Student Activism And Civil Resistance Against The 2025 Indonesian Military Bill (Ruu Tni 2025) In Bengkulu City

Alpan Pratama[1*], Lesti Heriyanti[2], Linda Safitra[3]
[1*,2,3]Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu, Indonesia
Corresponding Author E-mail : alpanpratama203@gmail.com

SEIKAT
Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Hukum

e-ISSN: 2964-0962

SEIKAT: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik dan Hukum

https://ejournal.45mataram.ac.id/index.php/seikat

Vol. 5, No. 5, Oktober 2026

Page: 4781 - 4798

Available at:

https://ejournal.45mataram.ac.id/index.php/seikat/article/view/4350

DOI:

https://doi.org/10.55681/seikat.v5i5.4350

Article History:

Received: 15-09-2026
Revised: 25-10-2026
Accepted: 26-10-2026

Abstract : *Abstract: This study examines student activism and civil resistance against the Indonesian Armed Forces Bill (RUU TNI 2025), which revises Law No. 34/2005, among campus activists in Bengkulu City. Using an instrumental case-study design within an interpretive-constructivist paradigm, the research combines symbolic interactionism with political sociology to understand how student activists construct political meaning. Data were gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation analysis with thirteen key informants from BEM, HMI, PMII, GMNI, IMM, and HIMA, then analyzed thematically. RUU TNI 2025 provoked controversy due to the expansion of Military Operations Other Than War, the extension of officers' retirement age, and the adjustment of institutional relations among the Armed Forces, the President, and the Ministry of Defense, which are seen as shifting civilian control. Findings show that all informants consistently framed the bill as a threat to civilian supremacy; nine of thirteen participated directly in street demonstrations; and all engaged in academic study and digital campaigns. Three key drivers emerged: organizational ideology, cross-organizational solidarity, and prior activism experience. Theoretically, the findings affirm that students act as political-sociological agents producing symbolic resistance against the expansion of state power, contributing to the literature on regional student movements in Indonesia.*

Keywords : *student activism, civil resistance; RUU TNI 2025, symbolic interactionism, political sociology*

Abstrak : Abstract: This study examines student activism and civil resistance against the Indonesian Armed Forces Bill (RUU TNI 2025), which revises Law No. 34/2005, among campus activists in Bengkulu City. Using an instrumental case-study design within an interpretive-constructivist paradigm, the research combines symbolic interactionism with political sociology to understand how student activists construct political meaning. Data were gathered through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation analysis with thirteen key informants from BEM, HMI, PMII, GMNI, IMM, and HIMA, then analyzed thematically. RUU TNI 2025 provoked controversy due to the expansion of Military Operations Other Than War, the extension of officers' retirement age, and the adjustment of institutional relations among the Armed Forces, the President, and the Ministry of Defense, which are seen as shifting civilian control. Findings show that all informants consistently framed the bill as a threat to civilian supremacy; nine of thirteen participated directly in street demonstrations; and all engaged in academic study and digital campaigns. Three key drivers emerged: organizational ideology, cross-organizational solidarity, and prior activism experience. Theoretically, the findings affirm that students act as political-sociological agents producing symbolic resistance against the expansion of state power, contributing to the literature on regional student movements in Indonesia.

Keywords : student activism, civil resistance; RUU TNI 2025, symbolic interactionism, political sociology

INTRODUCTION

Isu relasi sipil-militer kembali menjadi sorotan publik seiring dinamika legislasi pertahanan nasional pascareformasi, sebagaimana ditunjukkan oleh kajian terkini tentang dinamika militerisasi dan tata kelola pemerintahan pasca revisi Undang-Undang TNI (Kurniawan & Gerard, 2025). Kekhawatiran ini sejalan dengan temuan bahwa pemeliharaan batas institusional yang jelas antara domain militer dan sipil merupakan variabel paling kritis dalam proses konsolidasi otoritas sipil di lembaga pertahanan Indonesia (Satria Yudha Pamungkaset al., 2025) .Salah satu arena paling nyata dari dinamika tersebut adalah Rancangan Undang-Undang Tentara Nasional Indonesia (RUU TNI 2025) yang merevisi UU No. 34 Tahun 2004 dan memperkenalkan sejumlah perubahan yang memicu kontroversi luas. Perubahan-perubahan tersebut mencakup (Suryantoro, 2025), (1) perluasan Operasi Militer Selain Perang (OMSP) ke domain-domain baru termasuk keamanan siber dan perlindungan warga negara di luar negeri, (2) penyesuaian relasi kelembagaan antara TNI, Presiden, dan Kementerian Pertahanan yang dianggap menggeser keseimbangan kontrol sipil serta (3) perpanjangan usia pensiun perwira tinggi bintang empat yang penentuan batas atasnya diserahkan kepada kebijaksanaan Presiden (Al-adawiyah, 2025).

Para akademisi hubungan sipil-militer berpendapat bahwa perubahan ini membawa implikasi signifikan bagi keseimbangan antara domain militer dan sipil yang dengan susah payah dibangun sejak era Reformasi (Djuyandi & Sudirman, 2025). Argumen serupa turut ditegaskan dalam tinjauan konstitusional atas prosedur legislasi dan supremasi sipil dalam revisi Undang-Undang TNI, yang menyoroti pentingnya menjaga keseimbangan relasi kelembagaan antara TNI, Presiden, dan Kementerian Pertahanan (Indah & Sari, 2025). Sejumlah peneliti bahkan mengidentifikasi indikasi kembalinya pola dwifungsi ABRI dalam wujud baru, yang berpotensi melemahkan konsolidasi demokrasi Indonesia (Yosarie, 2025). Kekhawatiran ini sejalan dengan tinjauan retrospektif atas militerisme era Orde Baru dan tantangannya bagi demokrasi kontemporer (Paryanto Paryanto et,al 2025).

Kekhawatiran akademis tersebut menemukan pantulannya di lapangan, aktivisme mahasiswa dan resistensi sipil terhadap RUU TNI 2025 berlangsung dalam skala yang tidak biasa. Data dari Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan (Kontras) mencatat sedikitnya 47 kota di seluruh Indonesia menjadi lokasi aksi demonstrasi penolakan sepanjang Maret 2025. Di ruang digital, tagar #TolakRUUTNI menembus lebih dari dua juta cuitan dalam 72 jam pertama pasca pengesahan, menjadikannya salah satu trending topic terbesar pada kuartal pertama 2025. Pola pemberitaan media daring turut menempatkan polemik ini sebagai isu sentral ruang publik, sebagaimana ditunjukkan oleh analisis framing pemberitaan RUU TNI pada media Kompas.id dan Detiknews (Annisa Putri Suwito et,al , 2025).

Fenomena ini mencerminkan dinamika aktivisme digital yang semakin menjadi repertoar utama gerakan sosial kontemporer di Indonesia, di mana media sosial tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai kanal informasi, melainkan juga sebagai instrumen pembentukan kesadaran kolektif dan mobilisasi massa (Irwandi Ferry et,al 2026). Kapasitas mahasiswa untuk menggerakkan aktivisme lintas ruang digital dan jalanan ini bukan fenomena baru, melainkan berakar pada posisi historis yang sangat strategis dalam demokrasi Indonesia(Habib et al., 2025). Sebagai intelektual muda yang berada di persimpangan antara dunia akademik dan kehidupan sosial yang lebih luas, mahasiswa memiliki akses terhadap pengetahuan kritis, jaringan organisasional yang luas, dan kapasitas mobilisasi yang signifikan.

Peran historis mahasiswa dalam menggulingkan rezim Orde Lama pada 1966 dan Orde Baru pada 1998 telah membentuk identitas kolektif yang kuat sebagai agen perubahan sosial dan 'penjaga demokrasi', sebuah identitas yang secara historis terus diwariskan dan menjadi modal simbolik gerakan mahasiswa dalam menghadapi hegemoni negara (Prayogi et al., n.d.). This identity is actively reproduced and reactualized whenever a threat emerges to the democratic values fought for by earlier generations. Dalam konteks meluasnya penolakan terhadap RUU TNI, mahasiswa kembali menunjukkan kapasitasnya sebagai aktor gerakan sosial yang mampu mengintegrasikan resistensi simbolik di ruang digital dengan mobilisasi fisik di jalanan (Yosarie, 2025).

This national pattern also resonated in Bengkulu City, where a wave of student activism and civil resistance against RUU TNI 2025 displayed dynamics of its own. On 20 March 2025, hundreds of students from various universities and student organizations held a demonstration in front of the Bengkulu Provincial DPRD building. The action did not stand as a single event, but developed into a series of activities encompassing academic study forums across various campuses, public discussions involving academics and legal practitioners, and a massive campaign on social media platforms. What is notable is this movement's capacity to build cross-organizational solidarity among BEM, HMI, PMII, GMNI, IMM, and HIMA, which in

This phenomenon of cross-organizational consolidation in Bengkulu is precisely what earlier studies on the Indonesian student movement have rarely addressed; although these studies have made meaningful contributions, most remain focused on dynamics in major cities such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya. Dynamics in regional cities such as Bengkulu remain relatively underexplored academically, even though it is precisely here that the student movement faces distinct challenges and dynamics: limited media access, more constrained resources, and a unique institutional context. The urgency of filling this gap is substantive, not merely administrative or academic: if the residue of the ABRI dual-function pattern in a new form, as warned by a number of researchers, is indeed underway, the capacity to detect and understand patterns of civil resistance at various scales, including the regional city scale that has thus far escaped observation, becomes an important prerequisite for safeguarding the democratic consolidation painstakingly built since the Reform era. This geographic gap also intersects with a methodological gap, since most prior studies on RUU TNI 2025 tend to stop at normative constitutional law analysis or media framing mapping, while sociological readings that position students as actors who reflectively produce meaning, rather than merely responding passively to policy stimuli, remain relatively rare. It is this dual void, both in terms of the locus of study and the theoretical framework, that this research seeks to address simultaneously through the integration of symbolic interactionism and political sociology. This research fills that gap through three main questions: (1) How do Bengkulu student activists perceive and construct meaning toward RUU TNI 2025 from a political sociology perspective? (2) What forms of activism and civil resistance are undertaken by student activists, and what meanings are attached to their chosen forms of activism? (3) What factors facilitate or constrain the movement?

RESEARCH METHOD

Penelitian ini menggunakan desain studi kasus instrumental (instrumental case study) dengan paradigma interpretif-konstruktivis, karena tujuan utamanya bukan sekadar mendeskripsikan protes mahasiswa, melainkan menelaah aktivisme dan resistensi sipil terhadap

RUU TNI 2025 sebagai fenomena sosiologi politik yang kompleks (Puspitasari et, al, 2020.). Pendekatan ini memungkinkan peneliti membaca gerakan mahasiswa bukan sebagai peristiwa tunggal, melainkan sebagai konstruksi sosial yang lahir dari interaksi simbolik, struktur organisasi, dan ideologi politik yang berkelindan(Nur Intifada Zahroh et, al, 2025). Pendekatan kualitatif dipilih karena fenomena konstruksi makna dan tindakan kolektif mahasiswa tidak dapat direduksi menjadi angka atau ukuran kuantitatif; yang dibutuhkan adalah pemahaman mendalam tentang bagaimana makna terhadap RUU TNI 2025 dibentuk, dinegosiasikan, dan diterjemahkan ke dalam tindakan aktivisme melalui proses interaksi sosial antarmahasiswa dan antarorganisasi (Zakaria Habib Al-Ra'zie et, al, 2024). Dengan penelitian ini menempatkan sosiologi sebagai kerangka utama untuk membaca dinamika resistensi sipil, bukan sekadar analisis hukum atau politik normatif.

Desain ini diarahkan untuk mengungkap dua dimensi analitis pertama, argumentasi legitimasi hukum yang dibangun mahasiswa sebagai basis resistensi, yang dibaca melalui kerangka sosiologi hukum dan sosiologi politik; kedua, peran organisasi kemahasiswaan dalam mengonsolidasikan keresahan individual menjadi gerakan kolektif, yang ditelaah melalui perspektif interaksionisme simbolik dan paradigma ganda Ritzer. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam semi-terstruktur dengan informan kunci dari berbagai organisasi mahasiswa, dilengkapi dengan observasi partisipatif dan analisis dokumentasi (Saddawiyah et al., 2024). Teknik ini memungkinkan peneliti menangkap kosakata simbolik, strategi organisasi, serta narasi ideologis yang digunakan mahasiswa dalam merespons RUU TNI 2025 (Dan & Affianty, 2018).

Analisis dilakukan menggunakan model reflexive thematic analysis Braun dan Clarke (2022), yang menekankan keterlibatan reflektif peneliti dalam proses coding, pencarian tema, dan interpretasi data (Sutanto, 2019). Analisis ini dilandasi oleh interaksionisme simbolik Blumer (1969) dan Mead (1934) untuk membaca bagaimana makna resistensi dikonstruksi melalui simbol, interaksi, dan proses sosial, paradigma ganda Ritzer (1992) untuk menyeimbangkan pembacaan antara fakta sosial yang koersif (norma supremasi sipil, partisipasi publik) dan definisi sosial yang subjektif (interpretasi ideologi organisasi); serta sosiologi politik Bottomore (1993) untuk menempatkan resistensi mahasiswa dalam konteks distribusi kekuasaan, legitimasi politik, dan mekanisme representasi warga negara. Dengan integrasi kerangka sosiologi ini, penelitian tidak hanya menjelaskan *what students do, but also why and how* tindakan mereka bermakna dalam konteks relasi sipil-militer Indonesia (Militer & Perkembangan, 2019). Pendekatan ini memperkuat validitas akademik penelitian sekaligus menegaskan kontribusinya pada kajian sosiologi hukum, sosiologi politik, dan gerakan sosial di Indonesia (Isdiyanto, 2025).

Design and Location

This research was conducted at universities in Bengkulu City that serve as the main bases of the student movement, namely Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu (UMB), Universitas Bengkulu (UNIB), Universitas Islam Negeri Fatmawati Sukarno (UINFAS), Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Syariah Nahdlatul Ulama (STISNU), and Universitas Dehasen. This location was chosen purposively because these campuses have consistently mobilized activism and civil resistance on national legislative issues, particularly the rejection of RUU TNI 2025. The university is understood not merely as an educational space, but also as an arena of political sociology where students build critical awareness, articulate ideology, and consolidate cross-organizational solidarity.

The main distinguishing factor in choosing Bengkulu compared to major cities such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, or Surabaya is the non-metropolitan context that produces different dynamics within the student movement. First, limited media access and organizational resources in Bengkulu have actually driven the formation of a more inclusive cross-campus consolidation pattern, since no single university can move alone without network support. Second, Bengkulu's position as a regional city with a significant number of students but more limited public exposure makes civil resistance on Bengkulu's campuses a miniature of regional democratic struggle, where the movement's legitimacy is built not from the reputation of a major campus, but from moral solidarity and collective courage. Third, Bengkulu's local context shows that the regional student movement is not merely a "smaller version" of the national movement, but has its own logic of resistance worth analyzing within a regional political sociology framework.

Dengan kerangka studi kasus instrumental, penelitian ini menelaah sistem terbatas aktivisme mahasiswa dan resistensi sipil dalam konteks universitas di Bengkulu sebagai locus yang khas (*Abdullah Munir*,et, al .2023). Pemilihan lokasi ini menegaskan kontribusi penelitian terhadap literatur sosiologi gerakan sosial di Indonesia, dengan menunjukkan bahwa dinamika resistensi sipil di kota-kota non-metropolitan memiliki nilai analitis yang berbeda dari pusat-pusat gerakan mahasiswa di kota besar.

Participants

Thirteen key informants were selected through purposive sampling, focusing on individuals directly involved in activism and civil resistance against RUU TNI 2025. The selection took into account representation from various types of organizations and variation in roles of involvement. The number of thirteen informants was determined based on the principle of data saturation, with additional representation from the IMM leadership structure at the faculty and commissariat levels, HMI, as well as student organizations from other campuses in Bengkulu City, including representatives from HMI Unihas and PMII STISNU.

Table 1. Profile of Research Informants

No.	Name	Organization	Role
1	Hudha	UNIB	Law Governor / Academic
2	Dimas ardiansyah	BEM UINFAS	Minister of Home Affairs
3	Raditiya	GMNI	Cadre / Action Coordinator
4	Wahyu Febriansyah	BEM STISNU	Student President
5	Aldiansyah	PMII UIN Fatmawati Bengkulu	Cadre / Digital Coordinator
6	Ismail	IMM / BEM UMB	Former Minister of Advocacy
7	Ransyah	PC IMM Bengkulu	Head of Legal and Human Rights Studies Division
8	Fawas	IMM FEB UMB	Head of Organization Division

9	Marli	IMM PK FISIP UMB	Chairperson
10	Muhammad Hafiz	HIMA FEB Universitas Dehasen	Chairperson
11	Nelson	HMI Komisariat UMB	Head of Cadre Division
12	Akbar Salepa	HMI Unihas	Organization Division Officer
13	Muhammad Ikbal	PMII STISNU	Cadre
14	Restu	GMNI	Chairperson, GMNI Bengkulu Branch

Source: Primary Research Data, 2025

Data Collection Technique

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured in-depth interviews with an average duration of 60 to 90 minutes per informant, carried out between March and June 2025. The interviews were guided by five main thematic dimensions: (1) perception of threat to civilian supremacy, (2) the forms of activism and civil resistance chosen, (3) driving factors of involvement, (4) obstacles encountered, and (5) impacts felt by the informants. The selection of these dimensions was not merely technical, but rooted in a political sociology framework that positions students as social actors who produce political meaning through symbolic interaction and organizational structure. In addition to interviews, this research also used participatory observation during demonstrations, public discussions, and academic forums, as well as documentation analysis of organizational archives, media coverage, and policy records. The combination of these three techniques strengthens the depth of the data and enables triangulation across sources.

Data Analysis Technique

All data were analyzed using a reflexive thematic analysis model, which encompasses the stages of data familiarization, initial coding, theme searching, theme reviewing, and theme naming and writing. This model was chosen because it emphasizes the researcher's reflexive engagement in the interpretation process, so that the analytical results are not merely descriptive but also theoretical. The analysis was grounded in:

- Symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934): to read how the meaning of resistance is constructed through symbols, interaction, and social processes.
- Ritzer's dual paradigm (1992): to balance the reading between coercive social facts (the norms of civilian supremacy and public participation) and subjective social definitions (interpretations of organizational ideology).
- Bottomore's political sociology (1993): to situate student resistance within the context of power distribution, political legitimacy, and mechanisms of citizen representation.

This integration of sociological frameworks makes the analysis more layered, from individual meaning construction to broader social patterns, allowing the research to explain what, why, and how student resistance to RUU TNI 2025 unfolded.

Validity and Ethics

Research validity was maintained through source and method triangulation, namely comparing interview, observation, and documentation results from different organizations to ensure data consistency. In addition, member checking was conducted by confirming interview results back with informants so that the researcher's interpretation matched the informants' original intent. All informants provided informed written consent in accordance with the research ethics protocol of Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu. Ethical aspects were also maintained by offering an anonymity option for informants in vulnerable positions, thereby protecting freedom of expression. This emphasis on validity and ethics affirms that the research is not only methodologically sound but also academically and morally responsible.(Sitorus et al., 2017)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research show that student activism and civil resistance against RUU TNI 2025 in Bengkulu City do not stand alone, but are shaped by two intertwined dimensions: the legal legitimacy framework students use to justify their resistance, and the role of student organizations in translating individual unease into a consolidated collective movement. These two dimensions are elaborated in turn in the following two subsections.

Student Activism as Resistance to Military Legislation

One of the most significant forms of student activism is the articulation of legal-constitutional arguments as a basis for resistance: from a political sociology perspective, RUU TNI 2025 touches the core of a fundamental question about how military power is limited and controlled within a constitutional democratic system. In this perspective, every normative change touching the relationship between the military and civilians is also a change in the map of power, with implications reaching far beyond the substance of the law itself (Azzahra et al., 2026). Hudha, Law Governor of Universitas Bengkulu, was the informant who most articulately elaborated the legal-constitutional dimension of this issue:

> *"Normatively, we have to look at whether every change in this RUU TNI is in line with the principle of civilian supremacy that we have built since the reform era. When the retirement age is extended and the scope of OMSP is expanded without clear limits, we need to ask: does this strengthen, or does it actually risk eroding, the boundary between the military and civilian domains that we have painstakingly guarded all this time?"* (Hudha, Law Governor, UNIB)

Posisi Hudha sebagai Gubernur Hukum, sebutan struktural bagi ketua senat mahasiswa di lingkungan fakultas hukum, bukan sekadar atribut organisasional, melainkan jabatan yang secara inheren membentuk habitus argumentatif tertentu. Latar belakang pendidikan kefakultasan hukum memberikan Hudha kosakata analitis yang lebih presisi untuk mengartikulasikan kekhawatirannya; bahasa "prinsip supremasi sipil," "batasan yang jelas," dan "wilayah militer dan sipil" adalah istilah-istilah yang lazim dalam wacana hukum tata negara, bukan bahasa sehari-hari aktivis pada umumnya. Dalam kerangka interaksionisme simbolik Blumer (1969), fenomena ini menegaskan bahwa makna yang diproduksi seorang aktor senantiasa dimediasi oleh repertoar simbolik yang tersedia baginya melalui posisi sosial dan pendidikannya, Hudha memaknai RUU TNI 2025 melalui kacamata legal-formal karena itulah kerangka interpretatif yang paling tersedia

dan paling meyakinkan baginya untuk menyusun argumen resistensi yang kredibel di hadapan sesama sivitas akademika (Musta'in, 2020).

Hudha's statement reflects a deep awareness of the historical roots of the civil-military relations issue in Indonesia. This argument is consistent with the findings of Haripin et al. (2023), which affirm that maintaining the institutional boundary between the military and civilian domains is the most critical variable in the process of consolidating civilian authority within Indonesia's defense institutions. An informant with a background in government policy added a procedural dimension no less important within the context of political sociology:

> *"Every state has the right to update its military regulations in line with evolving threats. The problem is not the revision itself, but how the process is carried out. Democracy is not only about outcomes, but about how decisions are made openly, transparently, and with meaningful public input."* (Restu, Chairperson, GMNI Bengkulu Branch)

The decision to anonymize this informant's identity as "Source K," rather than openly naming him and his institutional affiliation, is itself meaningful sociological data, not merely a procedural ethical formality. As a policy practitioner with a background in government, his position sits at a structurally vulnerable intersection: he critiques the legislative process from within the very system in which he works. Within Bottomore's (1993) political sociology framework, this position as an "insider critiquing from within" actually strengthens the credibility of the procedural argument he presents, because criticism of this kind does not arise from the ideological distance of an activist outside the system, but from the direct observation of an actor who fully understands how the legislative process is supposed to work. The need for anonymity itself, read reflectively, reveals structural pressure on freedom of expression among state apparatus and serves as additional empirical evidence of the political climate that forms the context in which the studied student resistance emerged.

The comparison between these two statements reveals two complementary registers of argumentation within the discourse of rejecting RUU TNI 2025: a substantive register that highlights the normative boundary between the military and civilian domains, and a procedural register that highlights the legitimacy of the policy-making process itself. Within a political sociology framework, both affirm that the contestation over RUU TNI is not solely about 'what' the state decides, but also about 'how' that decision is made, a dimension that is often absent from public debate, which tends to focus more narrowly on article-by-article substance.

Read through the social fact paradigm, these two registers of argumentation can also be understood as manifestations of an external, coercive structure shaping how students interpret state policy: the norms of civilian supremacy and public participation have become institutionalized since the 1998 Reform to such an extent that they function as social facts in the Durkheimian sense borrowed by Ritzer, existing outside the informants' individual consciousness yet actively constraining and directing their interpretation of RUU TNI 2025. Within a political sociology framework, this phenomenon also reveals that the contestation of power is never single-dimensional: it always moves on two levels at once, a substantive level concerning the distribution of authority among state institutions, and a procedural level concerning the mechanisms of representation and citizen participation in decision-making. The state's failure to fulfill the second level, as affirmed by Source K, in turn strengthens the legitimacy of the student resistance

articulated by Hudha at the first level, since the two registers mutually reinforce one another within a single, coherent ecology of rejection discourse.

The Role of Organizations in Consolidating Civil Resistance

Dalam konteks sosiologi politik, ideologi berfungsi tidak sekadar sebagai sistem kepercayaan abstrak, melainkan sebagai kerangka interpretatif yang secara aktif membentuk bagaimana aktor sosial memaknai kebijakan negara dan menerjemahkannya ke dalam aktivisme kolektif (SELVIE , 2012). Di sinilah peran organisasi kemahasiswaan bersifat konstitutif: masing-masing organisasi membawa ideologi yang berbeda dan menghasilkan framing yang berbeda pula terhadap RUU TNI 2025, meskipun pada akhirnya berkonvergensi menjadi satu front resistensi sipil yang menolak ekspansi kekuasaan militer.

Konstitusi peran ini tidak hanya tampak pada tataran framing ideologis antarorganisasi, tetapi juga pada diferensiasi fungsional di dalam tubuh organisasi itu sendiri (Reni Suwarso, et, al 2023.). Di lingkungan IMM, misalnya, keterlibatan Ismail sebagai mantan Menteri Advokasi BEM UMB dan Ransyah sebagai Kepala Bidang Kajian Hukum dan HAM PC IMM Bengkulu mencerminkan pembagian kerja gerakan yang membedakan fungsi advokasi lapangan dari fungsi kajian hukum yang lebih sistematis. Dari sudut pandang paradigma perilaku sosial Ritzer (1992), diferensiasi peran ini dapat dibaca sebagai bentuk penguatan repertoar tindakan kolektif: organisasi tidak lagi bergantung pada satu jalur aksi tunggal, melainkan mendistribusikan kapasitas kadernya ke dalam fungsi-fungsi yang saling melengkapi, advokasi publik, kajian akademik-hukum, koordinasi aksi, dan mobilisasi digital, sehingga resistensi sipil terhadap RUU TNI 2025 tampil sebagai gerakan yang terstruktur, bukan sekadar reaksi spontan yang terfragmentasi.

This dimension of organizational consolidation is also affirmed by Fawas, Head of the Organization Division of IMM at the Faculty of Economics and Business, UMB, who highlighted the importance of internal solidity as a prerequisite for the movement's effectiveness:

> *"Before talking about external action, IMM must first be solid internally. The task of the Organization Division is to ensure that every commissariat, including in FEB, shares the same understanding of why RUU TNI needs to be critically examined. If internal solidity is strong, only then can our outward voice be at its maximum."*
> (Fawas, Head of Organization Division, IMM FEB UMB)

Fawas's statement reveals a dimension that has long been hidden behind the movement's outwardly solid public appearance, namely the internal consolidation work that precedes and sustains every manifestation of resistance in the public sphere. Within Ritzer's (1992) social behavior paradigm, the role of the Organization Division can be read as a mechanism for strengthening reward structures and internal coordination that ensures every organizational unit acts in alignment before external collective action is taken. Fawas, who is positioned at the faculty of economics and business rather than the faculty of law or social-political science like most of the other informants, shows that resistance to RUU TNI 2025 is not the monopoly of students whose academic backgrounds directly intersect with legal-constitutional issues, but has become a concern that cuts across disciplinary clusters on campus.

Marli, Chairperson of IMM's Commissariat Leadership at FISIP UMB, added a leadership perspective from the commissariat that directly oversees the social and political science cluster where the RUU TNI issue is most extensively discussed academically:

"We at FISIP carry a different kind of moral burden. Sociology and political science students study the state, power, and democracy every day in class. If we stay silent while civilian supremacy is at stake, it feels as if we would be betraying what we ourselves have learned." (Marli, Chairperson, IMM PK FISIP UMB)



Marli's position as Chairperson of the commissariat overseeing sociology and political science students places her in a distinctively reflective position: she leads activism from an institutional base epistemically closest to the very object of the resistance being studied. Read through Weberian verstehen, the structural proximity between FISIP's disciplinary background and the substance of the RUU TNI issue gives Marli a more reflective interpretive capacity compared to actors from other disciplinary clusters, because the conceptual framework of the state and power that she learned in the classroom becomes the very lens she directly uses to make sense of the unfolding political events. Marli's statement about a "moral burden" affirms that a leadership position in the FISIP commissariat is not merely a structural post, but is also perceived as an epistemic responsibility to translate academically learned knowledge into concrete action.

Raditiya, a GMNI cadre, interpreted RUU TNI 2025 through the lens of Sukarnoist marhaenism, which emphasizes the sovereignty of the people:

> *"For us in GMNI, the spirit of struggle always departs from the ideal of true popular sovereignty. When we read RUU TNI 2025, there is a deep concern that the civilian spaces we have won since 1998 could be eroded once again. The extension of the retirement age and the expansion of OMSP are not technical matters, this is about where our country is being steered."* (Raditiya, GMNI Cadre)



Raditiya's statement shows how marhaenism, as an ideological legacy of Sukarnoism, functions as a generational transmission framework linking the experience of 1998, an experience Raditiya did not biologically live through as a member of the 2020s student generation, with his present-day concerns. The phrase "the civilian spaces we have won since 1998" signals that the collective memory of the Reform era has been passed down through the internal interactional processes of the GMNI organization, as Blumer (1969) affirms that meaning is constructed not solely from an individual's direct experience, but also from ideological socialization that occurs across generations of cadres. Within Bottomore's (1993) political sociology framework, this phenomenon of inherited political memory becomes an important mechanism explaining why student organizations are able to sustain their mobilization capacity even as their cadre personnel continually turn over every few years: collective identity and the framing of threat are passed down institutionally, rather than depending on personal memory alone.

Aldiansyah of PMII viewed this issue through the lens of Islamic values that emphasize social justice and the rejection of any form of excessive domination:

> *"PMII moves from Islamic values of rahmatan lil alamin. When a policy has the potential to strengthen the domination of one group over another, we have a moral obligation to speak up. RUU TNI is not only about the military, it is about how the balance of power is maintained so that our democracy remains meaningful."*
> (Aldiansyah, PMII Cadre, UIN Fatmawati Bengkulu)

The concept of rahmatan lil alamin invoked by Aldiansyah is rooted in the moderate Islamic tradition of Nahdlatul Ulama, the parent organization overseeing PMII, which has historically emphasized balance (tawazun), moderation (tawasuth), and justice (i'tidal) in statecraft. The use of this theological framework to read an issue that is, on the surface, technical and militaristic demonstrates PMII's capacity to convert religious vocabulary into a coherent language of public policy critique, a process Blumer (1969) calls the translation of meaning through ongoing symbolic interaction between religious doctrine and contemporary political reality. Viewed through

Bottomore's (1993) political sociology, Aldiansyah's choice to frame RUU TNI 2025 as a matter of "balance of power" rather than merely a military issue affirms that religious actors within the student movement do not position themselves as a group sterile to discourse on state power, but instead actively produce their own ethical-political framework for judging the acceptable limits of state authority.

Wahyu Febriansya, Student President of STISNU Bengkulu, framed the rejection within a procedural democracy framework:

> *"We may not be a large campus, but the responsibility to safeguard democracy is just as great. The passing of this RUU TNI is too fast, leaving too little room for the people to speak. As BEM President, I feel that all of us owe a moral debt to the generation that will inherit this republic."*



(Wahyu Febriansya, BEM President, STISNU Bengkulu)

Wahyu Febriansya's emphasis on the phrase "we may not be a large campus" carries significant sociological data on how the peripheral position of an educational institution is instead reproduced into a source of moral legitimacy, rather than a reason for passivity. From Bottomore's (1993) political sociology perspective, this pattern shows that the capacity for political participation is not determined solely by the scale of institutional resources, such as the number of students, organizational funding, or media exposure, but by the extent to which an actor succeeds in converting its collective identity into an equal claim to public responsibility. STISNU Bengkulu, as a non-metropolitan campus with relatively limited resources compared to UNIB or UIN Fatmawati, through Wahyu's statement instead affirms itself as a fully legitimate political actor, consistent with this research's argument that the dynamics of the student movement in regional

cities cannot be reduced to a "smaller" version of the movement in major cities, but possess their own logic of legitimacy that deserves to be analyzed on its own terms.

The expansion of the cross-campus solidarity base is further affirmed by Muhammad Hafiz, Chairperson of HIMA FEB Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu, who shows that resistance to RUU TNI 2025 is not limited to UMB students alone:

> *"Even though our campus is different from UMB, the RUU TNI issue is not about alma mater. As soon as there was an invitation for a cross-campus discussion, HIMA FEB Dehasen responded immediately because we felt this is also our responsibility as Bengkulu students, not just the responsibility of students from one particular campus."* (Muhammad Hafiz, Chairperson, HIMA FEB Universitas Dehasen)

Hafiz's involvement from Universitas Dehasen significantly extends the empirical significance of this research's findings: the cross-organizational solidarity that has thus far been documented

The voice of HMI, an organization that has been mentioned from the outset as part of the solidarity front but had not yet been directly represented through an informant quotation, is present through Nelson, Head of the Cadre Division, HMI UMB Chapter:

> *"At HMI, we are equipped with the Basic Values of Struggle, which emphasize independence of stance, both ethically and organizationally. We read this RUU TNI as a test of that independence: whether students still dare to be critical of the state, or instead fall silent under structural pressure. The Cadre Division's task is to ensure new cadres understand this context, rather than merely joining actions without a clear basis of thought."* (Nelson, Head of Cadre Division, HMI UMB Chapter)

The presence of HMI's voice through Nelson significantly completes the organizational representation of this research, given that HMI has been repeatedly mentioned as part of the six-organization solidarity front since the introduction, yet had not previously been represented through a direct informant quotation. Nelson's emphasis on the Basic Values of Struggle and ethical-organizational independence reflects the distinctive character of HMI's ideology, which positions the autonomy of a critical stance as a core value, consistent with the Islamic-Indonesian intellectual tradition that characterizes this organization. Read through Ritzer's (1992) social definition paradigm, Nelson's explanation of the Cadre Division's function in "ensuring new cadres understand the context" shows that HMI's collective resistance to RUU TNI 2025 is not merely a spontaneous response, but the result of a structured process of ideological formation, in which the meaning of the threat to civilian supremacy is deliberately transmitted from senior cadre generations to more junior cadres as part of the reproduction of organizational identity.

As Minister of Home Affairs of BEM UINFAS, Dimas Ardiansyah emphasized the importance of cross-campus coordination in civil resistance:

> *"When we talk about the student movement, coordination is key. At UINFAS, we try to ensure that every action is not merely symbolic, but connected to networks at other campuses. This RUU TNI is not a local issue, so cross-campus coordination becomes our responsibility. We have to make sure that students from various campuses in Bengkulu have the same voice, so that resistance is not fragmented. Without coordination, action just becomes ceremonial, but with a network,*

resistance can have real political impact." (Dimas Ardiansyah, Minister of Home Affairs, BEM UINFAS)

This narrative shows that coordination is not merely technical, but a political strategy. Within the social behavior paradigm framework, cross-campus coordination strengthens the structure of collective action, making Bengkulu's student resistance more integrative and transcending alma mater boundaries.

Akbar Salepa, Organization Division Officer of HMI Unihas, highlighted the dimension of cadre regeneration as a mechanism for the movement's continuity:

> *"At HMI Unihas, we always talk about regeneration. If new cadres are not equipped with an understanding of civil-military issues, the movement will stop at a single generation. This RUU TNI has become a momentum to make sure new cadres truly understand what is at stake. We don't want resistance to be just a fleeting event, it has to become a critical tradition that is passed down. Cadre regeneration is the heart of the organization, because without it, the meaning of the struggle will be lost."* (Akbar Salepa, Organization Division Officer, HMI Unihas)

Within Ritzer's (1992) social definition paradigm, cadre regeneration becomes a mechanism for the reproduction of organizational ideology. Resistance to the threat against civilian supremacy does not stop at a single generation of students, but is passed down as a collective political identity.

Muhammad Ikbal, PMII STISNU Cadre, added a small-campus perspective emphasizing moral solidarity:

> *"There aren't many of us at STISNU, but our voice still matters. Resistance to RUU TNI is not about the size of the campus, but about moral courage to speak up. If small campuses stay silent, then democracy will only belong to the big campuses. We want to show that every student, from any campus, has the same responsibility. Precisely because we are small, we feel we have an even greater moral obligation to prove that democracy is inclusive."* (Muhammad Ikbal, PMII STISNU Cadre)

Ikbal's emphasis on the moral obligation of small campuses resonates with a similar finding from Wahyu Febriansya (BEM STISNU): from Bottomore's (1993) political sociology perspective, limited institutional resources are instead converted into a moral claim that strengthens the legitimacy of political participation. For Ikbal, campus size is not what determines the validity of a political voice, but moral courage to be critical of the state, consistent with this research's argument that civil resistance in regional cities has its own logic of legitimacy.

These varied yet convergent framing patterns provide strong empirical evidence for the three premises of symbolic interactionism: each organization acts based on meaning within its own ideological system; meaning is constructed through internal interactional processes; and that meaning is modified through ongoing interpretation. The convergence on rejecting the threat to civilian supremacy is the product of a complex social process, not a condition that pre-existed the interaction. This divergence in ideological framing that nonetheless converges on a single point affirms that resistance to RUU TNI 2025 is not merely a tactical consensus, but the result of a long dialogical process in which each organization renegotiates the boundaries of its own ideology for the sake of an interest deemed more urgent: safeguarding civilian supremacy.

These findings also reveal the second dimension of the dual paradigm, namely the social definition paradigm, which positions actors' subjective meaning as the primary unit of analysis rather than objective structure alone. Marhaenism for Raditiya, the value of rahmatan lil alamin for Aldiansyah, and the moral responsibility of the younger generation for Wahyu Febriansya are not merely ideological labels passively attached to each organization, but rather a framework for the definition of the situation (Blumer, 1969) that is actively reconstructed by each actor when confronting the new reality of RUU TNI 2025. Within a political sociology framework, this plurality of definitional frameworks is precisely the prerequisite for forming a resilient cross-ideological alliance: because resistance is not imposed from a single ideological center, but grows from authentic negotiation of meaning within each organization, the joint front of BEM, HMI, PMII, GMNI, IMM, and HIMA becomes sturdier than solidarity built upon a false ideological uniformity.

This cross-reading of the thirteen informants can also be enriched by the concept of the reference group, which is commonly used in further elaborations of symbolic interactionism.

The direct quotations from Dimas Ardiansyah, Akbar Salepa, and Muhammad Ikbal above importantly complete this research's source triangulation. All three occupy structural positions that extend the reach of the research's organizational representation: Dimas Ardiansyah represents the BEM home affairs ministry structure at a religiously based campus not yet represented by other informants; Akbar Salepa strengthens HMI's representation from the Unihas commissariat, distinct from the UMB commissariat already represented by Nelson; and Muhammad Ikbal brings the perspective of a PMII cadre from the STISNU campus base, complementing Aldiansyah's voice from PMII UIN Fatmawati Bengkulu.

Dalam kerangka triangulasi sumber , kehadiran ketiga suara ini memperkuat validitas temuan bahwa persepsi ancaman terhadap supremasi sipil bersifat konsisten lintas komisariat dan cabang organisasi yang sama, bukan sekadar artefak dari komisariat atau cabang tertentu yang kebetulan paling vokal (Malik et al., 2025). Dibaca melalui paradigma fakta sosial, konsistensi lintas komisariat inilah yang justru menjadi indikator paling kuat bahwa persepsi ancaman terhadap RUU TNI 2025 telah menjelma menjadi fakta sosial yang koersif, sebuah kerangka makna yang dianut secara seragam oleh kader di berbagai tingkat kepengurusan dan cabang kampus, terlepas dari perbedaan personel yang mengartikulasikannya.

Table 2. Summary of Thematic Dimensions, Informant Quotations, and Sociological Interpretation

Thematic Dimension	Informant Quotation	Sociological Interpretation
Perception of threat to civilian supremacy	"When the retirement age is extended and the scope of OMSP is expanded without clear limits, we need to ask: does this strengthen, or does it erode, the civil-military boundary?" (Hudha, UNIB)	Students interpret RUU TNI as a threat to the principle of civilian supremacy; resistance is built through legal-constitutional arguments.
Procedural legitimacy	"The problem is not the revision itself, but how the process is carried out. Democracy is not only about outcomes,	Criticism is directed at a legislative process with minimal public participation;

	but about how decisions are made openly, transparently, and with public input." (Source K, Policy Practitioner)	student resistance operates within the procedural domain.
Organizational ideology	"There is a deep concern that the civilian spaces we have won since 1998 could be eroded once again." (Raditiya, GMNI)	GMNI interprets RUU TNI through marhaenism; resistance is seen as an effort to safeguard the sovereignty of the people.
Islamic moral values	"When a policy has the potential to strengthen the domination of one group over another, we have a moral obligation to speak up." (Aldiansyah, PMII)	PMII interprets resistance as a moral obligation grounded in the Islamic value of rahmatan lil alamin; rejecting excessive domination.
Procedural democracy	"The passing of this RUU TNI is too fast, leaving too little room for the people to speak. As BEM President, I (Wahyu Febriansya, BEM STISNU)	Resistance is seen as the moral responsibility of the younger generation;
Cross-organizational solidarity	Collective statements from BEM, HMI, PMII, GMNI, IMM, and HIMA in joint actions in Bengkulu	Resistance does not emerge from individual awareness alone, but from layered social interaction; cross-ideological solidarity strengthens the collective movement.
Digital activism	"Digital campaigns have become a mobilization instrument capable of overcoming Bengkulu's geographic limitations." (Aldiansyah, PMII)	Digital activism functions as a repertoire of symbolic resistance; social media becomes an arena for the formation of collective awareness.

Source: Interview Data Analysis Results, 2025

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This qualitative research, employing an instrumental case study design, demonstrates that student activism and civil resistance among campus student activists in Bengkulu City against RUU TNI 2025 constitute a complex, layered, and meaning-laden political sociology phenomenon. Through the integration of thematic analysis, symbolic interactionism theory, and Ritzer's dual paradigm framework, this research produces an understanding far richer than approaches that reduce social phenomena to mere numerical measures. The data show that all thirteen informants consistently interpreted RUU TNI 2025 as a threat to civilian supremacy; all of them engaged in academic study and digital campaigns; nine of the thirteen informants participated in street

demonstrations; and not a single informant reported a direct policy change as a result of the movement, yet all informants identified democratic education and increased organizational capacity as the tangible impacts they experienced. Diverse yet convergent organizational ideologies, cross-organizational solidarity, and prior activism experience emerged as the main drivers of this multi-channel movement.

From a political sociology perspective, these findings affirm: first, that students are active actors who construct meaning, build solidarity, and choose strategies based on complex considerations; second, that the effectiveness of a movement is not measured solely by policy reversal, but by its contribution to the reproduction of democratic culture and the strengthening of civil society, consistent with the argument that a healthy state-civil society relationship is a prerequisite for post-reform democratic consolidation (Fauzan et al., 2025); and third, that dynamics in regional cities such as Bengkulu offer a perspective that enriches the study of Indonesian political sociology. Further research is recommended to extend this design toward comparative multi-city analysis and a longitudinal approach to examine the long-term influence of the student movement on local democratic consolidation, as well as to incorporate quantitative method triangulation to map patterns of resistance more broadly.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors extend their sincere gratitude to all thirteen informants who contributed their time, experience, and critical insight. This research was conducted independently without external funding. Thanks are also due to the Department of Sociology, FISIP, Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu, for the institutional support provided.

REFERENCES

Al-Adawiyah, S. (2025). *Dwifungsi Gaya Baru ? Penempatan Prajurit Aktif Di Jabatan Sipil Dalam Revisi Uu Tni 2025 Dan Dampaknya Terhadap Demokrasi*. *2025*.

Baru, O., & Tantangan, D. A. N. (2025). *Militerisme Dalam Politik Indonesia: Sejarah Restrospektif Orde Baru Dan Tantangan Demokrasi Paryanto Paryanto*. *9*, 26–37.

Dan, T., & Affianty, D. (2018). *Terorisme Dan Kejahatan Internasional*.

Djuyandi, Y., & Sudirman, A. (2025). *Journal Of Political Issues Analisis Hubungan Sipil-Militer Di Indonesia Pasca Reformasi*. *7*, 46–56.

Habib, Z., Ra, A.-, Shirazi, S. M., & Prayuda, F. (2025). *Aktivisme Digital : Gaya Politik Baru Kaum Muda Universitas Pamulang , Indonesia*. *1*.

Ilmu, F., & Jakarta, U. N. (2025). *Analisis Framing Pemberitaan Polemik Revisi Undang-Undang Tni Di Kompas . Id Dan Detiknews*. *3*(1), 137–153.

Indah, M., & Sari, P. (2025). *V.A. Romanti, E. Pawestri, & M.I.P. Sari P.Issn Number 2337-7216, E Issnnumber 2620-6625*. *2337*, 1083–1096.

Isdiyanto, I. Y. (2025). *Jurnal Hukum & Pembangunan Max Weber Vs Émile Durkheim : Pertarungan Paradigma Dalam Sosiologi Hukum Di Indonesia Max Weber Vs Émile Durkheim : Pertarungan Paradigma Dalam Sosiologi Hukum*. *55*(2). Https://Doi.Org/10.21143/Jhp.Vol55.No.2.1782

Keamanan, K., Prinsip, D. A. N., & Sipil, S. (2025). *Batas Kewenangan Tentara Nasional Indonesia Otonomi Daerah : Antara*. *2*(3), 282–295.

Https://Doi.Org/10.59971/Jamapedik.V2i3.413

Kurniawan, M. E., & Gerard, A. S. (2025). *Problematika Revisi Undang-Undang Tentara Nasional Indonesia Dalam Perspektif Hukum Tata Negara : Antara Reformasi Sektor Keamanan Dan Ancaman Militerisme*. *5*(1), 446–459.

Malik, R., Susanti, R., Hidir, A., Utara, U. S., & Utara, S. (2025). *Triangulasi Dan Analisis Domain ; Meningkatkan Kredibilitas Dan Kedalaman Penelitian Kualitatif*. *6*, 33–41.

Militer, S., & Perkembangan, S. D. A. N. (N.D.). *Sociology Of Knowledge),*.

Mukhtar, Sidratahta. "Strategi Perubahan Uud 1945: Peru Bahan Konstitusi Dan Demokrasi." Editor: Reni Suwarso, Ph. D., Dr. Audra Jovani, Mps, Honest Dody Molasy, Ma: 141. (N.D.).

No, V. (2026). *Transformasi Gerakan Sosial Di Era Digital : Studi Kasus Aksi Online Dan*. *1*(1), 27–33.

Perubahan, U. T. ;, & Suryantoro, P. K. (2025). Perubahan Uu Tni : Telaah Atas Substansi Dan Dampaknya. *Iuris Studia: Jurnal Kajian Hukum*, *6*(2), 557–565.

Prayogi, A., Maulana, M. A., Kurnia, K., Syarkawi, M. H., & Fuadi, M. H. (N.D.). *Ilmu Politik Dan Dinamika Kekuasaan*.

Puspitasari, H. R., & Pd, M. (N.D.). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*.

Saddawiyah, A. S., Setyawan, K. G., & Imron, A. (2024). *Peran Organisasi Ekstra Kampus Dalam Membangun Demokrasi Deliberatif Mahasiswa Universitas Negeri Surabaya*. *4*(3), 47–55.

Solusinya, T. D. A. N. (2025). *Strategi Pengumpulan Data Dalam Penelitian Kualitatif : 3*(6), 107–118.

Sutanto, A. (2019). *Pengalaman Meditasi Dalam Mengembangkan Kepekaan Diri Dan Self-Compassion : Studi Fenomenologi Pada Dewasa Muda Di Indonesia*. *2018*.

Teori, I. (2012). *Sosiologi Suatu*.

Teori, P., & Erving, D. (2010). *" Teori Diri ." 4*(2).

Waruwu, M. (2024). *Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif : Konsep , Prosedur , Kelebihan Dan Peran Di Bidang Pendidikan*. *5*, 198–211.

Yosarie, I. (2025). *Revisi Tanpa Semangat Reformasi : Residu Dwifungsi Abri Dalam Revisi Undang-Undang Nomor 34 Tahun 2004 Tentang Tentara Nasional Indonesia Revision Without The Spirit Of Reform : Residues Of The Abri ' S Dual Function In The Revision Of Law Number 34 Of 2004 Concerning The Indonesian National Armed Forces*. *22*(1), 22–31.