



Fragmented Justice: How the Wedding Cake Model is Influenced by the 'No Viral, No Justice' Phenomenon

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ABSTRACT

One relevant model for understanding how the justice system classifies cases is the wedding cake model. However, the existence of social media has presented new challenges. Ironically, viral cases jump over the traditional hierarchy in this model. This study uses a qualitative research method with a conceptual approach. The results of the study show that the phenomenon of "no viral, no justice" creates a situation where the exposure and popularity of a case on social media can shift attention and resource allocation which are basically limited. Meanwhile, the Wedding Cake Model is distorted by public pressure coming from the digital space. Reform of the justice system is needed to maintain objectivity and independence in facing the digital era.

INTRODUCTION

The development of communication technology, particularly social media, has transformed how society perceives the functioning of the criminal justice system (Rose M & Fox R, 2014). Traditionally reliant on procedural principles and a hierarchical approach to case management, the criminal justice system now faces new pressures arising from public opinion in digital spaces. Social media enables legal issues to become the center of attention within a short time frame, creating a new dynamic where viral cases often receive greater priority compared to other cases of similar severity or impact. The phenomenon known as "no viral, no justice" illustrates how the virality of a case can influence the justice system's prioritization and allocation of resources.

One relevant framework for understanding how the justice system classifies cases is the Wedding Cake Model. This model depicts the hierarchical structure of the criminal justice system, prioritizing cases based on their severity, social impact, and public attention. The model categorizes cases into four tiers. The top tier includes high-profile cases involving prominent figures or significant societal impact, while the lower tiers consist of minor cases resolved quickly with minimal resources. The Wedding Cake Model reflects the justice system's resource limitations, necessitating classification and prioritization based on urgency.

However, the advent of social media has posed new challenges. Viral cases often "leapfrog" the traditional hierarchy of this model. For example, cases initially classified in the lower tiers, such as minor crimes or misdemeanors, may rise to the top tier solely due to the significant attention they garner on social media. Conversely, non-viral cases, even those of equal or greater urgency, remain in the lower tiers and often receive far less attention. This shift demonstrates how public opinion, mediated through social media, has reshaped the justice system's priorities, replacing objectivity with popularity as a determining factor.

This phenomenon undeniably undermines the enforcement of law. Beyond challenging traditional hierarchies, it raises fundamental questions about justice. The justice system is designed to operate on the principle of equality, ensuring proportional treatment for every case regardless of who is involved or the extent of public attention it receives. Yet, social media has made adherence to this principle increasingly difficult. Viral cases often feature emotional narratives that evoke public sympathy, pressuring law enforcement to respond swiftly. In contrast, cases lacking similar public exposure are frequently treated as routine administrative matters. Social media's role as an "alternative court" further complicates this issue. The public not only observes but actively participates in demanding justice based on narratives shaped within digital spaces. These narratives are often biased or oversimplify complex issues, directing attention to specific aspects of cases while neglecting the broader legal context. Consequently, the attention given to a case becomes more a function of its social media popularity than its actual societal or legal impact.

In some major cases, social media has demonstrated its ability to drive significant changes. Issues such as domestic violence or harassment, which

previously garnered little attention, have become widely discussed thanks to social media. This highlights the potential of social media as a tool to enhance transparency and accountability within the legal system. However, these positive effects are counterbalanced by the risk of distortion, where excessive exposure creates pressures leading to hasty or biased decisions. The imbalance in resource allocation for viral cases compared to other lower-tier cases in the Wedding Cake Model also raises ethical concerns. In an ideal legal system, attention and resources are allocated based on a case's severity and urgency. Social media, however, often reverses these priorities, compelling law enforcement to dedicate substantial resources to viral cases while neglecting equally or more urgent ones. This condition undermines the principle of equality and fosters a perception that justice is reserved for those who can capture public attention.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The implications of the "no viral, no justice" phenomenon extend beyond the operational level of the justice system to societal perceptions of justice itself. When justice is seen as something achievable only through public exposure, there is a growing belief that the legal system is no longer objective or neutral. This perception can erode public trust in legal institutions, leading to widespread dissatisfaction and, ultimately, weakening the legitimacy of the criminal justice system. In a broader context, the era of social media has challenged the legal system to balance transparency with justice. On one hand, social media increases accountability by drawing attention to previously overlooked issues. On the other, emphasizing viral cases introduces a bias that jeopardizes the principle of equality. Thus, the legal system must reevaluate its approach to the Wedding Cake Model, incorporating new mechanisms capable of addressing public pressures without compromising its integrity. This paper aims to provide an initial step toward understanding how the justice system can adapt to the challenges of the digital era.

This study will explore how the Wedding Cake Model, which represents the hierarchical structure of the justice system, is affected by the "no viral, no justice" phenomenon. The primary focus is to examine the extent to which social media influences prioritization and resource allocation in the criminal justice system and to evaluate its impact on the principles of ideal justice.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative research method. Qualitative research aims to understand social phenomena and human behavior by processing descriptive data. The study adopts a conceptual approach, focusing on the analysis of concepts or theories relevant to the research topic. Data collection is conducted through library research, which is then analyzed using qualitative methods and presented descriptively.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The Interaction Between the Wedding Cake Model and 'No Viral, No Justice'

The Wedding Cake Model, introduced by Samuel Walker, serves as an analytical framework for understanding how priorities are managed in case

handling, highlighting the challenges of achieving justice (Lade Sirjon et al., 2024). This model likens the criminal justice system to a tiered cake, where each layer represents a category of cases receiving different levels of attention and resources. Walker classifies criminal cases into four hierarchical layers, ranging from those requiring substantial resource allocation to cases handled quickly with minimal involvement. While the model offers valuable insights into resource allocation in criminal justice, it simultaneously exposes potential inequities stemming from the prioritization system.

At the top layer, the Wedding Cake Model features high-profile cases, often referred to as "celebrity cases" or cases that attract widespread attention, often transcending national boundaries. These cases typically involve public figures, major crimes, or issues with significant social impact. A notable example of this layer is the O.J. Simpson case in the United States. This case not only involved a prominent celebrity but also sparked extensive discussions on racial issues, public trust, and structural issues in the criminal justice system (Nicholas Chagnon & Nickie D. Phillips, 2021). The media closely followed every development, and the intense public scrutiny demanded that law enforcement handle the case with extraordinary care and precision. The criminal justice system usually allocates substantial resources to such top-layer cases, including experienced law enforcement teams and renowned attorneys working intensively to ensure justice. Evidence collection is exhaustive, trials are lengthy, and key witnesses undergo meticulous examination. In these circumstances, law enforcement operates under immense pressure to ensure that all procedures are meticulously followed without error. While this intensive process serves to maintain public trust in the justice system, the heightened attention also introduces the risk of bias, where media coverage can influence both public perception and the decision-making of those involved.

The second layer includes serious cases that may not attract significant national media attention but still require special handling due to their societal impact. Cases in this layer include physical violence, mid-level drug trafficking, or large-scale thefts affecting local communities. Although these cases may not involve prominent public figures, their severity demands more attention than minor cases. For instance, drug trafficking by local networks may draw regional media attention and concern from affected communities, even if it does not garner national coverage. In handling second-layer cases, the criminal justice system continues to allocate considerable resources to maintain quality but does so to a lesser extent than for top-layer cases. Law enforcement strives to balance efficiency and thoroughness to ensure that case resolutions do not negatively affect local communities. For example, financial fraud affecting numerous residents in a specific region might require complex document analysis and witness testimony but typically receives regional rather than national attention. While these cases are handled with significant detail, their intensity does not match the scrutiny given to top-layer cases.

The third layer comprises cases with lower impact and simpler complexity. These include minor offenses such as petty theft, vandalism, or non-serious acts of violence that do not significantly affect the broader community. Such cases

generally receive little to no attention from the media or the public. For instance, shoplifting at a small retail store or damage to public property without injuries is typically resolved through expedited mechanisms like plea bargaining or guilty pleas, saving time and resources. While this expedited process promotes efficiency, it often comes at the expense of justice principles, especially when defendants lack adequate opportunities to defend themselves. At this level, defendants often do not have access to robust legal representation, and cases are usually resolved quickly. Defendants may admit guilt or reach agreements with prosecutors without undergoing full trials. These quick procedures risk undermining defendants' rights, particularly when socioeconomic factors drive their offenses. Criticism of third-layer case handling arises from concerns that defendants may lose the opportunity to mount a proper defense, especially those committing crimes under urgent or economically pressured circumstances.

The lowest layer of the Wedding Cake Model encompasses cases considered minor infractions with minimal societal impact. Examples include traffic violations or administrative breaches, such as driving without a seatbelt or operating without a proper business permit. These cases are typically resolved through fines or brief penalties without requiring full trials. At this level, the justice system prioritizes efficiency to conserve resources deemed unnecessary for minor offenses. In other words, cases not requiring significant attention are processed quickly without involving lawyers or lengthy procedures (Iryna Oboronova, 2022). While this emphasis on efficiency helps manage high caseloads, it carries the risk of unfair treatment, particularly when defendants are unaware of their rights within the legal process.

Although the Wedding Cake Model effectively provides a framework for prioritizing case handling, it faces significant challenges in the digital era, particularly due to the influence of social media. High public attention on specific cases, especially those going viral on social media, disrupts the hierarchy established in the model. A case typically placed in the second or third layer can quickly ascend to the top layer if it gains widespread attention on social media. In such instances, law enforcement feels compelled to allocate additional resources and expedite legal processes to meet public expectations. For example, a domestic violence case typically handled within the third or fourth layer might gain national attention if related videos or information go viral on social media (Azi Lev-On & Nili Steinfeld, 2020). Once such a case becomes a focal point, the criminal justice system must respond by dedicating extra resources and accelerating its handling, even involving teams usually reserved for high-priority cases. This scenario demonstrates how social media can reshape priorities within the Wedding Cake Model, which ideally should be based on the objective severity or societal impact of a case.

The significant influence of social media on the hierarchy of the Wedding Cake Model also shapes public expectations about the nature of crimes and their handling (Ray Surette, 2015). When the public observes a case gaining widespread attention on social media, expectations for transparency and accountability in the legal process increase, regardless of whether the case genuinely warrants high-priority status. This situation places law enforcement in

a challenging position, as they face public pressure to respond immediately to viral cases, even though resource allocation and attention are typically reserved for cases with broader impacts.

The phenomenon of "no viral, no justice" reflects the profound impact of social media on public perceptions of justice. This phenomenon arises when cases that go viral on social media attract widespread attention, prompting swift responses from the public and law enforcement alike. Conversely, cases that fail to garner similar attention often do not receive comparable responses, even when their severity or impact is on par. Consequently, the viral nature of a case has become a factor influencing priorities in criminal justice, demonstrating the interplay between public perception and legal responses in the digital era. Social media provides a platform for the public to voice opinions and disseminate information about specific cases (Xiwei Wang et al., 2020). Many viral cases are those that evoke emotional or controversial reactions, particularly when they involve perceived injustices. When a case goes viral, the public not only observes but also demands that law enforcement respond swiftly and decisively. This pressure creates a dilemma for law enforcement, which may feel compelled to act even if such actions conflict with standard procedures. In such scenarios, social media functions as an "alternative court," with the public acting as "judges" demanding justice based on circulating narratives and information in the digital space (Özlem Özdemir & Elif Başak Sarioğlu, 2024).

Social media has evolved beyond a mere communication tool to become a channel that amplifies public involvement in the legal system. On one hand, social media enhances transparency and accountability within the justice system, allowing the public to monitor and demand justice for cases deemed deserving of attention. On the other hand, excessive public pressure risks destabilizing resource allocation within the legal system. When viral cases receive disproportionate attention, it creates the impression that the justice system is responsive only to widely publicized cases. In contrast, the principle of justice mandates that every case be treated with equal attention, regardless of its social media exposure. This phenomenon illustrates how social media reshapes public perceptions of justice. In the digital realm, opinions and narratives form rapidly, often driven by emotional reactions. Social media algorithms further accelerate the dissemination of information, particularly content that garners significant user interaction. As a result, cases often gain attention not because of their severity or complexity but due to their popularity. The public then evaluates and supports cases based on their level of exposure rather than on legal facts or relevant evidence. This dynamic creates a bias where justice is judged by the attention a case receives, obscuring the public's understanding of what truly warrants justice.

This shift also reflects a transformation in the public's role within the criminal justice system. Before the social media era, the public generally remained passive, entrusting law enforcement with the handling of criminal cases. Today, social media enables the public to actively voice opinions and exert pressure on the justice system for faster responses. Through posts, comments, and online campaigns, the public can push for expedited handling of viral cases,

even when such actions may not fully align with standard procedures. In this context, social media is not only a communication tool but also an instrument that redefines priorities in law enforcement and alters dynamics within the justice system.

In the digital age, the interplay between the Wedding Cake Model and the "no viral, no justice" phenomenon creates tensions between resource allocation based on objective criteria and responses driven by public pressure. The Wedding Cake Model, developed by Samuel Walker, categorizes criminal cases within the justice system into layers based on severity, social impact, and resource needs. This model aims to allocate attention proportionally and maintain equitable treatment for all cases based on judicial objectivity (Vito Breda, 2016). However, the "no viral, no justice" phenomenon, amplified by social media, introduces a subjective factor, case popularity that can shift handling priorities. In this context, viral cases can disrupt the hierarchy of the Wedding Cake Model, leading to resource and attention shifts that deviate from the model's foundational principles. For example, cases of bullying or harassment at the local level, initially receiving minimal attention, can suddenly become viral through social media. As these cases gain widespread traction, public scrutiny intensifies, compelling law enforcement to act quickly. This situation creates tension because the Wedding Cake Model relies on an objective hierarchy based on social impact, whereas social media-driven viral attention is emotional and often at odds with principles of fair justice. When handling priorities are dictated more by public exposure than legal factors, the objectivity of the justice system becomes vulnerable to social pressure.

The "no viral, no justice" phenomenon highlights the limitations of the Wedding Cake Model in addressing rapid societal changes, particularly those driven by social media. The Wedding Cake Model, fundamentally rooted in objective principles, is designed to classify cases according to their severity and social impact. Within this framework, the justice system can allocate resources proportionally, ensuring optimal handling of high-priority cases without interference from external factors. However, in the digital era, social media enables issues previously unlikely to gain public attention to force the justice system into prioritizing them, even when their broader social impact is minimal. For instance, in the United States, animal neglect cases typically classified in the lower layers of the Wedding Cake Model can become a priority when public outcry on social media demands a swift response. As public pressure mounts, law enforcement may feel obligated to allocate more resources, potentially diverting attention from cases of greater objective gravity. In such scenarios, the Wedding Cake Model must adapt to remain relevant in the digital age, as social media's influence can shift focus and attention away from legal objectivity.

The interaction between the Wedding Cake Model and "no viral, no justice" also impacts the principle of equality within the criminal justice system. The Wedding Cake Model seeks to proportionally allocate attention to cases that demand intensive handling. However, the "no viral, no justice" phenomenon disrupts this principle, as viral cases often receive special attention while non-viral cases are neglected, even when they deserve equal consideration.

Consequently, cases that fail to attract public attention risk being overlooked or allocated minimal resources, undermining equality within the justice system. The criminal justice system faces the risk of sacrificing justice principles to satisfy public demands, especially when social media scrutiny creates intense pressure to address viral cases (Abdul Azis, 2022). This phenomenon not only jeopardizes the objective integrity of the Wedding Cake Model but also fosters the perception that the legal system responds only to popular cases on social media. In the long term, such conditions could erode the justice system's credibility, as the public may begin to question whether all cases are treated fairly or whether legal decisions hinge on public exposure.

Social media's role has fundamentally altered how the public perceives justice. Previously, the public was more passive in responding to criminal cases, delegating full responsibility for case handling to the justice system. However, with the advent of social media, the public now has the tools to monitor and influence opinions about specific cases. Through posts, comments, or online campaigns, the public can exert pressure on law enforcement to act promptly. In this context, social media serves as a "public court," where the public actively participates in determining how a case should proceed. When a viral case is deemed more deserving of attention, social media inherently creates bias in law enforcement priorities. For example, a minor shoplifting incident might garner extraordinary attention if a video of the event goes viral and elicits public sympathy. In the Wedding Cake Model, such cases typically fall into the third or fourth layers, but social media pressure can push them into the top layers. This dynamic fosters the perception that justice is "popularity-dependent," distorting the principles of objective justice.

The most apparent impact is the disruption of resource allocation. The Wedding Cake Model operates on the assumption that resources within the justice system are limited and must be allocated according to strict legal priorities. However, when a case becomes viral, law enforcement often feels compelled to allocate additional resources to address public attention. This creates an imbalance in the justice system, where cases that do not warrant significant attention may receive disproportionately large resource allocations solely due to their social media exposure. Such misallocation can have serious consequences for other cases that may be more urgent but lack visibility. For instance, domestic violence cases that do not gain public exposure risk being overlooked or processed with minimal resources due to the diversion of focus toward viral cases. The justice system's reliance on case popularity not only reduces operational efficiency but also affects public perceptions of fairness, undermining the foundational principle of equal justice for all.

The challenges arising indicate that the justice system requires a new approach to balance responses to public demands with objective law enforcement (M. Muammar, 2023). To ensure the Wedding Cake Model remains relevant in the digital era, adjustments must be made to allow the criminal justice system to address viral cases without compromising legality and fairness. One potential step is to strengthen internal guidelines that govern how law enforcement responds to emotionally driven public pressure, ensuring that every

decision aligns with the principles of justice. Additionally, the justice system can leverage technology, such as artificial intelligence-based analysis, to help separate law enforcement priorities from public influence (Sidra Kanwel et al., 2023). Algorithms designed to identify objective criteria can assist law enforcement in allocating resources more accurately, reducing the risk of decisions being swayed by the virality of a case. This approach aims not only to maintain consistency within the justice system but also to uphold the principles of justice amidst new challenges posed by social media.

The role of social media as a public communication platform also transformed how society perceives justice. Whereas the responsibility for enforcing justice previously rested entirely with the judicial system, the public now has direct access to monitor and even influence opinions on specific cases. Through posts, comments, or online campaigns, people can pressure law enforcement to act quickly. In this context, social media functions as a "public court," where citizens not only observe but also actively participate in shaping perceptions of justice. When viral cases are deemed more deserving of attention, social media introduces bias into law enforcement priorities. For instance, a minor theft in a store might receive extraordinary attention if footage of the incident goes viral and elicits public sympathy. Such a case, typically categorized in the third or fourth tier of the Wedding Cake Model, could be elevated to a higher tier due to public pressure on social media. This creates a perception that justice becomes "dependent on popularity," potentially distorting the objective principles of justice.

The most apparent impact is the disruption of resource allocation. The Wedding Cake Model operates on the assumption that resources in the justice system are limited and must be allocated based on strict priorities. However, when a viral case garners widespread attention, law enforcement may feel compelled to dedicate additional resources to address it. This creates an imbalance, where cases that ordinarily would not require significant resources receive disproportionate attention solely because of their media exposure. This disruption in allocation can result in severe or impactful cases with less public visibility being overlooked or processed with insufficient resources. Over time, reliance on case popularity can undermine the efficiency and credibility of the justice system, as the public begins to question whether law enforcement remains grounded in principles of justice or is instead swayed by the popularity of cases on social media.

Criticism of a Justice System Dependent on Viral Publicity

The dependency of the criminal justice system on case viralness has sparked profound criticism regarding its integrity, objectivity, and adherence to the principles of justice. When public attention on social media becomes the primary determinant for prioritizing criminal cases, the principles of equality and objective justice are at risk. This phenomenon reveals that cases going viral or gaining public support often receive greater attention from law enforcement, while cases that lack similar exposure tend to be overlooked. This disparity creates the perception that justice is available only to those whose cases

successfully capture public attention, undermining the fundamental principles of the criminal justice system. Ideally, the criminal justice system is designed to operate independently, free from external influences, including those from the general public and the media. However, when the popularity of cases on social media begins to affect prioritization, maintaining this independence becomes increasingly challenging. Cases receiving widespread attention tend to be allocated more resources, while other cases with comparable impact but lacking media coverage often receive less focus. This imbalance in resource allocation fosters a double standard in law enforcement, raising questions about the objectivity and integrity of prioritization decisions. Legal decisions should be grounded in facts and evidence, not in popularity driven by digital exposure.

Such dependency creates a moral dilemma for law enforcement officers, who are compelled to act swiftly, transparently, and ethically in their duties (Hamdi Gugule & Romi Mesra, 2022). In situations of intense public pressure, officers may feel forced to respond quickly to meet societal expectations, even if doing so compromises standard procedures. When legal decisions are influenced by public pressure rather than concrete facts, the integrity of the justice system is jeopardized. The public may begin to perceive the criminal justice system as reactive to public opinion rather than as an institution committed to objective principles of justice. This pressure places law enforcement in a difficult position, forcing them to balance their duty to enforce the law with the demand for rapid responses fueled by public exposure. Reliance on case popularity on social media also alters how society understands the concept of justice. When the public perceives that only viral cases receive additional attention, a belief emerges that justice depends on public support. In such circumstances, justice is no longer viewed as a universal right but as a "privilege" granted through public attention. This perspective risks eroding public trust in the criminal justice system, especially when people begin to feel that legal procedures can be swayed by popularity. Such perceptions may foster a generation that loses faith in the objectivity of the criminal justice system, seeing justice as something that can be "purchased" through social media exposure rather than enforced based on equitable legal principles.

When virality becomes a benchmark influencing priorities in law enforcement, the potential for bias in resource allocation increases significantly. Virality can prompt hasty case handling, often without considering all relevant aspects. This rushed approach risks undermining the principle of presumption of innocence, a cornerstone of law enforcement. In situations where decisions must be made quickly to meet public expectations, law enforcement may rely on limited information from social media rather than conducting thorough investigations. Intense public pressure can place defendants in a disadvantaged position, as public narratives often form before cases are properly adjudicated in court. The reliance on virality in law enforcement also exacerbates inequalities in the principle of equal treatment. Not all cases have the potential to go viral or attract widespread attention. Consequently, cases that do not go viral but have significant societal impact may be neglected or receive minimal resources. This phenomenon contravenes the principle of justice, which mandates equal

treatment for all individuals, and leads to inconsistent law enforcement practices (Rofingi et al., 2022). This reliance not only exacerbates systemic inequalities but also fosters a culture where justice is perceived as relevant only to cases that attract public attention.

On a broader scale, the dependency on a case's popularity underscores the criminal justice system's challenge in maintaining a balance between public pressure and objective justice. If the system continues to respond primarily to public pressure, the foundational principles of law enforcement risk being distorted by societal expectations that are not always objective. To preserve the system's integrity, law enforcement must adopt innovative approaches while adhering to justice principles that are free from the influence of popularity. Transparency and professionalism among law enforcement officers in handling viral cases also need to be strengthened. While public pressure can serve as a catalyst for expediting case resolution, officers must uphold strict procedures to ensure that decisions are based on facts and evidence rather than popularity (Zul Khaidir Kadir & Nadiah Khaeriah Kadir, 2024). A criminal justice system reliant on viralness faces the risk of losing credibility and integrity, as the public may question the objectivity of legal institutions when they perceive that legal responses are influenced by media exposure. Transparency at every stage of case handling, combined with training for officers to manage public pressure, is essential for ensuring that the legal system remains neutral and fair.

Addressing Viral Bias in the Justice System

Addressing these challenges requires responsive reforms to maintain the objectivity and integrity of the law. While social media's influence on legal processes cannot be ignored—it can even serve as a valuable tool for investigations (Agarwal Harshita & Poulomi Sen, 2021). Investigations originating from social media must be verified and thoroughly examined by law enforcement authorities (Nur Fadhilah Mappaselleng & Zul Khaidir Kadir, 2020). Hal ini untuk menghindari legal ambiguity (Kira Vrist Rønn et al., 2021). But, relying on public exposure to determine case priorities risks undermining the principles of equality and objectivity (Kaitlyn Marchant, 2023). The criminal justice system requires reforms aimed at ensuring the principles of justice remain unbiased while maintaining transparency. These reforms can only be achieved by establishing clear guidelines for handling public pressure, strengthening independent evaluations, educating the public, leveraging technology, and upholding the professionalism of law enforcement officers.

The first step in reform is establishing clear guidelines for addressing public pressure. These guidelines must be designed to ensure that case handling is based on objective criteria, not social media popularity. With criteria such as severity, social impact, and urgency, law enforcement can allocate resources without being swayed by the temporary nature of public exposure. These guidelines should also include mechanisms that ensure law enforcement professionals respond to public attention in a professional manner, without compromising standard procedures or principles of justice. Additionally, these guidelines must serve as a framework to limit the influence of public opinion on

the judicial system. By managing public pressure through firm policies, the justice system can better preserve its independence and avoid decisions that are overly influenced by societal opinion. Such guidelines will also enhance the credibility of the legal system as an institution rooted in objective justice, thereby maintaining positive public perceptions of the judiciary.

Strengthening independent evaluations is another crucial component of reforming the criminal justice system. Independent evaluations can be conducted by internal oversight bodies tasked with ensuring that every legal decision is grounded in evidence and justice principles, rather than social media popularity. The audit functions of such oversight bodies allow for critical reviews of viral cases, preventing interventions that disregard objective legal criteria. Independent evaluations aim to mitigate the excessive influence of public opinion, ensuring that case handling continues to align with established legal principles, regardless of a case's viral nature. Through independent evaluations, law enforcement officers can receive recommendations that help maintain consistency in case handling. This step ensures that the standards for case processing remain the same for both viral and non-viral cases. Independent evaluations also enable the monitoring of public pressure's impact, allowing corrective measures to be taken if it is found that public influence has skewed justice principles. In this way, independent evaluations not only preserve the credibility of the legal system but also reinforce its integrity.

Next is educating the public about the principles of justice. One of the main causes of public pressure on the justice system is the lack of public understanding of legal processes and criminal justice system in general (Jean-Denis David, 2022). Media influences public perception of criminal cases, often leading to bias and impacting legal awareness and social justice (Nurul Fadhillah, 2024). Lack of public legal education is a barrier to accessing the justice system, in addition to the high cost of litigation (Abiodun Michael Olatokun, 2022). Therefore, public education is a vital strategy in judicial reform to reduce unrealistic expectations. Education on principles such as the presumption of innocence, judicial independence, and the importance of legal objectivity will help the public understand that a case's viral nature does not necessarily reflect true justice. Educational campaigns can be implemented through various channels, including social media, seminars, and partnerships with educational institutions. Through these efforts, the justice system can improve public understanding of legal processes. Public education is critical to ensuring that people view justice not through the lens of viral attention but as a structured process that must be followed. The long-term goal is to create an environment where society values consistent and independent legal principles, free from reliance on social media exposure.

The next reform involves leveraging technology. In addressing bias stemming from viral cases, technology can play a significant role in ensuring the justice system remains objective (Steven Malby, 2017). For instance, artificial intelligence-based data analysis can help prioritize cases based on objective parameters. Criminal cases can be categorized based on their urgency and societal impact. AI-powered data analysis can identify high-impact cases without

being influenced by public attention. Technology also enables more efficient and consistent resource allocation in line with the needs of individual cases. By doing so, technology ensures that the justice system adheres to the principles of justice while reducing the risk of bias due to virality. Additionally, it alleviates the burden on law enforcement in managing public pressure, as priorities are determined by algorithms focused on legal factors rather than digital popularity.

In addition to technology, internal transparency can be instrumental in managing viral cases. Transparency allows the public to gain a better understanding of legal processes without being overly influenced by social media narratives. By providing more open information on the rationale behind legal decisions in viral cases, the justice system can clarify its processes and reduce public misunderstandings. Transparency can be achieved through regular reports, press conferences, or official publications accessible to the public. This step is essential in preventing misconceptions or incorrect assumptions about the workings of the justice system. By promoting transparency, the legal system not only maintains its integrity but also demonstrates a commitment to justice principles, free from public pressure.

Finally, enhancing the professionalism of law enforcement officers is crucial. Law enforcement professionalism plays a vital role in addressing public pressure arising from viral cases. Officers must always be prepared to handle emergency situations while ensuring they do not misuse their authority (Egidijus Nedzinskas et al., 2020). Law enforcement must consistently uphold objectivity and adhere to legal procedures, even in the face of intense social pressure. Professionalism can be enhanced through specialized training that equips officers with the skills needed to navigate situations influenced by public exposure. Such training should also cover strategies for managing public expectations, which are often unrealistic, enabling law enforcement to fulfill their duties without compromising justice principles. Highly professional law enforcement officers are expected to uphold the credibility of the justice system and ensure that every decision is based on legal facts, not the popularity of a case. This is crucial for maintaining public trust in legal institutions as fair and objective entities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Social media has become a force that not only shapes public opinion but also influences how law enforcement prioritizes criminal cases. The phenomenon of “no viral, no justice” has created a situation where the exposure and popularity of a case on social media can shift attention and resource allocation, despite these resources being inherently limited. While the Wedding Cake Model was previously relied upon to prioritize cases based on objective severity and social impact, it is now being distorted by public pressure emanating from digital platforms. As society gains access to highlight, discuss, and pressure the judicial system through digital channels, non-viral cases tend to be neglected, creating imbalances in law enforcement. This situation underscores that the principle of equality within the criminal justice system is under threat, as virality increasingly intervenes in legal processes, undermining the objectivity that

serves as a cornerstone for a fair and functional legal system. These circumstances demand that the judicial system promptly adapts to current conditions without compromising the fundamental principles of justice that it is meant to uphold.

Judicial reform is necessary to safeguard objectivity and independence in an era dominated by the influence of social media. Such reform should not only include revising internal guidelines for responding to viral cases but also strengthening independent evaluations and educating the public to ensure they understand that justice should not depend on the popularity of a case. The goal of reform is to ensure that the principle of objective justice remains the primary foundation of every legal process, even as public pressure generates excessive expectations. By doing so, the judicial system can maintain its credibility and public trust while demonstrating that justice is not subject to viral trends but remains grounded in consistent, transparent, and universally law-oriented principles.

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