

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST ONLINE GAMBLING CRIMES IN INDONESIA: A CRIMINAL LAW AND CRIMINOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of law enforcement against online gambling in Indonesia from criminal law and criminological perspectives. Although prior studies mainly focus on regulatory aspects, limited research integrates legal analysis with criminological explanations of offender behavior in digital environments. This study addresses this gap by combining both perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. A normative juridical approach is employed using secondary data from legislation, legal doctrines, and academic literature, analyzed qualitatively through a descriptive-analytical method. The findings indicate that law enforcement remains suboptimal despite existing regulations, due to limited institutional capacity, sophisticated modus operandi, and the transnational nature of online gambling. From a criminological perspective, these practices are driven by opportunity structures, technological accessibility, and economic motivations. This study offers a novel contribution by integrating criminal law and criminology to explain the interaction between regulation, offender behavior, and digital environments. It highlights the need for adaptive regulatory reform, capacity building, and a multidisciplinary approach to improve law enforcement effectiveness.

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### INTRODUCTION

The increasing prevalence of online gambling in Indonesia reflects a significant trend driven by the rapid advancement of information technology and the widespread expansion of internet access across society. The accessibility of digital platforms enables gambling activities to be conducted in a concealed, flexible, and borderless manner, making online gambling a form of modern crime that is difficult to control through conventional mechanisms. Moreover, the anonymity of cyberspace allows offenders to evade identification, while the involvement of organized transnational networks further complicates monitoring and law enforcement processes (Ahmad et al., 2024).

Online gambling exhibits distinct characteristics compared to conventional gambling, particularly in terms of accessibility, anonymity, and operational reach. Gambling activities can be conducted instantly without physical presence, utilizing offshore servers and digital identities that are difficult to trace. These conditions create new complexities in understanding crime patterns, as interactions between offenders and victims occur within virtual environments with minimal social control (Nurbaeti, 2025). As such, online gambling represents not only a legal violation but also a criminological phenomenon embedded in the modern digital ecosystem.

The impacts of online gambling extend beyond economic losses to include broader psychological and social consequences. Individuals involved are vulnerable to addiction, emotional instability, and financial distress, which may affect their daily lives. At the societal level, online gambling contributes to family conflict, reduced productivity, and the potential emergence of other criminal behaviors (Anisa, 2024). These multidimensional impacts indicate that online gambling constitutes both a legal and social problem requiring comprehensive intervention.

The rapid development of digital technology has also transformed patterns of crime from conventional to digital-based forms. From a criminological perspective, online gambling can be understood through the interaction between crime opportunities, individual motivations, and technological accessibility. The flexible nature of cyberspace enables offenders to adapt quickly to monitoring and enforcement efforts (Rahmaniar, 2025), highlighting the need for a cybercriminology approach in analyzing behavioral dynamics in digital crime.

Despite various regulatory frameworks and enforcement efforts in Indonesia, significant challenges remain. Law enforcement faces technical obstacles in tracing digital evidence, limited human resource capacity in digital forensics, and regulatory gaps that have not fully adapted to technological developments (Widianingrum, 2024). In addition, the transnational nature of online gambling creates jurisdictional complexities that hinder effective enforcement.

Previous studies have examined online gambling from legal and policy perspectives, emphasizing regulatory frameworks and enforcement challenges. However, most studies tend to adopt a normative approach and have not sufficiently explored the interaction between offender behavior, technological structures, and crime opportunities in digital environments (Fajri et al., 2025). This limitation indicates a research gap in integrating criminal law analysis with criminological perspectives, particularly in understanding online gambling as a multidimensional digital crime.

Based on this gap, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of law enforcement against online gambling in Indonesia by integrating criminal law and criminological perspectives. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which connects normative legal analysis with cybercriminology to examine the interplay between regulation, offender behavior, and digital environments. This study is expected to contribute both theoretically, by expanding cybercriminology discourse in the context of digital crime, and practically, by providing a more comprehensive basis for formulating adaptive and effective law enforcement strategies.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a normative juridical approach to analyze legal norms governing online gambling crimes in Indonesia and to assess their effectiveness in responding to evolving digital practices. The analysis integrates criminal law and criminological perspectives to examine the relationship between regulatory frameworks, offender behavior, and technological dynamics. This approach enables a systematic evaluation of legal principles and their capacity to address digital crime (Juhara et al., 2025).

The research applies a statute approach and a conceptual approach. The statute approach examines relevant legal instruments, including the Indonesian Criminal Code (KUHP) and the Information and Electronic Transactions Law (ITE Law), while the conceptual approach explores key theories in criminal law and criminology related to cybercrime. These approaches provide a coherent analytical framework for understanding online gambling as a multidimensional phenomenon (Semarta & Lubis, 2026).

This study relies on secondary data obtained through a systematic literature review, including primary legal materials (legislation), secondary sources (academic journals, books, and prior studies), and supporting tertiary materials (Benuf & Azhar, 2020). Data were collected through documentation and analyzed qualitatively using a

descriptive-analytical method to identify the relationship between juridical and criminological aspects and to evaluate the adequacy of existing regulations in addressing the dynamic and transnational nature of online gambling (Yulis, 2025).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Characteristics and Causal Factors of Online Gambling Crimes

Online gambling in Indonesia has experienced significant growth alongside the expansion of digital technology and internet accessibility. This transformation has shifted gambling practices from conventional forms into platform-based activities that can be accessed easily through electronic devices. As a result, online gambling has developed into a complex cybercrime phenomenon involving both individual actors and organized networks operating systematically within digital environments (Fhatihah et al., 2025).

One of the defining characteristics of online gambling is its reliance on digital infrastructures that enable anonymity and operational flexibility. Offenders can conceal their identities through anonymous accounts, encryption systems, and offshore servers, making detection more difficult. In addition, digital payment systems facilitate financial transactions that are often difficult to trace, thereby complicating the process of investigation and evidence collection (Sari & Zahra, 2026).

These technological characteristics contribute to the expansion of criminal opportunities in cyberspace. The absence of physical interaction and the borderless nature of digital environments reduce traditional forms of social control, allowing offenders to operate with relatively low risk. This condition reflects the adaptive nature of cybercrime, where perpetrators continuously adjust their strategies in response to technological developments (Leukfeldt & Yar, 2016).

From a causal perspective, the rise of online gambling is influenced by the interaction of economic, social, and technological factors. Economic pressures often motivate individuals to seek instant financial gains, while social environments may normalize gambling behavior, particularly in digital communities. At the same time, technological accessibility provides the necessary tools and platforms that facilitate participation in online gambling activities (Tumangger & Yusuf, 2025).

The convergence of these factors indicates that online gambling cannot be explained solely through individual motivation. Instead, it reflects broader structural conditions that create opportunities for crime. This aligns with Routine Activity Theory, which emphasizes the interaction between motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians in facilitating criminal acts (Holt et al., 2020).

Moreover, the involvement of organized networks highlights the systematic nature of online gambling operations. These networks utilize advanced technologies and cross-border infrastructures to manage activities efficiently, further increasing the complexity of the crime. This condition demonstrates that online gambling operates within a structured digital ecosystem that extends beyond simple individual misconduct (Anggoro & Santoso, 2025).

Overall, the characteristics and causal factors of online gambling illustrate that it is a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by the interaction between technology, social dynamics, and economic conditions. Understanding this interplay is essential for developing a comprehensive analytical framework, particularly within cybercriminology, to explain how digital environments transform patterns of crime and expand criminal opportunities (Malian, 2024).

### Law Enforcement Effectiveness in Addressing Online Gambling Crimes

The phenomenon of online gambling in Indonesia has shown a significant increase in recent years, driven by rapid digital technological advancement and expanding internet access across society. This activity has evolved into a systematic and organized practice supported by sophisticated technology, characterized by anonymity, flexibility, and continuous accessibility through digital devices. These features make online gambling difficult to monitor effectively and pose serious challenges to the national legal system, particularly as electronic payment systems accelerate its spread and adaptability to technological change (Kamaruddin et al., 2025).

The characteristics and driving factors of online gambling reflect an interaction between technological, social, and economic dimensions. Anonymity, offshore servers, and encrypted transactions enable offenders to evade

detection, while economic pressures, social influence, and the normalization of gambling behavior in digital environments increase individual participation. From a criminological perspective, this phenomenon illustrates how technological opportunities and individual motivations intersect within weak social control structures, reinforcing the complexity of cybercrime compared to conventional offenses (Amin, 2025).

Despite the existence of legal frameworks such as the Criminal Code and the Information and Electronic Transactions Law, regulatory responses remain insufficiently adaptive to the evolving nature of digital crime. Many perpetrators exploit legal loopholes, including cross-border server operations and encryption technologies, complicating evidence collection and offender identification. This condition highlights a structural gap between technological development and legal readiness, indicating the urgent need for more responsive and technology-oriented regulatory reforms (Husain, 2024).

The effectiveness of law enforcement is further constrained by institutional limitations, particularly in terms of human resources, infrastructure, and inter-agency coordination. Limited expertise in digital forensics and inadequate technological support hinder investigative processes, while fragmented coordination reduces the efficiency of enforcement efforts. These challenges demonstrate that strengthening institutional capacity and enhancing integrated law enforcement systems are essential to addressing online gambling effectively (Mustafa et al., 2025).

In addition, the digital environment plays a significant role in facilitating the expansion of online gambling through social media and communication platforms used for promotion and access distribution. Offenders continuously adapt to user behavior and technological developments, creating a dynamic ecosystem of cybercrime. This condition necessitates not only repressive law enforcement but also preventive strategies, including digital literacy enhancement and technology-based monitoring systems (Nugroho & Soesatyo, 2026).

Government efforts, such as website blocking and legal prosecution, have been implemented but remain limited in effectiveness. The re-emergence of gambling sites under new domains and the lack of synergy between government institutions, internet service providers, and law enforcement agencies indicate weaknesses in current approaches. Moreover, the involvement of transnational networks further complicates enforcement due to jurisdictional constraints, requiring stronger international cooperation through information exchange and extradition mechanisms (Achmadi & Suciyani, 2026).

From a theoretical perspective, the effectiveness of law enforcement against online gambling can be understood through an integrative framework combining criminal law and criminology. Law enforcement theory emphasizes the alignment between legal norms, institutional capacity, and public awareness, while criminological theory highlights the role of opportunity, motivation, and social control in shaping criminal behavior. The imbalance between rapid technological development and the readiness of legal systems underscores the need for adaptive, multidisciplinary, and technology-driven approaches to ensure more effective and sustainable responses to online gambling crimes (Perkasa & Pakpahan, 2023).

### **Efforts to Optimize Law Enforcement Against Online Gambling in Indonesia**

Efforts to optimize law enforcement against online gambling in Indonesia require a comprehensive and adaptive approach in response to the rapid evolution of digital technology. Law enforcement should not rely solely on repressive measures but must also incorporate preventive strategies aimed at reducing crime opportunities. This aligns with the perspective of Routine Activity Theory, which emphasizes that crime occurs due to the convergence of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardians. In the context of cyberspace, weak supervision and high accessibility increase the likelihood of online gambling practices (Fadli et al., 2025).

A key strategy lies in developing adaptive regulatory frameworks capable of addressing the transnational and technological nature of online gambling. Existing laws must be refined to cover encryption, cross-border operations, and evolving digital business models. Comparative practices in several countries show that regulatory harmonization and clear legal definitions significantly improve enforcement effectiveness. Therefore, alignment between national and international legal instruments is crucial to overcoming jurisdictional challenges (Sihotang & Hoessein, 2025).

Institutional capacity also plays a central role in determining enforcement effectiveness. Compared to more advanced jurisdictions with specialized cyber units, Indonesia still faces limitations in digital forensic expertise and

technological infrastructure. Strengthening technical competencies, including data analysis and cyber intelligence, is essential to improve investigative outcomes. Continuous training and investment in technological resources enable law enforcement agencies to respond more effectively to increasingly sophisticated cybercrime patterns (Widianingrum, 2024).

In addition, stronger inter-agency coordination is required to create an integrated enforcement system. Comparative analysis indicates that countries with centralized cybercrime coordination mechanisms tend to achieve faster and more efficient responses. In Indonesia, fragmentation among institutions remains a challenge, particularly in data sharing and operational synergy. The integration of information systems and real-time coordination can significantly enhance enforcement effectiveness (Rahmad & Anggita, 2025).

Preventive strategies through digital literacy are equally important in reducing online gambling practices. From a criminological standpoint, this approach reflects efforts to strengthen social control and reduce individual vulnerability to cybercrime. Public education on legal risks, economic consequences, and common modus operandi can decrease participation rates. This aligns with the concept of situational crime prevention, where reducing opportunities and increasing awareness can effectively suppress criminal behavior (Akwamitthoriq et al., 2026).

Technological approaches further support law enforcement through the use of artificial intelligence, big data, and digital monitoring systems. These tools enable early detection of suspicious activities and pattern recognition in financial transactions. Compared to conventional methods, technology-driven enforcement is more proactive and efficient in addressing cybercrime. The integration of such systems reflects the principles of Space Transition Theory, which explains how criminal behavior adapts within digital environments, requiring equally adaptive control mechanisms (Prayogo & Sugianto, 2025).

Finally, international cooperation and the strengthening of digital evidence systems are essential in addressing the transnational nature of online gambling. Cross-border collaboration through intelligence sharing and extradition mechanisms enhances enforcement capacity, as seen in global cybercrime frameworks. At the same time, standardized procedures for handling digital evidence are necessary to ensure legal validity in judicial processes. From a theoretical perspective, the effectiveness of law enforcement depends on the interaction between legal structure, substance, and culture, highlighting the need for a multidisciplinary and globally coordinated approach (Setha, 2024).

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the effectiveness of law enforcement against online gambling in Indonesia is shaped not only by regulatory frameworks but also by the interaction between criminological factors, technological development, and institutional capacity. Online gambling represents a modern form of crime characterized by anonymity, flexibility, and accessibility, leading to a shift toward more complex digital crime patterns. Consequently, law enforcement requires not only normative approaches but also adaptive strategies aligned with technological and social dynamics.

This study contributes academically by integrating criminal law and criminological perspectives to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between regulation, offender behavior, and crime opportunities in digital environments. Practically, the findings offer a basis for improving law enforcement strategies, particularly through regulatory strengthening, capacity building in digital forensics, and enhanced inter-agency coordination.

However, this study is limited by its normative juridical approach relying on secondary data, which does not fully capture empirical conditions. It is also restricted to the Indonesian context without comparative analysis. Future research is recommended to adopt empirical and comparative approaches, as well as to explore digital literacy and preventive strategies to support a more adaptive and sustainable law enforcement system.

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