonstrates that contemporary digital media simultaneously strengthens opportunities for civic participation

while also generating communicative conditions that complicate the production of shared legal legitimacy (Ruiz et al., 2011).

Viewed through Pierre Bourdieu's field theory, the controversy surrounding the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) represents a relatively autonomous social field in which actors possessing different forms of political, legal, and symbolic capital compete to establish their interpretations of justice, rights protection, and legal legitimacy as authoritative (García & Oleart, 2024). The empirical findings demonstrate that digital communication has broadened this field of contestation by enabling civil society organizations, legal professionals, activists, and citizens to challenge state narratives and strengthen their role as mechanisms of democratic oversight within an increasingly fragmented digital public sphere (Erfain, 2025; Quick & Maddox, 2024). Consequently, state institutions are required to navigate competing strategic responses, balancing efforts to preserve institutional authority through information management with the need to sustain legitimacy by engaging in dialogue, transparency, and policy responsiveness (Chen, 2019; Muliyati & Maharudin, 2025; Sabra & Elkadi, 2022). These findings therefore suggest that the long-term legitimacy of the revised KUHAP depends less on formal legal enactment than on the state's capacity to institutionalize meaningful public participation, protect freedom of expression, and reinforce legal accountability, thereby transforming policy contestation into a deliberative process that strengthens democratic governance and human rights (Erfain, 2025; Jannah et al., 2025).

Public resistance to the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) should be interpreted within the broader context of contested state–society relations rather than as a reaction to the statutory provisions alone. Digital criticism reflects accumulated concerns regarding unequal power relations, perceived threats to civil liberties, and the credibility of government communication, all of which shape public evaluations of legal legitimacy. Previous studies suggest that persuasive strategies grounded in top-down or "hardline" state propaganda often lose effectiveness when official narratives diverge from citizens' lived experiences, ultimately reducing institutional trust and reinforcing negative perceptions of government authority (Chen, 2019). Similarly, coordinated efforts to amplify official messages through digital influencers, buzzers, or automated accounts are frequently interpreted by online communities as attempts to marginalize substantive criticism instead of fostering open deliberation (Till, 2020). Public skepticism is further intensified when regulatory instruments, including anti-fake news legislation and cyber governance mechanisms, are perceived as limiting freedom of expression and constraining critical engagement rather than promoting digital literacy (Sabra & Elkadi, 2022). This concern becomes more pronounced where criticism of legal reform is associated with risks of repression, criminal prosecution, or the stigmatization of activists, thereby weakening the democratic oversight role of civil society (Affourtit, 2023; Erfain, 2025). Accordingly, opposition to the revised KUHAP can be understood as a rational response to the state's dual approach of accommodating limited dialogue and policy revision while

simultaneously preserving mechanisms of control over the digital public sphere, creating persistent uncertainty regarding the future relationship between democratic governance, legal accountability, and citizens' rights (Muliyati & Maharudin, 2025; Murtadlo & Saputra, 2025).

5. Conclusion

The empirical results demonstrate that the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) generated an intensive process of discursive contestation across Indonesia's digital public sphere, where state institutions and civil society actors advanced competing interpretations of procedural justice, fundamental rights, and the scope of law enforcement authority. Rather than measuring definitive changes in legal legitimacy, the sentiment analysis and conversation network mapping identify patterns of support, skepticism, and opposition that emerged during the critical stages of the law's deliberation and enactment. These findings suggest that public debate positioned the revised KUHAP not merely as a procedural legal reform but also as a symbolic representation of the evolving relationship between state authority and citizens within democratic governance. Accordingly, the digital public sphere is conceptualized in this study as a communicative arena in which legitimacy claims are articulated, negotiated, and contested, rather than as an empirical mechanism that directly determines the legal validity or social acceptance of statutory norms.

This research advances the study of criminal procedure law reform by providing a systematic empirical examination of public sentiment and digital discourse surrounding the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP) in Indonesia. Methodologically, it integrates aggregated sentiment analysis with qualitative interpretation of online narratives and actor interactions to capture the complexity of contemporary digital communication. Conceptually, the study extends the application of discursive contestation, social legitimacy, and the digital public sphere to the analysis of legal reform, demonstrating how perceptions of policy are increasingly shaped by the communicative dynamics of digital platforms, including visibility, interaction intensity, and collective affect. Accordingly, the findings offer an empirically grounded framework that enriches future interdisciplinary research at the intersection of law, digital media, and political communication.

Several methodological considerations should be acknowledged when interpreting the findings of this study. The analysis is based primarily on publicly available digital conversations, which capture the views of active online participants rather than the broader population, while the automated sentiment classification employed was subject to only limited independent validation. In addition, the analytical framework emphasizes patterns of digital discourse and does not directly examine institutional decision-making processes or the implementation of the revised Criminal Procedure Code (KUHAP). Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as descriptive evidence of public communication rather than as a basis for establishing normative judgments or

causal relationships regarding legal legitimacy and law enforcement outcomes. Future research would benefit from incorporating qualitative approaches, including interviews with policymakers, law enforcement officials, and civil society representatives, together with longitudinal analyses of the implementation phase, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how public discourse, institutional practice, and legal authority interact over time.

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