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Constitutionality of Separating National and Regional Elections after Constitutional Court Decision 135/PUU-XXII/2024

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Abstract

Indonesia's experience with the five-ballot simultaneous election in 2019 exposed the administrative strain created when presidential, national legislative, and regional legislative contests are conducted within a single electoral cycle. The resulting burden on voters, election organisers, and electoral logistics became part of the constitutional debate that preceded Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024. This article examines two related issues: whether the Constitution permits national and regional elections to be placed on different schedules, and how such a redesign affects the tenure of provincial and regency/municipal Regional People's Representative Councils (DPRD). The research is normative and doctrinal, drawing on statutory, case, conceptual, and historical approaches. It finds that the 1945 Constitution does not prescribe one compulsory model of simultaneity; separation is therefore permissible so long as the legislature protects electoral periodicity, popular sovereignty, representative legitimacy, and legal certainty. The principal difficulty lies in the transition. Existing legislation does not yet provide a complete mechanism for reconciling the new regional election timetable with the statutory five-year tenure of DPRD members. Any additional period in office must consequently rest on express legislation, be confined to the minimum period required for transition, and remain compatible with Article 22E paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution. Legislative harmonisation is therefore necessary before the new schedule is implemented.

Keywords: electoral periodicity, election scheduling, constitutional adjudication, regional legislatures, democratic legitimacy, electoral law.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's electoral calendar entered a new constitutional phase when Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024 authorised the national and regional electoral cycles to be reorganised. The central issue is not simply when ballots should be cast, but how a revised timetable can remain faithful to popular sovereignty under Article 1 paragraph (2) and to the five-year periodicity required by Article 22E paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution. Periodic elections renew the authority of representative bodies; they are therefore a source of democratic legitimacy rather than a matter of administrative convenience. A change in scheduling must also preserve legal certainty for election organisers, candidates, voters, and institutions responsible for public order and election security. For Police Science, this institutional clarity is relevant because a predictable electoral framework supports risk planning, inter-agency coordination, and the lawful maintenance of security throughout the electoral cycle. The 2024 Decision consequently raises interconnected questions about legislative discretion, DPRD tenure, transitional legality, and the coherence of Indonesia's electoral laws (Noviawati, 2019).

The present debate developed from the constitutional settlement established by Constitutional Court Decision Number 14/PUU-XI/2013. That decision required presidential and national legislative elections to be conducted concurrently, and the model was first implemented nationally in 2019. Its underlying rationale was to align the formation of the executive and national representative institutions, reinforce the presidential system, and reduce fragmentation in electoral administration. The legislature later incorporated this judicial interpretation into the statutory framework governing general elections. Although the model sought institutional coherence, it also expanded the number of choices presented to voters on one election day and concentrated complex organisational tasks within a narrow period (Rajagukguk et al., 2021).

The 2019 election demonstrated that legal simultaneity can generate operational consequences that affect the quality of democratic participation. Voters were required to distinguish candidates across several levels of representation, while election management bodies had to prepare, distribute, count, and recapitulate five different ballots. At polling-station level, these tasks compressed extensive administrative work into a limited timeframe. The problem was therefore broader than technical inconvenience: excessive complexity could impair the accessibility of the voting process, weaken attention to regional representation, and increase the possibility of administrative error. Those concerns prompted renewed evaluation of whether one nationwide election day remained the most effective means of implementing constitutional democracy (Tyesta ALW, 2019).

Geographical diversity intensified those difficulties. The movement of ballot papers and other materials across remote areas, the coordination of local election structures, and the simultaneous conduct of polling and counting required substantial institutional capacity. Where administration becomes overly complex, delays or mistakes may affect voting rights, legal certainty, and the resolution of electoral disputes. The 2019 experience thus supplied an important factual setting for constitutional review, although operational problems alone do not determine whether an electoral model is constitutional. Their legal relevance lies in showing how institutional design may facilitate or obstruct the effective exercise of rights guaranteed by the electoral framework (Mahesuari et al., 2023).

Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024 responded to a petition challenging the statutory arrangement of simultaneous elections. The Court differentiated national contests - the presidential election and elections for the DPR and DPD - from regional contests involving governors, regents, mayors, and DPRD members. It concluded that the existing combination had produced practical burdens capable of reducing the effectiveness of electoral administration and democratic participation. The Court therefore declared Article 167 paragraph (3) and Article 347 paragraph (1) of Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections conditionally unconstitutional to the extent that they compelled both groups of elections to be held together. Rather than prescribing every feature of the replacement system, the Court required the legislature to redesign the timetable and to prepare the legal measures needed for transition. This distinction is crucial: the judgment creates constitutional space for separation, but implementation remains dependent on legislation.

Scholarship on simultaneous elections has largely concentrated on implementation. Fathurrahman et al. (2023) found that compliance and participation did not eliminate excessive workloads, administrative mistakes, and weaknesses in the management of the 2019 election. Read together with other evaluations, this literature explains why the five-ballot model became the subject of reform. It does not, however, fully resolve the post-decision constitutional problem. Once national and regional contests are placed on different cycles, the question shifts from whether separation may improve administration to whether transitional arrangements can preserve the five-year renewal of DPRD mandates. The present article addresses that narrower gap by examining the constitutional boundaries of legislative redesign and the legal basis required for any temporary adjustment of regional legislative tenure.

Luhukay (2020) treated the separation of national and regional elections as an institutional alternative to the burdens revealed in 2019. The analysis was valuable in identifying the relationship between electoral complexity, organisers' workloads, and the effective exercise of voting rights. Because it preceded Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024, however, it could not assess the legal consequences generated by the Court's new interpretation. In particular, it did not examine how a delayed regional election would interact with the expiry of DPRD terms or what constitutional safeguards should govern the transitional period. That unresolved issue forms the principal doctrinal concern of this study.
Prayudi (2021) approached separation from a public-policy perspective. The proposed advantages included clearer political accountability, stronger alignment within the presidential system, reduced pressure on election officials, and greater opportunity for voters to focus on regional choices. The same study warned that identity-based mobilisation and weak party adaptation could limit those benefits. These considerations show that electoral reform has institutional costs as well as potential gains. They nevertheless remain distinct from the legal question examined here: whether the legislature may separate the cycles without diluting the periodic electoral mandate of provincial and regency/municipal DPRD members.

Against that background, the study asks two questions. First, does the separation of national and regional elections contemplated by Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024 conform to the 1945 Constitution? Second, what constitutional consequences follow for DPRD tenure when the regional legislative election is moved away from the national cycle? The article aims to determine the scope of legislative discretion in redesigning the schedule and to formulate the limits that should govern transitional tenure. The analysis centres on electoral periodicity, popular sovereignty, legal certainty, and the democratic legitimacy of representative institutions.

Constitutional law theory provides the first analytical framework. It treats the Constitution as the superior norm that authorises, structures, and limits public power. Legislation and judicial implementation must therefore be assessed against constitutional text, institutional competence, rights protection, and legal certainty (Asshiddiqie, 2021). In this article, that framework is used to read Article 1 paragraph (2), Article 18, and Article 22E paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution in relation to the Court's authority to interpret election provisions. It also guides the assessment of whether a statutory adjustment to DPRD tenure is a legitimate transitional measure or an impermissible continuation of representative power without a renewed mandate.

The second framework is constitutional democracy. Under this conception, democratic choice operates through legal institutions that constrain power, protect rights, and make government accountable. Elections are therefore more than procedures for selecting office-holders; they are recurring constitutional occasions on which citizens confer, review, or withdraw political authority (Pettit, 2022). This framework is particularly useful for evaluating a transitional extension. Even where a scheduling reform is rational and administratively beneficial, its implementation remains constitutionally defensible only when the temporary arrangement does not displace the electorate's entitlement to regular democratic renewal.

The article's contribution lies in linking electoral redesign to the constitutional status of the transition. Earlier work has explained the managerial, political, and voter-related problems of simultaneous elections, whereas the legal effect of the 2024 Decision on DPRD tenure has received less systematic treatment. By combining constitutional supremacy, periodicity, popular sovereignty, and legal certainty, this study develops criteria for judging any transitional arrangement: it must have an express statutory basis, pursue a legitimate constitutional objective, last no longer than necessary, and preserve the equality and accountability of representative mandates. This framework also contributes to Police Science by clarifying the legal environment within which election-security planning and public-order operations are organised.

The research is normative legal research. Its primary materials are the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia; Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections; Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, as last amended by Law Number 9 of 2015; Constitutional Court Decision Number 14/PUU-XI/2013; and Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024. Secondary materials consist of books and peer-reviewed scholarship on constitutional law, electoral governance, constitutional adjudication, and democratic institutions. Legal dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and the Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia are used as tertiary materials where clarification of terminology is required.

Four approaches are combined. The statutory approach identifies the rules governing election timing and DPRD tenure. The case approach reconstructs the *ratio decidendi* of the two Constitutional Court decisions and distinguishes the Court's holding from consequences that must still be regulated by the legislature. The conceptual approach examines constitutional supremacy, democratic legitimacy, legal certainty, popular sovereignty, and periodic renewal. The historical approach traces the movement from separate electoral schedules to the post-2013 simultaneous model and then to the redesign authorised in 2024. Together, these approaches connect the research questions to the relevant norms rather than treating administrative experience as an independent source of constitutional validity.

The legal materials are examined in four steps. First, the relevant constitutional and statutory provisions are identified and classified according to their functions. Second, those provisions are compared to locate tensions between the new schedule and the existing rules on DPRD tenure. Third, the reasoning of Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024 is analysed to determine what the Court authorised, what it required from lawmakers, and what it left unresolved. Fourth, possible transitional arrangements are evaluated against electoral periodicity, popular sovereignty, legal certainty, representative accountability, and constitutional supremacy.

Systematic, historical, and teleological interpretation are applied according to the issue under examination. Systematic interpretation reads Articles 1, 18, and 22E of the 1945 Constitution together with the election and regional-government statutes. Historical interpretation explains why the earlier separation of electoral schedules cannot automatically justify the legal consequences of returning to a separated model after a decade of simultaneity. Teleological interpretation focuses on the constitutional purposes served by regular elections: the renewal of political authority, meaningful representation, and accountable government. The combined analysis is used to assess both the validity of separation and the permissible limits of a transitional arrangement affecting DPRD tenure.

DISCUSSION

Constitutional Legitimacy of Separating National and Regional Elections

Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024 should be understood as an authorisation for legislative redesign, not as a self-executing electoral calendar. The Court considered the concentrated demands of the five-ballot model, including the number of offices presented to voters, the complexity of counting, and the pressure placed on election organisers. It concluded that the Constitution allows national contests to be separated from regional contests when the new arrangement continues to satisfy democratic and constitutional requirements. The judgment consequently removes the assumption that simultaneity is the only permissible reading of Article 22E, while leaving the legislature responsible for specifying dates, institutional coordination, and transitional rules (Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024, 2024).

The Court's reasoning must nevertheless be read with care. Administrative difficulty was not transformed into a freestanding constitutional prohibition on complex elections. Rather, the practical record helped the Court assess whether the statutory model still supported effective participation and manageable electoral administration. The legal conclusion was that separation falls within the range of constitutionally acceptable designs; it was not that every separated schedule is automatically valid. A particular legislative model may still be defective if it disrupts the five-year cycle, treats representative mandates inconsistently, or creates uncertainty about when elected authority begins and ends. The constitutional assessment therefore moves from the permissibility of separation to the legality of the rules chosen to implement it.

That distinction reveals the central normative gap. The 2024 Decision establishes that the electoral cycles may be separated, but it does not itself determine what happens when the new regional election date falls after the ordinary expiry of DPRD membership. Article 155 paragraph (4) of Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, as last amended by Law Number 9 of 2015, links the end of a five-year DPRD term to the oath of its successors. Without a specific transitional rule, the statutory text may allow incumbents to remain until replacement, even though the electorate has not renewed their mandate at the usual five-year interval. Legislation is therefore required to reconcile continuity of the institution with periodic democratic authorisation.

The operational experience of 2019 explains why redesign was considered, but it should be incorporated into constitutional analysis through a disciplined legal connection. Fuadi (2022) describes how the short period available for voting, counting, and recapitulation generated intense physical and psychological pressure for election officials. Those conditions are relevant because an electoral framework should enable institutions to perform their legal duties effectively and should not impose avoidable risks that undermine participation or accuracy. They support the search for a more workable schedule, yet they do not dispense with the need to protect the constitutional values that a transition may affect. Administrative effectiveness and democratic renewal must be achieved together rather than traded against each other.

Research on the Polling Station Working Committee (KPPS) further illustrates the institutional dimension of the problem. Novi Tazkiyatun Nihayah et al. (2023) associate the intensive sequence of polling and counting with fatigue and excessive workloads among officials. In a normative study, such findings function as contextual evidence rather than as proof of constitutional invalidity. They indicate that the legislature has a legitimate reason to reduce concentrated burdens and to distribute electoral tasks more rationally. The Court relied on comparable concerns when assessing the quality of participation and administration under the existing model (Constitutional

Court of the Republic of Indonesia Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024, 2024).

The proper constitutional inference is therefore limited but significant. Article 22E paragraph (1) requires elections to be conducted directly, generally, freely, secretly, honestly, and fairly every five years. An electoral design that predictably overwhelms its administering institutions may make those standards harder to realise, even when the design is formally authorised by statute. The legislature may respond by separating schedules, provided that the remedy remains consistent with the same article's requirement of periodic renewal. Reform is constitutionally responsive when it improves the conditions for meaningful voting without postponing democratic accountability beyond a legally justified transition.

The welfare and safety of election officials also deserve consideration, although Article 28G paragraph (1) should not be treated as a guarantee against every demanding public duty. Its relevance lies in the State's obligation to design and administer elections with reasonable safeguards against disproportionate and foreseeable harm. A proportional arrangement should balance the public interest in efficient elections, the rights of voters, and the protection of those who carry out statutory functions. The maxim *salus populi suprema lex esto* may reinforce that orientation, but it operates as a normative guide rather than an autonomous rule capable of deciding the constitutional issue (Atmadja, 2018). The stronger legal basis for reform remains the combined demand for effective participation, lawful administration, and periodic elections.

Separation may also improve the representative quality of regional contests. Wasisto's (2021) study of voter behaviour in Surabaya found that the five-ballot format and limited political literacy made it difficult for voters to distinguish candidates at different legislative levels. When national campaigns dominate public attention, regional issues and candidates may receive less scrutiny. A dedicated regional cycle could therefore create more deliberative space for local programmes, accountability, and representation. This benefit is constitutionally relevant because popular sovereignty is exercised meaningfully only when voters can understand the offices and alternatives before them. It does not, however, justify an indefinite postponement of the next regional legislative election; the opportunity for more focused choice must remain tied to a clear and lawful timetable.

Electoral-governance scholarship similarly treats effectiveness as a relationship between system design, institutional capacity, voter preparedness, and representative outcomes (Sirajuddin et al., 2021). Excessive complexity may increase procedural error and reduce the practical exercise of voting rights (Khoirunnisa, 2020). These considerations support legislative discretion to choose a separated model, but that discretion is bounded. The implementing statute must regulate the sequence of national and regional contests, coordinate the responsibilities of election bodies and security institutions, and explain the transitional status of office-holders. A schedule that solves one administrative problem by creating uncertainty over representative tenure would not satisfy the broader constitutional requirement of effective and accountable electoral governance.

The most serious issue arises if the interval between national and regional elections causes incumbent DPRD members to serve beyond the ordinary electoral cycle. Continuity is necessary because a representative body cannot simply cease functioning before its successors are installed. Yet institutional continuity does not by itself supply a renewed democratic mandate. Mutawalli et al. (2023) emphasise the constitutional importance of electoral periodisation, which enables citizens to reassess political authority at predictable intervals. A transitional extension may therefore be defensible only as an exceptional bridge between two systems, not as an ordinary enlargement of legislative tenure. Its legal basis, duration, and purpose must be stated expressly and remain open to constitutional review.

The text of Article 22E paragraph (1) supports separation. It requires general elections every five years and identifies the principles governing their conduct, but it does not state that all national and regional contests must occur on the same day or within one cycle. Asriana et al. (2022) accordingly distinguish periodicity from simultaneity: the former is constitutionally required, whereas the precise arrangement of different contests is left to legal design. On this reading, separate schedules are valid in principle. The legislature must nevertheless ensure that each elected representative institution receives a mandate through an election held within the constitutional period, subject only to a narrowly tailored transitional mechanism.

A systematic reading reaches the same conclusion. Article 1 paragraph (2) locates sovereignty in the people and requires its exercise to follow the Constitution. Article 22E paragraph (1) gives recurring institutional form to that sovereignty through elections, while Article 18 situates regional representative government within the constitutional structure. These provisions do not command one pattern of simultaneity; instead, they require a design that keeps authority democratically traceable and legally certain. Laksono and Agustine (2017) show that judicial interpretation has played a substantial role in shaping election design after Decision Number 14/PUU-XI/2013. The legislature retains room to redesign the system, but the resulting statute must continue to connect representative power to regular popular authorisation.

Historical practice confirms that separated schedules are not inherently foreign to the 1945 Constitution. Before Decision Number 14/PUU-XI/2013, national and regional electoral processes operated under different statutory timetables. Abra (2019) notes that the constitutional text did not prescribe a single original model of simultaneity. That history demonstrates legislative flexibility, but it cannot be used without qualification. The current transition begins after the legal system has organised simultaneous elections and after DPRD members were elected for terms calculated under that framework. Returning to separation therefore creates tenure consequences that did not arise in the same form under the earlier system. Historical acceptance of separate voting dates does not amount to historical approval of extending an existing mandate without clear law.

Teleological interpretation focuses on why Article 22E requires a five-year cycle. The provision protects the recurring transfer and review of authority, not merely the regular occurrence of an administrative event. Hantoro (2023) explains that constitutional interpretation of simultaneity must remain connected to the purposes of electoral government. A redesigned timetable is therefore legitimate when it improves fairness, participation, and institutional manageability while maintaining the public's periodic control over representatives. Conversely, a transition that delays accountability for longer than necessary would conflict with the purpose of the five-year guarantee even if it could be accommodated through a literal reading of the statutory end-of-term provision.

The timing problem is concrete. DPRD members elected in 2024 ordinarily complete a five-year term in 2029. If the first regional cycle under the new model is held roughly two to two-and-a-half years after the national election, the inauguration of successors may occur after that point. The law must then choose among transitional options while avoiding an institutional vacancy. Any additional service by incumbents should be authorised before the ordinary term expires, confined to the minimum period needed to install successors, and accompanied by a fixed election date. These conditions prevent a temporary bridge from becoming an open-ended extension and allow voters, parties, election organisers, and security institutions to plan on a legally certain basis.

An extension without a specific legislative foundation would be constitutionally vulnerable. Article 22E paragraph

(1) gives citizens a recurring opportunity to renew or withdraw representative authority. When incumbents continue to exercise legislative power after the usual period without a new election, that opportunity is postponed. Junadi et al. (2021) connect limits on legislative tenure to accountability and the prevention of entrenched power. A transition may justify a short departure from the ordinary timetable, but the departure must satisfy legality, necessity, proportionality, and temporal certainty. A general reference to institutional continuity is insufficient unless the statute explains why the chosen duration is indispensable and how democratic control will be restored.

Implementation therefore requires coordinated amendments rather than a single change to the election date. Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections must specify the new cycles and their transitional sequence. Those provisions must be harmonised with Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, as last amended by Law Number 9 of 2015, particularly the rule governing the end of DPRD tenure. The statute should also allocate responsibilities among election management bodies, clarify inauguration dates, and provide a stable basis for election-security coordination. This integrated approach avoids unequal treatment in which national institutions receive mandates on a predictable five-year cycle while regional representative bodies operate under uncertain or ad hoc extensions.

Constitutional Implications for Regional Legislative Tenure

The constitutional consequence of separation is best understood as a problem of mandate continuity. The 2024 Decision does not erase the distinction between DPRD elections, which fall within the general-election framework, and regional-head elections, whose constitutional basis is located in Article 18. Nevertheless, grouping those contests within a regional cycle may cause the term of a DPRD to expire before the next regional vote and inauguration. Article 1 paragraph (2) and Article 22E paragraph (1) require the resulting gap to be addressed in a manner that preserves popular sovereignty and electoral periodicity. The aim is to maintain the operation of representative government without allowing continuity to displace the electorate as the ultimate source of authority.

Article 155 paragraph (4) of Law Number 23 of 2014 states that DPRD members serve for five years and that their tenure ends when successors take the oath. The provision secures institutional continuity, but it was not drafted as a comprehensive transitional regime for the electoral separation authorised in 2024. If the next inauguration occurs after the five-year point, the continuation of incumbents must be treated as an exceptional statutory consequence rather than as an automatic entitlement. Express transitional legislation should identify the affected terms, the exact endpoint, the legal status of decisions taken during the additional period, and the mechanism for inaugurating successors. Such detail is necessary to prevent uncertainty over the validity and accountability of regional legislative action.

Regular elections protect citizens' ability to evaluate their representatives. Firmanto (2023) observes that delaying an election engages constitutional-democratic concerns because it suspends the ordinary opportunity to confer a fresh mandate. A limited transition is not necessarily equivalent to an unconstitutional postponement, but it must remain temporary, predetermined, and directed toward the operation of the new system. Without these safeguards, different schedules could produce unequal standards of accountability between national and regional institutions. Tukina (2020) highlights the importance of respecting regional democratic sovereignty within Indonesia's constitutional order. Any transition should therefore preserve not only institutional continuity but also the equal constitutional value of regional representation.

The pre-2013 experience of separate schedules cannot answer the present tenure issue. At that time, the legal system had not yet moved from a consolidated simultaneous model into a newly separated cycle. Decision Number 14/PUU-XI/2013 and Law Number 7 of 2017 subsequently reorganised the electoral structure (Zuhri, 2018). Kurnia (2022) demonstrates that the practical consequences of the post-2013 model became part of the later constitutional debate. The current change therefore operates upon terms of office formed under a different timetable. For that reason, past coexistence of separate elections cannot be treated as a sufficient legal basis for additional tenure. Under a purposive reading, the five-year cycle remains a substantive guarantee of democratic renewal (Wijoyo & Firdaus, 2022).

The legislature must distinguish the reason for reform from the rules governing transition. The burdens of the 2019 election support reconsideration of the schedule, but they do not independently authorise a longer representative mandate. Zainurahman et al. (2025) identify the legal implications of the 2024 Decision for regional offices and the need for statutory adjustment. Yulida and Anggreini (2025) likewise examine transitional electoral design as a means of avoiding legal and institutional disruption. Drawing on those concerns, the implementing law should establish a fixed first regional election date, a narrowly defined interim tenure, a uniform inauguration mechanism, and clear review provisions. These safeguards would connect the temporary measure directly to the constitutional objective it serves.

The absence of such rules creates a normative void. Current legislation regulates the ordinary length and termination of DPRD membership but does not fully address the change from the 2024 electoral cycle to a later regional cycle. If incumbents continue without a new mandate, uncertainty may arise regarding accountability, the temporal scope of authority, and the democratic basis of decisions taken during the additional period. Diniyanto (2022) links election postponement to the requirements of constitutional democracy and the rule of law. The relevant issue is therefore not whether DPRD tenure may ever be adjusted, but whether the adjustment is authorised, necessary, proportionate, and precisely limited.

Separation should consequently be treated as a constitutional redesign with two inseparable components. The first is the permanent allocation of national and regional contests to different schedules. The second is a one-time transition that reconciles the new timetable with existing mandates. Administrative efficiency may justify the first component, whereas only express and narrowly tailored legislation can legitimate the second. If either component is left incomplete, reform may improve election-day management while weakening legal certainty and periodic accountability. Constitutional legitimacy requires both a workable electoral system and a transparent route by which every representative mandate returns to the electorate.

A constitutionally sound framework should therefore amend Law Number 7 of 2017 and harmonise it with the regional-government legislation. At minimum, it should define the composition of the national and regional cycles, set the first election and inauguration dates, specify any temporary continuation of DPRD membership, and prohibit extensions beyond the period strictly required for transition. It should also coordinate electoral administration and security responsibilities so that legal certainty extends from institutional planning to implementation. With those safeguards, separation can enhance voter focus and administrative capacity while preserving constitutional supremacy, democratic legitimacy, and the five-year principle of electoral renewal.

CONCLUSION

The separation of national and regional elections is constitutionally permissible because Article 22E paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution requires periodic elections but does not impose a single compulsory model of simultaneity. Constitutional Court Decision Number 135/PUU-XXII/2024 accordingly opens space for the legislature to design a more manageable electoral calendar. That authority is limited by popular sovereignty, legal certainty, representative accountability, and the requirement that political mandates be renewed at five-year intervals. The unresolved issue concerns the transition from the 2024 cycle to the first separated regional cycle. Existing rules on DPRD tenure do not by themselves provide a sufficiently precise basis for an additional period in office. Any continuation beyond the ordinary term must be expressly authorised, temporary, necessary, and tied to a fixed date for the election and inauguration of successors. Harmonised amendments to the election and regional-government laws are therefore essential to preserve both institutional continuity and democratic legitimacy.

SUGGESTION

The legislature should enact the transitional framework before implementing the separated schedule. The amendment to Law Number 7 of 2017 on General Elections should establish the first national and regional cycles, while corresponding changes to Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government should regulate the exact end of the affected DPRD terms and the inauguration of successors. Any temporary continuation must be limited to the shortest objectively necessary period and accompanied by a publicly fixed electoral timetable. Election management bodies, regional governments, and security institutions should then prepare coordinated operational plans based on that statutory schedule. Comparative research may further examine how other constitutional systems preserve representative legitimacy when judicial decisions require a change in electoral timing.

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Operational Independence, Democratic Accountability, and Precision Policing in Indonesia

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Abstract

Indonesia's police-governance debate is often framed as a choice between direct presidential control and full institutional separation. That binary overlooks the more precise legal question: how democratic policy direction can coexist with professional independence in case-specific policing decisions. This article examines the constitutional and administrative position of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) after Law Number 5 of 2026, using qualitative normative legal research with statutory, conceptual, and structured comparative approaches. Primary legal materials include the 1945 Constitution, the relevant People's Consultative Assembly Decrees, the Police Law and its latest amendment, regulations on Polri and Kompolnas, and Constitutional Court Decision Number 114/PUU-XXIII/2025. Japan, Germany, and England and Wales are compared because they represent distinct arrangements for collegial buffering, territorial distribution of police authority, and an express separation between political accountability and operational command. The analysis finds that Indonesian law has strengthened professionalism, neutrality, internal supervision, and Kompolnas, while leaving the meaning and limits of Polri's position "under the President" insufficiently specified for case-specific intervention. The article proposes a two-level institutional boundary test that distinguishes lawful democratic control over legislation, general priorities, budgets, appointments, and public accountability from prohibited directions concerning identifiable investigations, evidence assessment, or case outcomes. Its novelty lies in translating that distinction into an integrated safeguards package for Presisi: a statutory anti-interference rule, a written-direction register, reinforced external oversight, conflict-of-interest controls, merit safeguards, and reviewable implementation indicators. The proposal does not remove civilian control; it makes such control legally bounded, auditable, and compatible with evidence-based, proportionate, transparent, and procedurally fair policing.

Keywords: Indonesian National Police, operational independence, democratic accountability, police oversight, comparative policing, Presisi

INTRODUCTION

The constitutional position of the police cannot be evaluated solely by asking which state organ stands above it in an organisational chart. Police institutions exercise coercive powers, investigate criminal allegations, regulate public order, and provide services that directly affect liberty, equality, and political participation. A democratic system must therefore pursue two objectives at the same time: the police must remain subject to lawfully constituted civilian authority, yet particular investigations and enforcement decisions must not become instruments of partisan advantage. The institutional problem is one of bounded authority rather than absolute independence.

In Indonesia, Article 30(4) of the 1945 Constitution identifies Polri as a state instrument responsible for maintaining security and public order, protecting and serving the public, and enforcing the law. The post-reformasi separation of the military and police was constitutionally and politically consolidated through People's Consultative Assembly Decrees Number VI/MPR/2000 and VII/MPR/2000. Law Number 2 of 2002 subsequently placed Polri under the President and made the Chief of the Indonesian National Police (Kapolri) responsible to the President. This arrangement affirmed civilian supremacy after the police had been integrated within the armed forces, but it did not fully specify the legal boundary between legitimate presidential policy control and impermissible influence over individual law-enforcement matters (People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia, 2000a, 2000b; Republic of Indonesia, 1945, 2002).

The legal setting changed materially in 2026. Law Number 5 of 2026, the Third Amendment to Law Number 2 of 2002, strengthened provisions concerning Kapolri's authority, professional and accountable policing, internal supervision, political neutrality, appointments outside the police organisation, human-rights and democracy content in professional education, and Kompolnas. The amendment did not, however, alter Article 8, under which Polri remains under the President. Consequently, contemporary analysis cannot proceed as though the 2002 statute were unchanged, nor can it assume that formal separation is the only available reform. The relevant inquiry is whether the amended statutory framework contains sufficiently clear, enforceable, and reviewable safeguards against case-specific political intervention (Republic of Indonesia, 2026).

Indonesian scholarship has documented the incomplete character of police reform, including persistent politicisation risks, organisational legacies, accountability gaps, and the difficulty of converting structural change into professional practice (Haripin & Siregar, 2016; Sufriadi, 2024). Recent work has also examined legitimacy, procedural justice, community policing, human-resource reform, and the relationship between police performance and public evaluation in the Indonesian context (Adhikara et al., 2024; Adhikara & Putranto, 2026; Fitrianto et al., 2025). These studies are essential, but they do not by themselves provide a doctrinal test for distinguishing lawful democratic direction from unlawful intervention in particular cases.

A separate body of literature examines police accountability and operational independence in other jurisdictions. Research on England and Wales shows that elected accountability can create productive scrutiny but also recurring disputes over the boundary between strategic direction and operational command (Davies & Johnson, 2016; Derfoufi, 2023; Lister, 2013; Loveday, 2018; Shannon, 2021). Comparative oversight scholarship further demonstrates that civilian bodies differ greatly in mandate, access to information, investigative capacity, remedial authority, and institutional independence; the existence of an oversight body alone does not guarantee effective accountability (Cooper, 2023; Kim, 2022; Savage, 2013; Shilston, 2016; Stelkia, 2020).

A third literature addresses evidence-based policing, procedural justice, and police legitimacy. Evidence-based policing concerns the disciplined use of the best available knowledge in selecting and evaluating interventions, while procedural justice concerns the fairness, neutrality, respectful treatment, and voice experienced in police encounters (Bullock & Tilley, 2009; Klose, 2024; Scrase, 2021). Empirical studies associate procedurally just treatment with legitimacy, although the strength, direction, and cultural expression of that relationship remain context-dependent and should not be reduced to a universal causal formula (Perry, 2024; Pósch, 2021; Sahin et al., 2017; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). The institutional conditions under which officers can consistently apply evidence, proportionality, and fair procedure nevertheless remain underdeveloped in the Indonesian legal debate.

The research gap lies at the intersection of these three discussions. Existing Indonesian reform studies identify organisational and political vulnerabilities; accountability studies describe oversight arrangements; and policing scholarship explains evidence, fairness, and legitimacy. What remains insufficiently specified is a legal-institutional boundary that preserves democratic civilian control at the policy level while protecting identifiable cases from extralegal direction, together with safeguards capable of making that boundary operational within Polri's Presisi agenda. Without such a boundary, "independence" may be misunderstood as freedom from accountability, while "civilian control" may be interpreted too broadly to include influence over investigative targets, evidence, or outcomes.

This article asks: how should Indonesian law distinguish legitimate democratic control of Polri from prohibited case-specific political intervention, and which institutional safeguards can support that distinction without weakening accountability or public-security coordination? Its objective is not to prove that executive control has caused particular enforcement outcomes. A normative-comparative study cannot establish that empirical proposition. Instead, it identifies structural vulnerability, tests the coherence of existing safeguards, and develops legally feasible reform alternatives.

The article's novelty is a two-level institutional boundary test. At the first level, democratically legitimate control includes legislation, general policing priorities, budget authorisation, service standards, transparent appointment processes, reporting duties, inspection, and ex post review. At the second level, prohibited intervention includes directions intended to target or protect an identifiable person or group, alter the lawful sequence or substance of an investigation, dictate the assessment of evidence, accelerate, delay, suspend, or terminate a case for an extralegal purpose, disclose protected case information, or condition careers and resources on a desired case outcome. Between these levels lies a limited category of operational policy decisions, such as public-order planning and inter-agency emergency operations, which must be based on law, recorded in writing, proportionate, time-limited, and open to independent ex post review.

This distinction is then translated into a safeguards package for Presisi. Presisi is Polri's institutional program of predictive, responsibility-based, transparent, and just policing (Indonesian National Police, 2021). It is not identical to the academic concept of precision policing, and neither concept is synonymous with predictive policing. For this article, substantive precision means decision-making that is legally grounded, evidence-informed, proportionate to risk, procedurally fair, transparent enough to be audited, and accountable for error. Institutional safeguards do not automatically produce those qualities, but they reduce the risk that relevant evidence and legal standards will be displaced by unauthorised external interests.

Research Design and Method

This study is qualitative, normative and comparative legal research. Its object is the distribution and control of public authority over Polri, with particular attention to the distinction between general policy direction and case-specific operational decision-making. The statutory approach examines the 1945 Constitution, People's Consultative Assembly Decrees Number VI/MPR/2000 and VII/MPR/2000, Law Number 2 of 2002 as amended most recently by Law Number 5 of 2026, regulations governing Polri's organisation and Kompolnas, and Constitutional Court Decision Number 114/PUU-XXIII/2025. Primary materials are interpreted through textual, systematic, historical, and purposive reasoning. Secondary materials consist of peer-reviewed research on Indonesian police reform, democratic policing, accountability, evidence-based policing, procedural justice, and comparative institutional design (Constitutional Court of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025; President of the Republic of Indonesia, 2010, 2011; Republic of Indonesia, 2002, 2026).

Materials were searched for the period January 2016-July 2026 through Crossref, Google Scholar, publisher databases, and official legal portals, using combinations of the terms “Indonesian police reform,” “Polri institutional position,” “police operational independence,” “democratic police accountability,” “civilian police oversight,” “precision policing,” “evidence-based policing,” “procedural justice,” “National Public Safety Commission,” “German police federalism,” and “Policing Protocol Order.” Earlier sources were retained only when they were foundational to operational independence, police accountability, or procedural justice. Inclusion required a verifiable legal text, official institutional document, or peer-reviewed source directly addressing the analytical dimensions. News reports, unattributed survey figures, unverifiable references, and sources that did not support the proposition for which they were cited were excluded.

Japan, Germany, and England and Wales were selected through a most-different-systems logic rather than as models to be copied. Japan illustrates a collegial public-safety commission positioned between political leadership and national police administration; Germany illustrates constitutionally distributed police competence between the Federation and the Länder, supplemented by parliamentary and judicial accountability; and England and Wales provides an express legal vocabulary separating elected strategic accountability from chief-constable operational independence, together with an independent complaints body. The jurisdictions are compared across the same dimensions: constitutional structure, institutional position, appointment, policy direction, operational independence, safeguards against case-specific intervention, complaints and discipline, parliamentary accountability, budget oversight, and judicial review.

The analytical procedure has four steps. First, the Indonesian legal framework is reconstructed after the 2026 amendment. Second, legitimate control and prohibited intervention are distinguished by reference to legality, institutional competence, specificity, purpose, process, and reviewability. Third, comparable safeguards are identified in the selected jurisdictions and separated into transferable principles and context-bound institutions. Fourth, reform options are assessed for constitutional feasibility, administrative feasibility, accountability value, politicisation risk, transition cost, and measurable implementation. The study is limited to normative and institutional analysis; it does not measure the prevalence of political intervention or estimate the causal effect of a particular model on trust, misconduct, or crime control.

DISCUSSION

Polri's Constitutional and Statutory Position after the 2026 Amendment

The 1945 Constitution establishes both democratic authority and legal constraint. Article 1(3) defines Indonesia as a state based on law, Article 4 vests governmental power in the President, and Article 30(4) assigns Polri the functions of public security, protection, service, and law enforcement. Read together, these provisions do not create a police institution outside civilian government. They require public power, including police power, to be exercised under law and through institutions whose authority is defined, limited, and reviewable.

The post-2000 separation of the TNI and Polri was designed to differentiate defence from domestic law enforcement and to consolidate civilian supremacy. People's Consultative Assembly Decree Number VI/MPR/2000 separated the institutions, while Decree Number VII/MPR/2000 defined their respective roles. Law Number 2 of 2002 then placed Polri under the President. The phrase "under the President" has organisational significance, but it should not be interpreted as an unlimited authorisation for any executive actor to direct any police decision. The President's constitutional authority must still be exercised through statute, lawful instruments, and accountable administrative processes.

Law Number 5 of 2026 materially strengthens the governing framework. Among other matters, it emphasises professionalism, proportionality, transparency, accountability, and internal supervision; confirms political neutrality; regulates positions outside the police organisation; expands professional education concerning human rights and democracy; and reinforces Kompolnas. The amendment also clarifies Kapolri's role in determining and controlling technical police policy and leading operational policing. These provisions support the proposition that professional operational authority is institutionally located within Polri, even while general political responsibility remains connected to the President.

The amendment's significance is twofold. First, it rejects an account of the Police Law as static and demonstrates that the legislature has chosen incremental safeguards while retaining the formal Article 8 arrangement. Second, it exposes a remaining ambiguity: the statute regulates neutrality and supervision but does not comprehensively define prohibited case-specific interference, a lawful channel for written executive direction, or a remedy when an officer receives an improper instruction. The gap is therefore not the total absence of safeguards; it is the absence of a sufficiently operational boundary between policy authority and case authority.

Kompolnas remains central to that assessment. Under the Police Law and Presidential Regulation Number 17 of 2011, Kompolnas advises the President on the direction of police policy and the appointment or dismissal of Kapolri and receives public complaints concerning police performance. The 2026 amendment strengthens its statutory position, but its placement under and responsibility to the President and its predominantly advisory character limit its capacity to serve as a wholly independent investigator of serious interference allegations. Strengthening Kompolnas therefore requires attention not merely to additional tasks, but to membership safeguards, access to information, reasons-giving, publication, conflict rules, and the relationship between inquiry and disciplinary or criminal processes.

Constitutional Court Decision Number 114/PUU-XXIII/2025 is also relevant because it narrowed the explanation of "positions outside the police" by invalidating the phrase that permitted positions unrelated to policing merely because they were based on a Kapolri assignment. Law Number 5 of 2026 subsequently introduced Article 28A governing outside appointments, and constitutional challenges to that provision were pending at the research cut-off date. The decision and subsequent litigation demonstrate that institutional boundaries, conflict of interest, and the status of active officers in civilian positions are not peripheral administrative questions; they affect neutrality and the perceived separation between professional policing and political administration.

Table 1 summarises the current regulatory position and the unresolved issues identified through normative analysis. The final column does not assert that a violation has occurred. It identifies legal design questions that remain open after the 2026 amendment.

Table 1. Indonesian legal framework and unresolved institutional safeguards

Legal component	**Current legal position**	**Accountability value**	**Unresolved design question**
Constitutional mandate	Article 30(4) defines Polri as a state instrument for security, protection, service, and law enforcement.	Places policing within constitutional government and the rule of law.	How should policy control be distinguished from influence over identifiable cases?
Institutional position	Article 8 of Law No. 2/2002 retains Polri under the President.	Provides a clear line of democratic responsibility.	What form, purpose, and record are required for lawful presidential direction?
Operational leadership	The amended Police Law confirms Kapolri's technical-policy and operational leadership.	Locates professional command within Polri.	What remedy applies when a direction conflicts with law, evidence, or professional standards?
Professional standards	Law No. 5/2026 strengthens professionalism, proportionality, transparency, accountability, neutrality, and internal supervision.	Creates standards against which decisions can be assessed.	Which external body can independently examine serious or systemic non-compliance?
Kompolnas	Advises the President, contributes to policy and Kapolri selection, and receives public complaints; its role is strengthened in 2026.	Adds civilian input and external scrutiny.	How can independence, information access, publication, and follow-up be secured without creating operational command?

Legal component	Current legal position	Accountability value	Unresolved design question
Outside appointments	Decision No. 114/PUU-XXIII/2025 narrowed the former explanation; Article 28A now regulates outside positions.	Recognises conflict-of-interest and neutrality concerns.	Which functions are sufficiently related to policing, and what recusal and disclosure rules apply?

Source: Authors' analysis based on the legal and institutional materials cited in the text.

A Boundary between Democratic Control and Case-Specific Operational Independence

Operational independence is not a claim that police should be immune from legislation, budgets, judicial orders, prosecutorial coordination, parliamentary scrutiny, audit, discipline, or public complaint. It is a narrower principle: decisions that apply law and evidence to an identifiable case should be made by legally competent officials for legally relevant reasons. The principle is therefore compatible with strong democratic accountability, provided accountability is exercised through general rules, transparent priorities, independent review, and lawful remedies rather than covert or informal commands.

The proposed boundary test uses six cumulative considerations. The first is legal basis: a direction must be traceable to constitutional or statutory authority. The second is competence: it must be issued by the institution authorised to decide the matter. The third is specificity: the more a direction identifies a person, group, investigation, evidentiary issue, or desired outcome, the more closely it approaches prohibited intervention. The fourth is purpose: public safety, legality, and coordination are distinct from partisan benefit, personal protection, retaliation, or selective disadvantage. The fifth is process: lawful directions should be written, reasoned, recorded, and disclosed to appropriate oversight bodies. The sixth is reviewability: affected officials and oversight institutions must be able to challenge or examine the direction without retaliation.

At the policy level, democratic authorities may enact police legislation, determine general national priorities, authorise budgets, establish service standards, set transparent qualifications for senior appointments, require performance reports, and commission audits. They may also coordinate emergency responses and set general objectives for crime prevention, public order, or victim protection. These forms of control are legitimate because they are general, prospective, publicly attributable, and reviewable. They become problematic when an apparently general priority is used as a disguised instruction concerning a named political opponent, supporter, company, organisation, or proceeding.

At the case-specific level, a statutory anti-interference clause should prohibit any person from directing a police officer, for an extralegal purpose, to commence, refrain from commencing, prioritise, delay, suspend, terminate, or alter an investigation or enforcement action concerning an identifiable person or event. It should also prohibit directions concerning the inclusion, exclusion, characterisation, or assessment of evidence; disclosure of protected case information; selective deployment intended to confer partisan advantage; and adverse career, budget, or disciplinary consequences imposed to secure a predetermined case outcome. The rule should bind political office-holders, police superiors, civil servants, and private intermediaries.

A legal prohibition without a reporting mechanism would be largely symbolic. Polri should therefore maintain a confidential lawful-direction register for high-level strategic and operational-policy instructions. The register should identify the issuing authority, legal basis, objective, scope, duration, implementation unit, and review arrangements, while protecting operationally sensitive information. Officers receiving a suspected improper instruction should have access to a protected internal legal channel and an external escalation route. Retaliation should constitute a separate disciplinary violation, and allegations involving criminal conduct should be referred to the legally competent investigative authority.

The difficult category is neither general policy nor a single investigation but the "policy of operations": protest policing, election security, disaster response, inter-agency operations, cyber incidents, and national-security emergencies. These matters require political coordination and may affect operational deployment. A categorical prohibition on executive involvement would be unrealistic. The appropriate safeguards are a clear legal mandate, written objectives, proportionality, temporal limits, recorded command responsibility, protection of investigative discretion, and ex post review by institutions with access to operational records.

This framework avoids two errors. The first is equating operational independence with the absence of democratic control, which could permit an unaccountable coercive institution. The second is equating formal executive responsibility with an unlimited power to shape case outcomes. The boundary is functional: it asks what decision is being made, by whom, for what purpose, through which procedure, and subject to what review.

Presisi, Precision Policing, Evidence, and Procedural Justice

Conceptual clarity is necessary because Presisi and precision policing operate at different levels. Presisi is an official Polri program expressed through the principles of predictive policing, responsibility, transparency, and justice and implemented through organisational, operational, public-service, and supervisory transformation (Indonesian National Police, 2021). Academic precision policing, by contrast, is not a single settled doctrine. In this article, it refers to the disciplined alignment of police authority, information, intervention, and accountability so that coercive action is no broader than law and verified risk requires.

Evidence-based policing is one component of that account. It requires decision-makers to identify relevant research and operational information, evaluate quality and context, explain why an intervention is appropriate, and learn from outcomes. It is not rule by statistics and does not eliminate professional judgment. Klose (2024) argues for a broader understanding in which evidence is integrated with organisational knowledge and decision processes rather than treated as a mechanical hierarchy. Institutional independence matters because evidence can guide decisions only when officers are able and required to give legal and evidentiary reasons that are not displaced by unauthorised demands.

Predictive policing is narrower and more controversial. It uses data or analytic models to anticipate locations, events, or risks. Predictive tools can support resource allocation, but they can also reproduce reporting disparities, historical enforcement patterns, or opaque assumptions. Presisi should therefore not be interpreted as a mandate to maximise algorithmic prediction. Any predictive application requires a legal purpose, data-quality controls, bias assessment, human review, explanation, security safeguards, periodic validation, and a remedy for materially affected persons.

Procedural justice concerns how authority is exercised. Voice, neutrality, respectful treatment, and trustworthy motives influence whether police encounters are perceived as fair, but comparative and Indonesian research cautions against assuming an identical relationship across all settings (Adhikara & Putranto, 2026; Hough et al., 2010; Perry, 2024). For institutional design, the important point is not a deterministic promise that a safeguard will create trust. It is that transparent reasons, consistent standards, complaint review, and protection from extralegal interference make procedurally fair practice more institutionally supportable and auditable.

The relationship proposed in this article is therefore conditional rather than automatic. Institutional safeguards can protect professional judgment; protected judgment can make it more feasible to apply law, reliable evidence, and proportionality; those decision standards can support fair procedure and transparent reasons; and effective review can correct error and expose misconduct. Public legitimacy may be strengthened when these practices are visible and credible, but that effect must be tested empirically. The normative contribution is to identify the institutional preconditions and accountability mechanisms, not to claim a measured causal effect.

Substantive precision policing can accordingly be assessed through five questions: Was the intervention legally authorised? Was it based on relevant and sufficiently reliable information? Was the degree of coercion proportionate to the verified risk? Were affected persons treated through fair and explainable procedures? Was the decision recorded and open to effective review? A reform of Polri's relationship with executive power is relevant only insofar as it improves the reliability of these answers. Institutional restructuring that merely moves authority to a different office, without reasons, records, conflict rules, and review, would not advance precision.

Comparative Institutional Safeguards

Comparative law is useful here as a disciplined method of identifying institutional functions, not as a catalogue of foreign solutions. Japan, Germany, and England and Wales differ in constitutional form, administrative tradition, territorial organisation, political accountability, and police history. Their institutions are not transplantable as complete packages. They nevertheless illuminate three relevant functions: buffering political authority through a collegial body, distributing police power territorially and functionally, and expressly distinguishing strategic accountability from operational command.

Japan's Police Act establishes the National Public Safety Commission (NPSC) and the National Police Agency (NPA), alongside prefectural public safety commissions and prefectural police. The NPA Commissioner General is appointed by the NPSC with the Prime Minister's approval and operates under the Commission's supervision. The NPA formulates national systems, coordinates police administration, and conducts limited operations of national significance, while prefectural police retain substantial operational responsibility. The design therefore combines national coordination with collegial supervision and territorial administration (Japan National Police Agency, 2026).

The Japanese lesson is not that the police are outside the executive. The NPSC includes a minister as chair and commissioners appointed within the constitutional government, and the national and prefectural systems remain publicly accountable. The transferable principle is a plural decision structure that can require reasons, deliberation, and institutional distance before general political preferences become police-administration directions. Whether that structure works depends on appointment quality, access to information, transparency, and the Commission's willingness to exercise supervision.

Germany presents a different logic. Articles 30 and 70 of the Basic Law establish a presumption that state powers and legislative competence remain with the Länder unless the Constitution assigns them to the Federation. Article 87 permits specified federal police institutions and central offices, while most ordinary policing is organised under Land law and Land interior authorities. This distribution limits the concentration of all police functions in a single national command, but it does not eliminate executive supervision. Both federal and Land police operate within administrative hierarchies, statutory powers, parliamentary budgets, courts, data-protection rules, and disciplinary systems (Federal Republic of Germany, 2025).

Germany has also added a Parliamentary Commissioner for the Federal Police Authorities. The Commissioner is an auxiliary body of the Bundestag, is not bound by instructions, can receive complaints from the public and police personnel, investigate structural deficiencies and misconduct, and report to Parliament and the public. Its jurisdiction is limited to federal police bodies, and it does not command police operations. The transferable lesson is that an independent parliamentary office can provide a protected complaints and systemic-review channel without becoming a parallel police command (German Bundestag, 2026).

England and Wales explicitly recognises a relationship among the Home Secretary, locally elected Police and Crime Commissioners or mayors exercising equivalent functions, police and crime panels, and chief constables. The Policing Protocol Order 2023 clarifies that elected bodies set strategic plans, hold chief constables to account, and exercise budget and appointment powers, while chief constables retain operational independence and day-to-day control. The arrangement does not eliminate boundary disputes, as the literature

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demonstrates, but it provides a legal vocabulary and institutional forums through which those disputes can be examined (Davies & Johnson, 2016; Derfoufi, 2023; Lister, 2013; Shannon, 2021; United Kingdom, 2023).

The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) adds a separate accountability function. It oversees the complaints system in England and Wales and independently investigates the most serious and sensitive matters, while less serious complaints remain primarily within police forces. The IOPC does not determine all disciplinary outcomes and is not a general operational supervisor. Its significance lies in independent evidence gathering, standards, referral, review, and public learning in cases where internal handling alone may be insufficient (Independent Office for Police Conduct, 2026).

Across the three systems, no single institutional feature prevents politicisation. Commission structures can become passive; territorial fragmentation can complicate coordination and create unequal standards; elected commissioners may intensify political contestation; and independent complaint bodies may face capacity, delay, or remedial limitations. The value of comparison therefore lies in combinations of safeguards: distributed decision authority, explicit competence boundaries, written legal instruments, plural appointments, information access, independent complaint channels, parliamentary reporting, and judicial review.

Table 2 compares the jurisdictions through consistent dimensions. The final row identifies principles potentially transferable to Indonesia and the institutional features that depend heavily on constitutional context.

Table 2. Structured comparison of police governance safeguards

Dimension	**Indonesia**	**Japan**	**Germany**	**England and Wales**
Constitutional structure	Unitary presidential state; Polri is a national institution.	Unitary parliamentary state with national coordination and prefectural police.	Federal state; ordinary police competence largely belongs to the Länder.	Unitary state with territorially organised forces and elected/local accountability arrangements.
Institutional position	Polri is under the President; Kapolri leads technical policy and operations.	NPA operates under NPSC supervision; prefectural commissions supervise prefectural police.	Federal and Land police remain within respective executive-administrative systems.	Chief constables lead forces; Home Secretary and PCCs/mayors exercise defined strategic powers.
Appointment and policy	President appoints Kapolri with DPR approval; general policy linked to executive and legislation.	NPSC appoints Commissioner General with Prime Minister's approval; commission is collegial.	Appointments and policy vary between federal and Land systems under law and parliamentary budgets.	PCCs/mayors appoint and hold chief constables to account; strategic plans and budgets are politically accountable.
Operational independence	Implied by professional command and legality but no comprehensive statutory boundary for case-specific intervention.	Commission supervision coexists with professional police administration and prefectural operations.	Protected through constitutional competence, statutory powers, administrative law, courts, and distributed authority; not absolute.	Expressly recognised in the Policing Protocol Order 2023, subject to law and accountability.

Dimension	Indonesia	Japan	Germany	England and Wales
External oversight	Kompolnas, DPR, courts, audit bodies, internal supervision, and complaint mechanisms with differing mandates.	National and prefectural public safety commissions; legislative and judicial accountability.	Parliaments, courts, data-protection bodies, ombuds-type institutions, and Parliamentary Commissioner for federal police.	PCCs/mayors, police and crime panels, HMICFRS, IOPC, courts, Parliament, and local scrutiny.
Transferable lesson	Need an explicit boundary, protected reporting, independent systemic review, and auditable directions.	Collegial buffering and plural appointments can reduce personalised direction.	Distributed competence and an independent parliamentary complaints channel can limit concentration.	Strategic/operational distinction and independent serious-complaint investigation can be codified.
Contextual constraint	National unitary command and current constitutional practice require incremental reform.	Commission design is embedded in Japan's post-war police settlement and prefectural administration.	Federalism cannot be transplanted without major constitutional and administrative change.	Elected local governance and common-law constabulary traditions are not directly transferable.

Source: Authors' analysis based on the legal and institutional materials cited in the text.

Reform Options and an Integrated Safeguards Package

The comparison supports reform by function rather than wholesale institutional transplantation. Indonesia has at least four broad options: retain the formal Article 8 position while adding a statutory anti-interference regime; strengthen Kompolnas within its current constitutional setting; create a more independent oversight council or parliamentary commissioner; or undertake a deeper repositioning of Polri. These options are not mutually exclusive, but they differ substantially in legal complexity, administrative cost, and risk.

The most immediately feasible option is to retain Polri's formal position while codifying the boundary test. An amendment to the Police Law should define general policy direction, operational-policy direction, and case-specific decisions. It should prohibit extralegal case intervention, require written and reasoned high-level directions, establish confidential registration and audit, protect refusal of manifestly unlawful orders, provide an external reporting route, and specify disciplinary, administrative, or criminal consequences according to the underlying conduct. Judicial review and evidentiary remedies must remain available where an intervention affects an individual proceeding.

A second option is to strengthen Kompolnas without turning it into a daily operational command. Its core role should be systemic oversight: examining patterns of interference, conflicts of interest, serious integrity failures, implementation of national policy, and follow-up to public complaints. To perform that role, it requires a legally defined right to obtain documents subject to necessary confidentiality protections, authority to summon explanations, power to issue public findings and recommendations with mandatory written responses, and the ability to refer suspected criminal or disciplinary violations to competent bodies. It should not decide whether a named suspect is charged or dictate investigative steps.

Membership design is as important as formal power. A strengthened Kompolnas should include a balanced combination of public-law, policing, human-rights, public-administration, audit, and community expertise. Selection criteria, public nomination, conflict disclosure, fixed terms, protected dismissal grounds, cooling-off periods, and transparent voting can reduce dependence on a single appointing actor. The President may retain a constitutionally appropriate appointment role, but the process should include public scrutiny and legislative participation sufficient to support plural legitimacy.

A third option is an independent serious-misconduct and interference mechanism. This could be established as a specialised unit within a strengthened Kompolnas, a separate statutory office, or a parliamentary commissioner with jurisdiction over systemic and high-level matters. Its mandate should be triggered by death or serious injury following police contact, allegations involving senior officers, credible political-interference claims, retaliation against whistleblowers, or matters with substantial public-interest implications. It should possess independent evidence-preservation and inquiry powers but should coordinate with prosecutors, courts, and existing disciplinary institutions to avoid double command and jurisdictional conflict.

Senior appointments and promotions require separate safeguards because career control can become an indirect means of influencing case decisions. The law should require published competency criteria, documented merit assessment, conflict declarations, reasons for deviation from ranked recommendations, recusal where an official has a relevant interest, and audit of unusual promotion or transfer patterns. DPR approval of Kapolri should focus on competence, integrity, program, and accountability commitments rather than demands concerning particular cases. A fixed and transparent process can reduce uncertainty without eliminating democratic responsibility.

Outside appointments should be governed by a functional-necessity test after Decision Number 114/PUU-XXIII/2025 and Article 28A of the amended Police Law. The appointing authority should identify the statutory link to police functions, duration, reporting line, access to police information, recusal duties, and the effect on command status. Appointments that place active officers in institutions with direct political, regulatory, commercial, or electoral interests require heightened justification and conflict safeguards. Public disclosure should be the default, subject only to narrowly tailored security exceptions.

Budget oversight should protect both democratic control and operational integrity. The legislature and executive may determine aggregate allocations and policy priorities, while operational managers require sufficient delegated authority to implement approved plans without informal financial pressure linked to particular cases. Material reallocations should be documented, and emergency funds should be subject to rapid ex post audit. Performance indicators should avoid incentives that reward arrest, charge, or case-closure volume without regard to legality, evidentiary quality, proportionality, victim service, or complaint outcomes.

Table 3 evaluates the principal reform components. The preferred approach is cumulative and staged: clarify the boundary first, then reinforce information, complaint, appointment, conflict, and review mechanisms. A deeper constitutional repositioning should be considered only after evidence shows that statutory safeguards cannot function within the existing structure.

Table 3. Reform design, limits, risk mitigation, and implementation indicators

Reform component	Legal vehicle and responsible institution	Scope and limit	Risk mitigation	Sequence and indicators
Anti-interference clause	Amend Police Law; DPR and President.	Prohibits extralegal case-specific direction; preserves general policy, budgets, coordination, courts, and lawful supervision.	Precise definitions; written reasons; protected refusal; sanctions tied to underlying conduct; judicial review.	Short term. Indicators: directions registered; reports resolved; retaliation cases; compliance audits.

Reform component	Legal vehicle and responsible institution	Scope and limit	Risk mitigation	Sequence and indicators
Lawful-direction register	Police Law and implementing regulation; Polri legal and inspectorate units with external access.	Records high-level policy-of-operations directions; excludes routine commands and protects sensitive data.	Classification rules; retention periods; access logs; independent sampling; penalties for concealment.	Short term. Indicators: completeness, timeliness, audit findings, corrective action.
Strengthened Kompolnas	Police Law and revised presidential regulation; President and DPR.	Systemic inquiry, complaint review, information access, public recommendations; no case command or prosecution power.	Plural selection, fixed terms, conflict rules, mandatory responses, judicially reviewable procedure.	Medium term. Indicators: response rates, publication, referral outcomes, implementation of recommendations.
Independent serious-matter mechanism	Statute creating a unit, office, or parliamentary commissioner.	Serious misconduct, senior officers, death/serious injury, interference, whistleblower retaliation.	Clear referral thresholds; evidence-preservation powers; coordination protocol; external audit.	Medium term. Indicators: investigation duration, referral quality, recurrence reduction, complainant protection.
Merit and conflict safeguards	Police Law, personnel regulations, ethics rules; Polri, President, DPR, oversight bodies.	Senior appointment, promotion, transfer, outside posts, recusal and asset/interest disclosure.	Published criteria; reasons; audit trails; cooling-off rules; sanctions for nondisclosure.	Short-medium term. Indicators: competitive selection, disclosed conflicts, audited exceptions, complaint outcomes.
Parliamentary and judicial review	DPR rules, reporting statutes, administrative and criminal procedure.	General policy, budgets, implementation, legality and rights; excludes partisan direction of named cases.	Public hearings on systems, protected sessions for sensitive matters, standing and remedy rules.	Continuous. Indicators: follow-up to findings, court compliance, budget transparency, remedy accessibility.

Source: Authors' analysis based on the legal and institutional materials cited in the text.

Constitutional Feasibility, Administration, and Transition

The proposed package is constitutionally feasible because it does not remove the President's role in government or create a police institution beyond law. It defines how authority connected to Article 8 should be exercised consistently with the rule of law, Article 30(4), due process, equality, and accountable administration. General policy, budgets, appointments, and national coordination remain democratically controlled. Case-specific independence is protected as a professional duty owed to law rather than as an institutional privilege.

Administrative feasibility requires careful allocation of functions. Polri's inspectorate, professional-security function, investigative supervision, and legal divisions should retain responsibility for internal compliance. Kompolnas or another external body should examine systemic and serious matters, not supervise daily operations. Prosecutors and courts should retain their procedural roles, while audit and data-protection bodies should address financial and information-governance issues. Memoranda and regulations must specify referral, confidentiality, evidence preservation, and time limits to prevent duplication.

Implementation should proceed in three phases. During the first twelve months, the Government and DPR should enact the boundary and reporting provisions; Polri should issue implementing rules, establish protected legal advice, map sensitive decision points, and train commanders and investigators. During years two and three, Kompolnas selection, information powers, complaint handling, publication, and coordination should be revised, accompanied by independent evaluation. Only after those mechanisms have operated should decision-makers assess whether a new council, parliamentary commissioner, or deeper institutional repositioning is necessary.

Evaluation must use indicators that capture legality and institutional behaviour rather than reputation alone. Relevant measures include the completeness and auditability of high-level directions; time taken to resolve interference reports; retaliation allegations; compliance with recusal and conflict declarations; implementation of oversight recommendations; quality and timeliness of complaint outcomes; judicial findings of unlawful police action; disciplinary transparency; and evidence of corrective organisational learning. Public-trust surveys may supplement this analysis only when their instrument, fieldwork, sample, sampling method, margin of error, question wording, response categories, and original release are disclosed.

The article's limitations remain important. It does not establish how frequently intervention occurs, which actors are most influential, or how the proposed safeguards would affect crime, trust, or organisational performance. Those questions require interviews, case-file analysis, complaint data, survey research, and implementation evaluation conducted under appropriate ethical and security protections. The comparative findings identify institutional principles and trade-offs; they do not demonstrate that a Japanese commission, German federal distribution, or England-and-Wales governance structure would produce the same results in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The central issue in Polri reform is not a binary choice between presidential control and complete separation. Indonesian constitutional law requires democratic civilian authority and policing under law. After Law Number 5 of 2026, the statutory framework contains stricter rules on professionalism, proportionality, transparency, accountability, neutrality, internal supervision, education, outside appointments, and Kompolnas, while Article 8 continues to place Polri under the President. The unresolved problem is the absence of a sufficiently explicit and enforceable boundary between lawful general policy direction and prohibited intervention in identifiable cases.

The article addresses that gap through a two-level institutional boundary test. Legislation, general priorities, budgets, transparent appointments, service standards, reporting, inspection, and ex post review are legitimate forms of democratic control. Directions intended for an extralegal purpose to target or protect an identifiable person, manipulate evidence, alter investigative timing or outcome, disclose protected information, or condition careers on a desired result should be prohibited. Mixed operational-policy decisions should be legally based, written, proportionate, time-limited, recorded, and independently reviewable.

Comparative analysis supports principles rather than a single model. Japan demonstrates collegial buffering, Germany demonstrates distributed competence and a parliamentary complaints channel, and England and Wales demonstrate an express strategic-operational distinction and independent serious-complaint investigation. For Indonesia, the most feasible path is an integrated safeguards package: a statutory anti-interference clause, a lawful-direction register, protected reporting and anti-retaliation rules, stronger systemic oversight, merit and conflict-of-interest safeguards, transparent outside appointments, and effective parliamentary, judicial, and public review. These measures do not guarantee public legitimacy or substantively precise policing, but they create institutional conditions in which evidence, proportionality, fair procedure, transparency, and accountability are more likely to govern police decisions.

SUGGESTION

The Government and the House of Representatives should prioritise a targeted amendment or implementing legislative package that defines general policy control, operational-policy direction, and prohibited case-specific intervention. Within the first implementation year, Polri should establish a protected reporting mechanism and an auditable direction register, while Kompolnas should receive clear information-access, publication, and follow-up powers for systemic and serious matters. Any broader repositioning of Polri should be considered only after independent evaluation of these safeguards and should preserve national coordination, constitutional civilian control, judicial remedies, and professional operational responsibility.

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A Comparative Legal Analysis of Cyberbullying Among Children on TikTok in Indonesia and Singapore

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Abstract

The rapid growth of algorithm-driven platforms such as TikTok has expanded children's opportunities for interaction while intensifying risks of cyberbullying, including insults, threats, doxxing, stalking, and other digital harassment. In Indonesia, protection is dispersed across the ITE Law, Criminal Code, and Child Protection Law, leaving no dedicated framework that comprehensively defines child cyberbullying or regulates prevention, response, and recovery. This study compares Indonesia and Singapore in defining, preventing, and responding to child cyberbullying on TikTok and assesses how Indonesia can strengthen regulation within the ASEAN framework. Using normative legal research with legislative and comparative approaches, the study finds that Indonesia has legal bases for addressing cyberbullying but relies on a fragmented, offence-based model. Singapore adopts a more integrated and victim-focused approach through the Protection from Harassment Act 2014 and the Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025, covering harassment, doxxing, stalking, image-based child abuse, and impersonation. Indonesia meets several standards under the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse, but implementation gaps remain. Indonesia should harmonise definitions, strengthen specialised institutions and reporting systems, improve victim recovery and digital literacy, and increase platform accountability.

Keywords: cyberbullying, TikTok, Indonesia, Singapore, child protection, online safety regulation

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalisation, technological advancements have progressed rapidly, particularly in the domains of information and communication technologies, which have engendered significant societal transformation (Karomah & Masyuri, 2024). According to The Global Statistics' digital report through 2025, TikTok boasts approximately 108 million active users aged 18 and above, positioning Indonesia as one of the largest markets worldwide. Despite a notable decline of approximately 19.1 million users between January 2024 and January 2025, TikTok remains the leading application for mobile app downloads and ranks as the second most popular platform (The Global Statistics, 2026). This data is depicted in the accompanying chart.

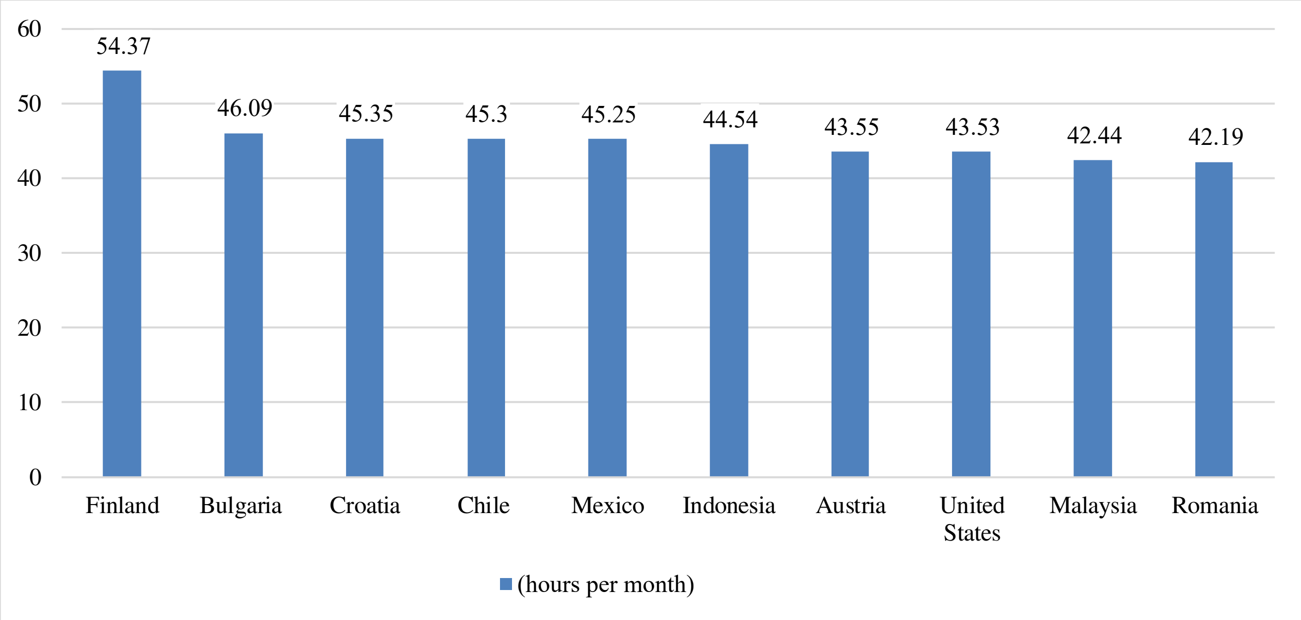

Figure 1: Countries that Spend the Most Time on Social Media (February, 2025).
Source: GoodStats Indonesia (Wafa, 2025).

GoodStats reports that Indonesia ranks within the top 10 countries for TikTok usage, with users spending around 44.54 hours monthly or about 1 hour and 29 minutes daily (Wafa, 2025). Social media use in Indonesia is very widespread, encompassing messaging applications and content creators that keep Indonesians linked, involved, and interactive (Murphy, 2025). TikTok is a social media platform focused on short videos, enabling users to create, edit, and share their video content (Daulay, 2024). TikTok's algorithm is centred around the *FYP* (For You Page), employing a recommendation system to deliver a tailored experience to users. It suggests content based on factors such as comments, likes, shares, and watch duration (Alwi, 2024). On one hand, this algorithm influences content to go viral more quickly and can be beneficial for digital marketing (Chandra, 2023). This *platform* is generally used as a source of information and a channel for users' creativity (Siroj & Zulfa, 2024).

Nevertheless, the presence of these algorithms results in several adverse consequences, including users being exposed to harmful content, including violence, sexual blackmail, and terrorism (Spring & Radford, 2026), and impacts on mental health (Luthfiani et al., 2025), as a result of viral TikTok content receiving a large number of repeated derogatory, sarcastic, and aggressive comments. Comments and messages received on TikTok may constitute a form of cyberbullying (Aser et al., 2022). This kind of bullying can happen through text messages, instant messages, and chat rooms (Dio Manik et al., 2026). Nevertheless, notwithstanding its beneficial effects, the platform is also susceptible to misuse for criminal activities such as cyberbullying. Perpetrators often engage in actions including the dissemination of negative comments, insults, and even threats directed at their victims, irrespective of their age (Tan & Kornelis, 2022). This is different from Instagram, whose algorithm emphasises users' social networks to compile their feeds. Instagram's algorithm gives priority to content from accounts users follow, especially those they interact with regularly (Syambas, 2024).

Cyberbullying on TikTok encourages more people to post negative comments because the platform's algorithm favours recent and viral content, leveraging its extensive reach to facilitate widespread dissemination (Salsabila et al., 2026). Victims of cyberbullying often face serious outcomes like depression and anxiety. Ongoing fear leads them to frequently feel unsafe at school and home (Aulia et al., 2026). Victims often see a decrease in self-confidence due to cyberbullying, which can result in lower academic performance or trouble concentrating. Additionally, those affected frequently encounter social sanctions within their local communities (Siroj & Zulfa, 2024).

Regulations on cyberbullying in Indonesia are outlined in Article 433, paragraphs (1) and (2), and Article 436 of Law No. 1 of 2023 on the Criminal Code. Furthermore, Law No. 1 of 2024 on the Second Amendment to Law No. 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions includes Article 27A, Article 27B, paragraphs (1) and (2), Article 45B, and Article 29. Despite these regulations, there remains ambiguity in the legal standards governing cyberbullying (Saputra et al., 2026). The Criminal Code predominantly addresses overarching legal principles related to actions detrimental to the honour, dignity, and sense of security of the victim. In the digital era, behaviours that previously transpired in physical interactions are increasingly moving into the digital domain. Consequently, the provisions of the Criminal Code must be reformulated to reflect the contemporary digital landscape while preserving its fundamental essence (Permaisuri et al., 2025). Law No. 1 of 2024, which amends Law No. 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions, includes articles that mainly focus on assault and defamation. However, cyberbullying involves more than just defamation and harassment, and the law does not clearly specify the limits of criminal offences related to defamation and insults (Herman, 2025).

Through a retributive approach and digital policies, ASEAN countries have united to establish the Declaration on the Elimination of Bullying of Children in ASEAN. This declaration embodies a collective commitment to safeguarding children from all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying (ASEAN, 2021a). This commitment encourages Indonesia, an ASEAN member, to enhance digital literacy, bolster the national legal framework for child protection, and collaborate on law enforcement efforts concerning cyberbullying (ASEAN, 2021c).

Similar to Indonesia, Singapore is among the ASEAN nations that endorse and enforce this declaration. It has a relatively high average monthly viewing duration on TikTok within ASEAN, approximately 34 hours and 29 minutes (aww.media, 2025). Singapore already implements regulations to safeguard minors on social media. The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) specifically works to shield minors from harmful content and can direct platforms to block such material. Its goal is to promote online safety, particularly for children (Infocomm Media Development Authority, 2026). To improve online safety, specific Social Media Services (SMS) must adopt extra measures to protect children. These include preventing children from being exposed to content that could harm their physical or mental health, applying stricter account controls for younger users, and offering tools that allow children or their parents to oversee safety (Ministry of Digital Development and Information, 2024).

Children’s utilisation of social media is also strictly regulated due to their high vulnerability to becoming targets of cybercrime. Excessive usage of social media platforms is a significant concern, linked to issues such as anxiety, depression, insomnia, and stress. These associations depend on the duration, frequency, and the number of social media platforms accessed. In TikTok’s Annual Online Safety Report, covering the period from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, TikTok reported the removal of 57,500 accounts from Singapore, suspected of having owners under the age of 13. Although numerous accounts belonging to users under 13 have been blocked, a substantial number of active accounts still exist, leaving them vulnerable to negative content and comments.

This study aims to address the research question: How do the legal frameworks of Indonesia and Singapore differ in defining, preventing, and responding to cyberbullying against children on TikTok? Additionally, it considers a secondary research inquiry: How can Indonesia enhance its regulations in accordance with the ASEAN guidelines on cyberbullying? This research aims to analyse the differences between the legal frameworks of Indonesia and Singapore concerning the addressing, prevention, and definition of cyberbullying against children on TikTok. Furthermore, it seeks to ascertain how Indonesia can address ambiguities in its current regulations by aligning them with the ASEAN guidelines on cyberbullying.

This paper employs a normative legal research method, focusing on analysing regulations at the normative level and concepts related to cyberbullying and criminal law in Indonesia. To enrich the research, the author employs a statutory and comparative approach, comparing regulations on cyberbullying in Indonesia and Singapore. The author uses primary legal sources, specifically laws and regulations on cyberbullying in Indonesia and Singapore, as well as international legal instruments on cyberbullying in the ASEAN region.

Regarding secondary legal sources, the author uses books, journal articles, reports, and non-legal materials such as information from websites, dictionaries, and other relevant data. The data were processed through qualitative descriptive analysis, presented narratively and focused on the substance or content of the regulations. The author also presented the data using tables.

DISCUSSION

Regulations on Cyberbullying in Indonesia

Cyberbullying is a type of violence involving harassment through digital devices like cell phones, computers, and tablets, and can happen on digital and social media platforms (United Nations Indonesia, 2025). In the digital age, effective detection and intervention against cyberbullying depend heavily on a clear definition of its concept and characteristics. Łosiak-Pilch et al. (2022) define cyberbullying as aggressive, intentional behaviour carried out by perpetrators using electronic communication tools to repeatedly target victims who cannot easily defend themselves (Łosiak-Pilch et al., 2022). Meanwhile, Li (2024) characterises cyberbullying as a form of deliberate aggressive conduct aimed at an individual or a group through digital devices, capable of occurring at any time and in any location, with particular emphasis on the targeting of victims (Permaisuri et al., 2025).

Research by Xiaoting Yang et al. (2022) identifies four key features of cyberbullying: targeting, aggression, repetition, and harmfulness (Yang et al., 2022). This study defines targeting as “cyberbullying directed at specific individuals or groups,” while aggression refers to “the frequent manifestation of cyberbullying as online verbal violence or harmful expressions” (Sadiq et al., 2021). Repetition is noted as "it may involve multiple aggressive messages or persistent harassment". While harmfulness is "emphasised in most studies as a core consequence of cyberbullying behaviour".

Victims of cyberbullying are individuals who experience abusive comments that cause emotional distress on social media. As a result, cyberbullies can continue to intimidate victims even when they are alone, outside of school, or at home. Victims lack a safe space because threats can occur at any moment, leading to anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation (Marbun & Bengkel, 2024). Cyberbullying manifests in various forms, including flaming, slandering, identity theft, exposing secrets, and removing or blocking individuals from groups. Examples encompass abusive language attacks, unauthorised use of someone’s identity, spreading rumours to shame others, and excluding disliked individuals from groups. These categories were identified through research in Songkhla, Thailand, an area with demographics similar to those of Indonesia (Handono et al., 2019).

According to data from the Ministry of Communication and Digital Economy, 48 per cent of Indonesian children have experienced cyberbullying (Kementerrian Komunikasi dan Digital, 2025). UNICEF has identified cyberbullying as a priority issue that must be addressed to uphold children’s rights, particularly in protecting children from violence, especially in the digital space (Rusyidi, 2020). A U-Report survey of 2,777 Indonesian youth aged 14-24 found that 45% of them have experienced cyberbullying. The reporting rate among boys was slightly higher than among girls (49% compared to 41%).

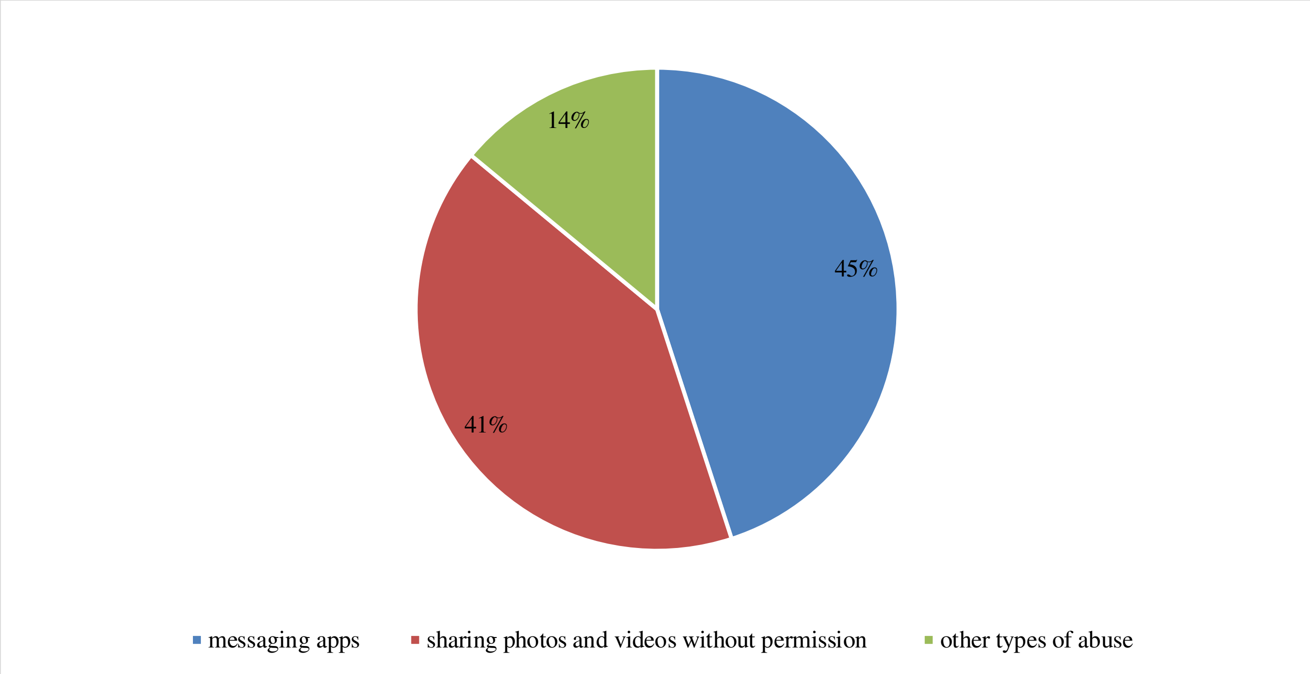

Figure 2: The Most Common Types of Online Bullying Against Children According to U-Report.
Source: U-Report Indonesia (U-Report Indonesia, 2019).

According to 1,207 U-Report respondents, the most common form of cyberbullying occurs via chat apps. The growth of social media, which has minimal usage restrictions, allows children to interact freely, increasing their risk of harassment within these chat platforms. This type accounts for 45%, the highest among various cyberbullying forms, as perpetrators can easily conceal their identities online (U-Report Indonesia, 2019). This situation makes it simpler and more convenient for perpetrators to target children with bullying, since children are particularly vulnerable and easily deceived due to their limited understanding of the negative aspects of social media. The absence of parental supervision is another weakness that bullies can take advantage of. Concerning the unauthorised sharing of personal photos or videos, children often post such content impulsively because of their limited social media knowledge. This exposes them to cybercriminals who can easily gather information about them and use their photos or videos for cyberbullying. Other harassment types include Identity-Based Harassment and Verbal Harassment.

Law No. 23 of 2022 on Child Protection, along with its amendments, particularly Law No. 35 of 2014, defines 'violence' as any act causing physical, psychological, or sexual distress, suffering, neglect, or threats, coercion, or unlawful detention of a child. The amendment to Article 59(2)(i) clarifies that children victims of physical or psychological violence are entitled to special protection. Additionally, the amendment to Article 69 highlights that this protection includes awareness campaigns about legal rights and mechanisms for monitoring, reporting, and sanctions. Therefore, the Child Protection Law sets a clear framework for addressing violence against children and provisions for protection, including sanctions. However, the law leaves some ambiguity by not explicitly covering the “digital space” in cases of cyberbullying (Pakaya & Mahyani, 2022).

Regulations on cyberbullying in Indonesia are outlined in multiple laws, including Law No. 1 of 2024, which amends Law No. 11 of 2008 (the ITE Law), and Law No. 1 of 2023 of the Criminal Code. An analysis of these laws is provided in the following table.

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Table 1. Regulations Governing Cyberbullying in Indonesia

Law	Aspects and Articles	Substance of the Article	Notes	Forms of Cyberbullying
"Law No. 1 of 2024 on Second Amendment to Law No. 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions"	Prohibited Acts, Article 27A in conjunction with Article 45, paragraphs (4) and (5)	"Any person who intentionally attacks the honour or reputation of another person by making an accusation, with the intent that such matter be made known to the public in the form of Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents transmitted through an Electronic System."	The explanatory notes state that "attacking the honour or reputation" refers to acts that demean or damage another person's reputation or self-respect, thereby causing harm to that person, including defamation and/or slander. This offence is complaint-based.	Attacking someone's honour (demeaning, damaging their reputation, or self), defaming, and/or making accusations in a manner intended for public knowledge in electronic form.
"Law No. 1 of 2024 on the Second Amendment to Law No. 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions"	Prohibited Acts, Article 27B(1) and (2) in conjunction with Article 45(7) and (8)	1. "Any person who intentionally and without authorisation distributes and/or transmits Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents, with the intent to unlawfully benefit themselves or another person, and forces a person through the threat of violence to: a. hand over goods, whether in whole or in part, belonging to that person or to another person; or b. grant a loan, acknowledge a debt, or write off a receivable 2. Any person who intentionally and without authorisation distributes and/or transmits Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents, with the intent to unlawfully benefit themselves or another person, by threatening to defame or by threatening to disclose a secret, thereby compelling a person to: a. hand over goods that are partly or entirely owned by that person	The explanatory notes state that "threats of violence" refer to Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents containing content intended to instil fear, anxiety, or concern regarding the commission of violence. Furthermore, "threats of defamation" refer to threats to attack another person's honour or reputation by accusing with the intent that such accusation become public knowledge. This article is an addition to the chapter on "Prohibited Acts," so the article in question also outlines several elements of the criminal offence of cyberbullying. This offence is complaint-based.	Threats of violence and threats of defamation in digital form.

Law	Aspects and Articles	Substance of the Article	Notes	Forms of Cyberbullying
		or by another person; or b. grant a loan, acknowledge a debt, or write off a receivable.”		
"Law No. 1 of 2024 on the Second Amendment to Law No. 11 of 2008 on Information and Electronic Transactions"	Prohibited Acts, Article 29	"Any person who intentionally and without authorisation sends Electronic Information and/or Electronic Documents directly to a victim that contain threats of violence and/or intimidation."	The explanatory notes state that the term “victim” refers to a person who suffers physical, mental, and/or economic harm as a result of a criminal act. The acts referred to in this provision are cyberbullying. Thus, it is evident that this article can be used to identify “victims” who suffer as described above as a result of cyberbullying.	Threats of violence and/or intimidation
"Law No. 1 of 2023 on the Criminal Code"	Article 156	"Violence is any act, with or without the use of physical force, that poses a danger to the body or life, resulting in physical, sexual, or psychological suffering, and depriving a person of their liberty, including rendering a person unconscious or helpless."	This article, which contains the definition, does not specify that violence includes that occurring in the digital realm; however, the definition is specified in Article 158 regarding “in public.”	“Posing a danger” includes psychological harm
	Article 157	"Threat of Violence is any act in the form of speech, writing, images, symbols, or body movements, whether or not using electronic or non-electronic means, that can cause fear, anxiety, or concern that violence will be committed."	This article, which contains the definition, does not specify that threats of violence include those occurring in the digital space; however, the definition is provided under “in public” in Article 158.	Causing a sense of fear, anxiety, or concern regarding the commission of violence.
	Article 158	"In Public means a place or space that can be seen, visited, known, or witnessed by others, either directly or indirectly through electronic media that allows the public to access electronic information or electronic documents."	This article broadens the meaning of the “ locus delicti” to include electronic media as part of what is meant by “in public.”	
	Article 242	"Any person who, in public, expresses feelings of hostility, hatred, or contempt toward a single or several groups of the	This article clarifies the prohibited acts, namely expressing feelings of hostility, hatred, or	

Law	Aspects and Articles	Substance of the Article	Notes	Forms of Cyberbullying
		Indonesian population based on race, nationality, ethnicity, skin colour, gender, mental disability, or physical disability, shall be punished with imprisonment for a maximum of 3 (three) years or a fine not exceeding Category IV."	contempt toward one or more groups or segments of the population based on the classifications listed in the article.	
	Article 262	"Any person who, openly or in public and in concert with others, commits violence against a person or property shall be punished by imprisonment for a maximum of 5 (five) years or a fine not exceeding Category V."	This article clarifies the prohibited act, namely committing violence against a person in public.	The form is violence against a person.
	Article 433, paragraphs (1) and (2)	1. "Any person who verbally attacks the honour or reputation of another person by making an accusation, with the intent that such accusation be made known to the public, shall be punished for defamation with imprisonment for a maximum of 9 (nine) months or a fine not exceeding Category II. 2. If the act referred to in paragraph (1) is committed through writing or images that are broadcast, displayed, or posted in a public place, the offender shall be punished for written defamation with imprisonment for a maximum of 1 (one) year and 6 (six) months or a fine not exceeding Category III."	This article clarifies the criminal offence of defamation committed verbally, in writing, or through images.	The form is insulting.

Law	Aspects and Articles	Substance of the Article	Notes	Forms of Cyberbullying
	Article 436	"Insult that does not constitute defamation or Written defamation committed against another person, whether in public, verbally or in writing, or in the presence of the person being defamed, verbally, through conduct, or through a written communication sent to or received by that person, is punishable as a misdemeanour of defamation by imprisonment for a maximum of 6 (six) months or a fine not exceeding Category II."	This article pertains to minor defamation.	The form is defamation.

Source: Compiled by the Authors, 2026.

Based on the regulatory mapping provided in Table 1, it can be asserted that the regulation of cyberbullying in Indonesia remains disjointed across conceptual, normative, and law enforcement dimensions. This disjointedness stems from the absence of cyberbullying being recognised as a distinct category of legal conduct with a comprehensive definition, elements, forms, characteristics, and mechanisms for victim protection. Instead, various behaviours that may substantively be classified as cyberbullying are dispersed across multiple provisions within the ITE Law and the Criminal Code. Consequently, Indonesian positive law tends to address cyberbullying through an offence-based framework.

The initial form of fragmentation is seen in how cyberbullying elements are spread across various offences with specific legal aims. Article 27A of the ITE Law aims to protect honour and reputation by banning the act of making accusations intended for public awareness through electronic information or documents. This can cover cyberbullying behaviours like insults, defamation, or digital reputation attacks. However, its effectiveness relies on proving the act of “making an accusation” and the intent to make it public. Therefore, not all digital acts of belittling, humiliating, mocking, or threatening victims fit neatly into Article 27A. This is significant because cyberbullying often involves repeated teasing, derogatory comments, image manipulation, spreading humiliating memes, digital ostracism, or collective attacks, which may not always qualify as factual accusations. Additionally, since Article 27A is complaint-based, unclear boundaries around what constitutes insult and defamation can lead to several legal ambiguities.

In general, Article 27B of the ITE Law bans anyone from intentionally and without permission distributing, transmitting, or creating electronic information or documents with illegal content that can be accessed via an electronic system. This ban includes various types of content such as pornography, gambling, defamatory or slanderous material, and content that involves extortion or threats (Putra, 2019). This article primarily aims to prevent the spread of harmful, immoral, or illegal content through digital platforms like the internet and social media. Its goal is to shield the public from the misuse of information technology that could threaten dignity, security, and public order. It frequently provides the legal foundation for prosecuting cybercrimes, such as cyberbullying, which are often carried out electronically and may contravene this article (Hadi, 2025).

Article 29 of the ITE Law is more directly relevant because it addresses the transmission of electronic information or documents containing threats or intimidation to a victim. The explanatory notes explicitly include cyberbullying within this scope. However, this recognition has not led to a comprehensive legal framework for cyberbullying, mainly because the offence is narrowly defined, focusing on threats of violence or intimidation and requiring that communication be sent “directly to the victim.” In practice, much cyberbullying happens indirectly through public posts, anonymous accounts, digital groups, sharing content with third parties, online forums, mass comments, or algorithmic amplification. Therefore, the mention of cyberbullying in Article 29's explanation does not equate to a broad legal regulation covering all cyberbullying forms.

The relationship between the ITE Law and the national Criminal Code adds further complexity. The Criminal Code has incorporated developments in the digital realm through various definitions and offences. For example, Article 157 addresses threats of violence via speech, writing, images, symbols, or bodily movements, whether or not electronic means are used. Similarly, Article 158 broadens the definition of "in public" to include electronic media accessible to the public, recognising the digital space as a relevant venue for certain crimes. Despite this, inconsistencies remain. Some Criminal Code provisions are still based on traditional categories such as violence, threats, defamation, slander, and minor insults without fully accounting for cyberbullying's unique features like content persistence, perpetrator anonymity, unlimited replication, virality, coordinated attacks, and digital power imbalances. Articles 433 and 436 are broadly applicable to cyberbullying through defamation and minor insults, offering a general legal framework. These provisions mark progress in criminal fines, contrasting with the previous Criminal Code, which primarily mandated custodial sentences under Articles 310, 311, and 315 (Oktavira, 2023).

Although regulations are still fragmented, Indonesia currently has some legal provisions on cyberbullying through the Criminal Code and the ITE Law. These laws complement each other: the Criminal Code provides the overall legal framework and addresses incidents in public spaces, while the ITE Law enhances cybercrime regulation by focusing on electronic conduct (Lalisu et al., 2026). The aspiration is that these regulations will enhance initiatives aimed at safeguarding victims of cyberbullying. This is essential because, beyond offering protection, it assists victims in feeling secure and helps avert the creation of new victims (Hikmawati, 2024).

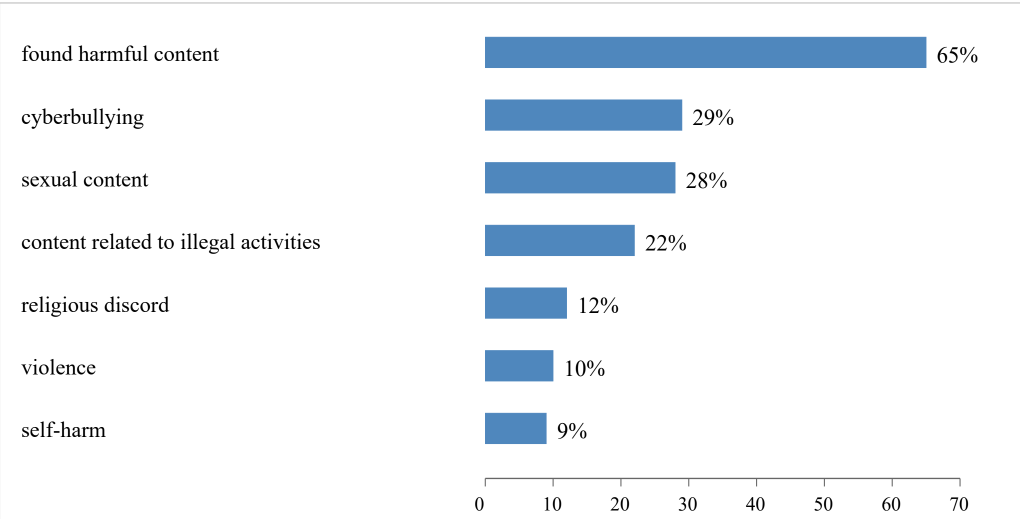

Figure 3: Survey Conducted by the Ministry of Digital Development and Information (MDDI).
Source: Ministry of Digital Development and Information (Ministry of Digital Development and Information, 2024).

Regulations on Cyberbullying in Singapore

Singapore's cyberbullying regulations are primarily outlined in the Protection from Harassment Act, which covers threatening, insulting, or distressing conduct online or in person, implicitly including cyberbullying as online harassment. Additionally, the newly introduced Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act explicitly targets cyber harm, extending to doxing, stalking, and harassment, thereby enhancing protections in the digital environment.

A survey by the Ministry of Digital Development and Information (MDDI) reveals that about 65% of children have encountered harmful content on social media, the highest among various platforms. Although social media has its downsides, as shown in the table, Singapore actively addresses this issue through the IMDA. The IMDA has identified six major Social Media Services (SMS) with significant reach or influence in Singapore: Facebook, HardwareZone, Instagram, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube. These platforms must follow the Code of Practice for Online Safety (Online Safety Code), which came into effect on July 18, 2023. This code mandates that designated Social Media Services (SMS) implement additional safety measures for children, such as preventing the targeting of harmful content, enforcing stricter account settings for minors, and providing tools for children and parents to manage safety effectively.

Singapore has introduced warning labels on social media platforms to inform minors about their usage, including duration, frequency, and the number of platforms involved. Parents suspecting their children may be addicted to social media can turn to service providers like Touch Community Services, which offers counselling and intervention programs for adolescents. Alternatively, they can seek assessments and help from specialised units such as the National Addictions Management Service (NAMS). The country supports parents from early on, even before birth, and is committed to implementing more effective measures to guide social media habits. The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) oversee early childhood care through child, maternal, and preschool programs, aiming to establish clearer guidelines on device use and screen time, communicated consistently across healthcare settings with increased reminders (Ministry of Digital Development and Information, 2024).

Singapore does not possess a specific law that explicitly delineates cyberbullying. Instead, the nation has developed a comprehensive legal framework through various complementary regulatory instruments to address diverse forms of conduct in the digital domain. Regulations about cyberbullying in Singapore can be located within the Protection from Harassment Act 2014, which addresses doxing, harassment, threats, and stalking, whether executed directly or through social media platforms. As cyberbullying has advanced, Singapore has enhanced its legal provisions by enacting the Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025, which broadens protections against such conduct. In addition to affording victims the right to prompt redress, the OSRA establishes the Online Safety Commission, empowered to issue directives to perpetrators, platform administrators, and digital service providers to remove or restrict access to content that causes harm to victims. An analytical overview of these statutory provisions is presented in the ensuing table.

Table 2. Regulations Governing Cyberbullying in Singapore

Regulation	Article	Description	Forms of Cyberbullying
"Protection From Harassment Act, 2014 (POHA)"	**"Intentionally causing harassment, alarm, or distress** 3. (1) No individual or entity shall, with the intent to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to another person (referred to in this section as the “target person”), by any means , (a) use any threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour; (b) make any threatening, abusive, or insulting communication; or (c) publish any identifying information about the target person or a person related to the target person, and thereby causing the target person or any other person (each referred to in this section as the “victim”) harassment, alarm, or distress."	This section focuses on preventing cyberbullying, which includes harassment, alarm, and distress intentionally inflicted by an individual or legal entity	harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation
"Protection From Harassment	**"Harassment, Alarm, or Distress** 4. (1) An individual or entity must not, by any means,	This section focuses on protecting victims	harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation

Regulation	Article	Description	Forms of Cyberbullying
Act, 2014 (POHA)"	(a) use any threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour; or (b) make any threatening, abusive, or insulting communication, which, when heard, seen, or otherwise perceived by any person (referred to in this section as the victim), is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress."	from harassment, alarm, and distress caused by a person or legal entity	
"Protection From Harassment Act, 2014 (POHA)"	**"Fear, provocation, or facilitation of violence** 5. (1) An individual or entity must not, by any means, direct toward another person (referred to in this section, except subsection (1A), as the victim) any threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour, or make any threatening, abusive, or insulting communication to another person (also referred to in this section, except subsection (1A), as the victim), either, (a) with the intent , (i) to cause the victim to believe that unlawful violence will be used by any person against the victim or any other person; or (ii) to provoke the use of unlawful violence by the victim or another person against any other person; or (b) whereby , (i) the victim is likely to believe that the violence mentioned in paragraph (a)(i) will be used; or (ii) it is likely that the violence mentioned in paragraph (a)(ii) will be provoked. (1A) An individual or entity must not, by any means, publish any identifying information about another person (referred to in this subsection as the victim) or a person related to the victim, either , (a) with the intent , (i) to cause the victim to believe that unlawful violence will be used against the victim or any other person; or (ii) to facilitate the use of unlawful violence against the victim or any other person; or (b) knowing or having reasonable grounds to believe that it is likely , (i) to cause the victim to believe that unlawful violence will be used against the victim or any other person; or (ii) to facilitate the use of unlawful violence against the victim or any other person."	This section focuses on violence and provocation through social media intended to incite greater unrest	Provocative, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour
"Protection From Harassment Act, 2014 (POHA)"	**"Unlawful Stalking** 7. (1) An individual or entity must not unlawfully stalk another person. (2) Subject to subsection (7), an individual or entity (referred to in this section as the accused) unlawfully stalks another person (referred to in	This section focuses on protecting individuals from online stalking that causes the	unlawful stalking, harassment, alarm, or distress

Regulation	Article	Description	Forms of Cyberbullying
	this section as the victim) if the accused engages in a course of conduct that , (a) involves acts or omissions associated with stalking; (b) causes harassment, alarm, or distress to the victim; and (c) the accused , (i) intends to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to the victim; or (ii) knows or ought reasonably to know that such conduct is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to the victim."	victim or another person to experience pressure and anxiety	
"Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025 (OSRA)"	**"Online Harassment** 9. (1) In this Act, “online harassment” means the communication of online material that a reasonable person would conclude is , (a) threatening, abusive, insulting, sexual, or indecent; and (b) likely to cause a person (referred to in this section as the victim) harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation."	This section focuses on harassment on social media that causes the victim to experience pressure, anxiety, or humiliation.	harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation.
"Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025 (OSRA)"	**"Doxing** 10. (1) In this Act, “doxing” means the publication of any identity information of a person that a reasonable person would conclude was likely intended to cause harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation to that person or any related person (each referred to in this section as the victim)."	This section focuses on the dissemination of personal information without the victim’s consent with the intent to harass the victim and cause the victim to experience fear or distress.	doxing
"Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025 (OSRA)"	**"Online Stalking** 12. (1) In this Act, “online stalking” means a course of online conduct engaged in by one person (referred to in this section as the online stalker) with respect to another person (referred to in this section as the victim) , (a) that involves online acts or omissions associated with stalking; and (b) that a reasonable person would conclude is likely to cause the victim harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation."	This section focuses on online stalking that causes the victim to experience pressure, anxiety, or humiliation.	harassment, alarm, distress, or humiliation for the victim.
"Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025 (OSRA)"	**"Image-Based Child Abuse** 14. (1) In this Act, “image-based child abuse” means the communication of online material that contains any of the following:	This section focuses on the distribution of intimate images	Outing & Exploitation, Image-based Child Abuse

Regulation	Article	Description	Forms of Cyberbullying
	(a) an image or recording of a person (referred to in this section as the victim) being subjected to child abuse; (b) an offer to sell or distribute a child abuse image or recording of the victim; (c) an advertisement for a child abuse image or recording of the victim; (d) (d)any material that appears to be designed or communicated in such a way as to lead to any child abuse image or recording of the victim."	of children under 16 years of age.	
"Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025 (OSRA)"	**"Online Impersonation** 15. In this Act, "online impersonation" means online activity conducted by one person (referred to in this section as "X") with respect to another person (referred to in this section as "the victim") that , (a) involves X pretending to be the victim without the victim's consent; and (b) would lead a reasonable person to believe that the online activity was conducted by the victim when this was not in fact the case."	This section focuses on the use of another person's identity for entertainment or satire.	Online impersonation

Source: Compiled by the Authors, 2026.

According to the regulatory mapping in Table 2, Singapore's cyberbullying regulations are broadly scoped. This extensive scope highlights an adaptive strategy to the evolving nature of information technology and the diverse forms of online bullying. Overall, Singapore's cyberbullying laws are quite comprehensive, evidenced by various legal instruments that, while not explicitly using the term "cyberbullying," substantively encompass different behaviours that qualify as cyberbullying.

The Protection from Harassment Act 2014 is the main legal framework in Singapore addressing cyberbullying and related behaviours. It covers various harassment forms, including online abuse. Victims can pursue civil remedies, such as protection orders, to stop the perpetrator's harassing actions. Additionally, if a false statement of fact is published, the court can issue another type of order. Part 2, Offences Article 3 criminalises intentionally causing harassment, alarm, or distress through threatening, insulting, or degrading words or communications. This emphasises intent as the key element for liability, setting clear boundaries for cyberbullying offences. Conversely, Article 4 broadens protection by removing the intent requirement, focusing instead on the harm caused, which benefits child victims by addressing the actual impact of cyberbullying.

Generally, Article 5 covers actions that create fear of violence or provoke cyberbullying against children. The provocation element refers to cyberbullying conducted intentionally to harass the victim repeatedly. Article 7 pertains to illegal stalking on social media, which can be seen as cyberstalking. This involves the perpetrator deliberately monitoring the victim to gather information, such as defaming or locating the victim's address for threats. This aspect makes the victim feel unsafe, even in social settings (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019).

The Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act of 2025 further fortified regulations against cyberbullying, adapting to new digital challenges and emerging forms of abuse. Part 3, Article 9, utilises the "reasonable person" standard to assess whether content is objectively threatening, insulting, or sexually explicit, factors that can cause distress or humiliation. This expands the protection scope, especially for children, and offers a potential standard of proof for cyberbullying victims. Meanwhile, Article 10 targets “doxing”, the act of sharing personal information to harm someone. This is especially critical because distributing personal data, notably about child victims, can escalate the risk of further exploitation (e-Safety Commissioner, 2025). Article 12 strengthens Article 7 of the Protection from Harassment Act 2014 by implementing a “course of conduct” approach, which is typical of cyberbullying. This change addresses weaknesses in the “reasonable person” standard of that article, as adult perceptions of reasonableness may not align with a child’s subjective experience, thus offering less protection (Ministry of Digital Development and Information, 2025). Article 14 explicitly offers special protection for children by prohibiting the dissemination of content and exploitation of minors, aiming to prevent children from being exposed to cyberbullying. It clearly states that minors are individuals needing protection and deserve special safeguards (Koh, 2026).

Furthermore, Article 15 addresses the aspect of anonymity, despite not explicitly mentioning it. The element of “disguised actions” is a significant concern often encountered in cyberbullying. The existence of this provision protects digital integrity, especially for children. The inclusion of this norm demonstrates that Singapore’s regulations have evolved towards adaptive safeguards against the challenges posed by digital anonymity.

Conceptually, laws like the Protection from Harassment Act 2014 form the main framework regulating various harmful activities online, including harassment, threats, doxing, and impersonation. POHA focuses on protecting victims and providing remedies, such as court-issued protection orders or content removal under the Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025. This act enhances enforcement by empowering the OSC to instruct platforms and group admins to remove harmful content, restrict offenders’ online accounts, or, in the future, enable victims to post replies (Koh, 2026).

A Comparison of Cyberbullying Regulations in Indonesia and Singapore in the Context of the Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN

The ASEAN Regional Plan of Action (RPA) for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse was created collaboratively by ASEAN member states in response to increasing threats to children in the digital world (D’Cruz, 2022). This meeting was called to acknowledge that advances in information technology have opened new channels for violence and exploitation against children, including cyberbullying, digital sexual abuse, and grooming online. These issues can no longer be tackled effectively through isolated national efforts alone. There are also regulatory gaps among ASEAN member countries, highlighting the need for a common framework to harmonise child protection standards and bolster regional cooperation. The ASEAN RPA discussions extend beyond just developing or enhancing laws, covering seven essential areas (ASEAN, 2021b).

The Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse is grounded in a regional normative framework aimed at harmonising child protection standards across ASEAN nations. This plan is more than just a political statement; it also offers clear operational indicators across seven key areas for ASEAN members. The RPA acts as a standards benchmark, allowing for comparison of how well each country has integrated regional child protection standards into its legal frameworks.

Table 3. Comparative Analysis of Cyberbullying Regulations in Indonesia and Singapore Based on the Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from All Forms of Online Exploitation and Abuse in ASEAN

No.	Focus Area	Action	Indonesia	Singapore
1.	"Focus Area 1: Promote, develop, and implement comprehensive national legal frameworks in each ASEAN Member State and work toward improving child protection	a. "Activity 1. Conduct a legislative review"	Already established	Already established
		b. "Activity 2. Strengthen legislative frameworks"	Already implemented	Already implemented

No.	Focus Area	Action	Indonesia	Singapore
	standards and policies regarding all forms of online exploitation and abuse across ASEAN Member States"	c. "Activity 3. Adopt or strengthen national policies and action plans"	Already meets the requirements but is not yet specific to children	Substantively met
2.	"Focus Area 2: Enhance the capabilities of law enforcement, the judiciary, and legal professionals through regular, relevant, and up-to-date training, as well as the sharing and exchange of best practices in protecting children against all forms of online exploitation and abuse"	a. "Activity 1. Build the capacity of law enforcement and the judiciary"	Already met, but not uniformly	Has become more systematic
		b. "Activity 2. Ensure that law enforcement and the judiciary have adequate mandate, guidance, and tools"	Not yet fully optimal	Already established
		c. "Activity 3. Strengthen offender management systems"	Not currently implemented.	Already implemented and more systematic
3.	"Focus Area 3: Encourage the establishment of a national specialised unit with an explicit mandate to lead, support, and coordinate investigations"		Already established but not yet centralised.	Already established, and more specific and coordinated
4.	"Focus Area 4: Ensure the effectiveness of rights-based, gender- and age-responsive child protection and support services, as well as social welfare programs"	"Activity 1. Ensure the quality and accessibility of rescue, recovery, care, and support services"	Already established but not yet evenly distributed	Already more effective
5.	"Focus Area 5: Strengthen data collection and monitoring, reporting, and referral mechanisms through hotlines to report online materials suspected of being illegal, including child sexual abuse material"		Not fully optimised yet	Already optimal
6.	"Focus Area 6: Promote a national education program and school curricula to raise awareness of sexual and other forms of exploitation of children to empower children, young people, parents, guardians, caregivers, practitioners, and the community"	a. "Activity 1. Strengthen and Expand Education on CSEA"	Already established but not yet evenly distributed	Already established and more systematic
		b. "Activity 2. Awareness-raising"	Already established but not yet uniform	Already established and more systematic

No.	Focus Area	Action	Indonesia	Singapore
7.	"Focus Area 7: Mobilise and enhance engagement with the private sector and other relevant stakeholders to actively involve them in monitoring prevention and response measures through 15 regulations, corporate social responsibility, and collaboration for the development of effective measures to detect, remove, and report illegal content related to child sexual abuse and exploitation."		Not fully optimised yet	Already optimal

Source: Compiled by the Authors, 2026

Within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action for the Protection of Children from Online Exploitation and Abuse, Indonesia has met most indicators, especially in legal, educational, and policy areas. This is demonstrated by laws such as Law No. 1 of 2024, which amends Law No. 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions; Law No. 1 of 2023, the Criminal Code; and Law No. 35 of 2014, amending Law No. 23 of 2002 on Child Protection. However, these laws remain largely normative and are not fully enforced. Indonesia's main weakness is the fragmented protection system, lacking a specific framework for children's protection in the digital space. Consequently, Indonesia relies on a general approach with uneven enforcement and faces technological and coordination challenges, resulting in a reactive stance toward issues like cyberbullying against children (Nafi & Nurhayati, 2026). Services tackling digital crimes against children, such as data systems, monitoring, and reporting, are inconsistent across Indonesia. The ASEAN Regional Plan of Action highlights the need for evidence-based policies to achieve more effective and measurable responses.

Indonesia has demonstrated relatively strong performance in education and awareness initiatives. These efforts can help decrease cyberbullying among children, though they are not yet fully or effectively implemented, especially in reporting systems, monitoring, and removing harmful content (Anastashia, 2026). In other words, Indonesia is officially aligned with ASEAN standards but has not yet reached a fully effective and integrated implementation level.

Singapore demonstrates a strong level of implementation, with nearly all focus areas covered by its regulations. This includes the legal framework, enforcement capacity, and private sector involvement in preventing cyberbullying. Key regulations like the Protection From Harassment Act 2014 and the Online Safety (Relief and Accountability) Act 2025 form the core foundation. These laws are not only normative but also include clear, swift, and adaptable enforcement mechanisms that keep pace with the rapidly changing digital landscape (International TradeTrust Compliance Network, 2026). Singapore employs a structured and coordinated strategy. Law enforcement agencies are well-resourced and operate under clear guidelines. Specialised units focused on preventing cyberbullying against children are vital for combating this issue. Concerning protection services and reporting systems, Singapore reacts swiftly to cyberbullying cases, supported by accessible, data-driven mechanisms.

The private sector plays a crucial role in combating cyberbullying by actively monitoring social media for harmful content. Singapore's government requires digital platforms to supervise their content, eliminate harmful posts, and establish a reporting system that channels complaints to authorities for further action (Infocomm Media Development Authority, 29 June 20226).

The Urgency of Strengthening Legal Protection for Children in Cyberbullying Cases in Indonesia Based on the ASEAN RPA

The RPA analysis in Table 3 shows that Indonesia continues to have notable gaps in fulfilling the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action standards. The RPA was created as an operational tool to implement the 2019 ASEAN Declaration on Protecting Children from Online Exploitation and Violence. It focuses on seven main areas:

legal framework, law enforcement capacity, specialised investigative units, victim services, data systems, education, and private-sector involvement.

Although Indonesia has various regulations on cyberbullying, their approaches are too general and don't specifically target different types of cyberbullying. In contrast, Singapore adopts a more comprehensive, progressive regulatory framework that clearly defines specific types of cyberbullying and enforces strict enforcement mechanisms. To effectively prevent cyberbullying, Indonesia must go beyond merely enacting laws; it must also improve implementation through a coordinated and adaptable system. Additionally, Indonesia should create a dedicated institution to combat cybercrime, especially against children, to ensure a quick and effective response to cyberbullying cases. The ASEAN RPA emphasises establishing a specialised national unit with a clear mandate to lead investigations, support victims, and coordinate responses. Singapore's experience shows that having such a dedicated unit is crucial for effectively managing cyberbullying cases involving children (Chia, 2025).

Conversely, Indonesia encounters difficulties in the form of unintegrated data and inconsistent reporting mechanisms. In the absence of accurate data, the policies implemented are likely to be reactive rather than evidence-based. Consequently, it is imperative for Indonesia to establish an integrated reporting system, inclusive of a digital complaint platform, and to develop definitive follow-up mechanisms (Putra, 2019). From an ASEAN perspective, these specialised units are part of a collective effort to develop a rapid, coordinated, and regional response system. Accordingly, Indonesia should enhance its institutional framework by providing a clear mandate to tackle cyberbullying and cybercrimes against children, following best practices adopted by other member states.

While Indonesia has shown good progress in education, there is a need to make its approach more systematic and fair. The country should introduce a more comprehensive digital literacy program for children, parents, and teachers to combat cyberbullying. This aligns with ASEAN RPA Focus Area 6, which promotes awareness about sexual and other forms of exploitation through national education and school curricula, empowering children and communities. However, in practice, education has not yet been fully integrated into the national curriculum and has not effectively reached every part of society (ASEAN, 2021b).

Indonesia therefore continues to face interpretive and implementation gaps in addressing cyberbullying. A clearer and more integrated framework is needed to protect children from harmful online conduct while giving law-enforcement and child-protection institutions more consistent legal guidance, digital child protection is also a regional concern. Indonesia should align domestic policy with the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action as part of its responsibility to support a safer cross-border digital environment for children.

CONCLUSION

The comparison shows that Indonesia and Singapore differ substantially in how they define, prevent, and respond to child cyberbullying on TikTok. Indonesia has a legal basis for intervention, but protection remains fragmented across offences such as insult, defamation, threats, and intimidation, without a single framework defining child cyberbullying, prevention, response, and victim recovery. Singapore provides a more integrated and victim-focused model through its harassment and online-safety legislation. Indonesia has met several commitments under the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action, particularly in legal frameworks, education, awareness, and policy, but important implementation gaps remain. The central problem is therefore not simply the absence of criminal provisions, but fragmentation in definitions, institutions, reporting, recovery, and platform accountability. Indonesia should harmonise the legal definition and forms of child cyberbullying, strengthen specialised institutional coordination and reporting systems, improve victim recovery and digital literacy, and establish clearer responsibilities for digital platforms. These measures would better align domestic protection with ASEAN standards while preserving a child-centred approach to online safety.

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Transforming PTIK into a Police University for Indonesian Police Education Reform

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Abstract

This study examines the transformation of PTIK into a Police University as part of Indonesian police education reform. Amid the increasing complexity of modern crime, digital public scrutiny, and growing demands for transparency and accountability, the Indonesian National Police requires an education model that is not only operationally competent but also research-based, multidisciplinary, and ethically grounded. This study applies a qualitative policy-analysis design through a narrative literature review, legal-policy document analysis, and a focused comparison of police education models in England and Wales, Finland, and Australia. The analysis shows that transforming PTIK requires more than a change of institutional nomenclature. It requires legal clarity, alignment with higher education quality assurance, curriculum redesign, research-capacity development, academic staffing, and collaboration with national and international knowledge networks. The study argues that a Police University can strengthen police professionalism and accountability by functioning as a knowledge-production institution, a policy laboratory, and a bridge between police practice and scientific research. Its contribution to public trust should therefore be understood as indirect and conditional: it builds the institutional preconditions for more accountable, evidence-informed, and publicly responsive policing, rather than automatically restoring public trust. The article offers a contextual transformation model and a phased roadmap for developing PTIK into a Police University within Indonesia's legal and institutional setting.

Keywords: police education reform, Police University, police professionalism, institutional accountability, policy analysis, public trust

INTRODUCTION

Changes in the global security landscape over the past two decades have demonstrated a fundamental shift from conventional threats to unconventional threats that are complex, fluid, and technology-based. Digital technology has reshaped socio-economic life but also opened up new opportunities for the emergence of cybercrime, transnational organised crime, and disinformation practices that can disrupt social and political stability. Research on contemporary cybercrime and policing shows that networked environments require security institutions to strengthen data literacy, cyber awareness, policy analysis, and public accountability (Hadlington et al., 2021).

In this context, police institutions can no longer operate with a predominantly training-oriented and reactive model that emphasises operational response more than research-based problem-solving. Modern policing is required to develop analytical capacity, technology literacy, and predictive capability to address increasingly sophisticated crimes. Contemporary policing scholarship increasingly links professional education with accountability, legitimacy, and research-based practice (Martin, 2024; Miles-Johnson, 2024).

However, in practice, police institutions in various countries, including Indonesia, face serious challenges related to declining public trust. This phenomenon cannot be separated from issues often identified in police reform literature such as abuse of authority, weak oversight, and an organisational culture that is not fully aligned with the principles of democratic governance. Research on procedural justice demonstrates that public cooperation is shaped not only by enforcement outcomes but also by perceptions of fairness, transparency, and equitable treatment. In other words, the crisis of public trust in the police is an indicator of fundamental problems in the relationship between the institution and society (Anrango Narváez et al., 2023).

In the Indonesian context, these dynamics are increasingly complex with increasing public exposure to police performance through digital media. Digital democracy creates online participation and public oversight for broad public participation while accelerating the spread of criticism of state institutions. The police are not only required to be effective in law enforcement but also to maintain social legitimacy amidst intense public scrutiny. This demands a paradigm shift from force-oriented policing to knowledge-based and service-oriented policing. In this article, digital democracy refers to the interaction between online public scrutiny, digital accountability, cyber-related risks, and the use of data in police governance; it is therefore treated as a contextual pressure on police education rather than as a separate variable.

This condition leads to the formal research problem: to what extent is the police education system capable of meeting these demands? Police education is a key foundation for shaping the character, competence, and value orientation of police officers. Problem-oriented and evidence-based policing research indicates that police effectiveness depends on analytical capacity to understand underlying problems rather than only technical responses (Bullock et al., 2022). This means that police education cannot simply emphasise operational aspects; it must also develop intellectual, critical, and reflective capacities. In PTIK curriculum design, this implies case-based training in problem analysis, social-conflict mapping, evidence-based intervention design, and evaluation of operational outcomes.

Unfortunately, the police education model in the Indonesian police education context still tends to be training-oriented rather than education-oriented. Recent police education research shows that training models that overemphasise procedural or operational routines without developing critical capacity can limit adaptation and integrity-oriented professional development (Koerner & Staller, 2021; Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2021). This situation poses a serious obstacle to efforts to reform police institutions. The relevant limitation in this article is therefore not discipline itself, but the limited integration of curriculum design, research output, lecturer development, and policy analysis into police education.

In the context of the Indonesian National Police (Polri), the Police Science College (PTIK) holds a strategic position as an educational institution that develops junior, middle, and senior police officers. This role is also connected to the statutory mandate of Polri to maintain public order, enforce the law, and provide protection, guidance, and service to the community under Law Number 2 of 2002 on the Indonesian National Police. However, PTIK's role still faces limitations in developing police science as an academic discipline, strengthening research capacity, and integrating with the national and global higher education ecosystem. As a result, police education has not yet fully become a centre of knowledge production capable of driving innovation in police policy and practice (STIK-PTIK, n.d.).

In fact, the experience of selected comparative models shows that strengthening university-based police education is key to fostering the professionalism and accountability of police institutions. Recent studies of higher police education show that police practices increasingly require a strong evidence base rather than relying only on experience or institutional tradition (Gardiner, 2021; Terpstra & Schaap, 2021). Within this framework, universities serve as spaces for knowledge production, critique, and innovation, which are crucial for the development of police institutions. The comparison in this article is limited to broad institutional lessons from the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Netherlands, rather than a full cross-national evaluation.

The transformation of PTIK into a Police University is legally and academically significant in this context. This transformation is not simply a change in institutional nomenclature, but an effort to reconstruct the paradigm of police education from a training model to an integrative, multidisciplinary, and research-based academic model. The Police University is expected to become a centre for the development of police science, security studies, and public policies related to law enforcement and national security. Its urgency rests on three institutional needs: legal clarity for higher education status, stronger research capacity, and a curriculum system that can be externally assessed through national accreditation standards.

This transformation also has strategic implications for strengthening the professionalism of police officers. Professionalism is measured not only by technical skills but also by intellectual capacity, moral integrity, and the ability to adapt to social change. Recent scholarship on police professionalism similarly connects professional authority with the development of knowledge, education, and competency standards (Martin, 2022). Therefore, strengthening police education through a university model is a crucial step in building the professional authority of the Indonesian National Police (Polri).

In addition, the transformation of police education is also closely linked to efforts to strengthen institutional accountability and legitimacy. Education based on democratic values, human rights, and professional ethics will produce a police force that is more responsive to the public and more sensitive to social justice issues. Research on procedural justice and legitimacy similarly indicates that legitimacy depends on how institutions exercise authority and how fairly the public perceives that authority (Anrango Narváez et al., 2023).

Therefore, the transformation of PTIK into a Police University is not merely an institutional necessity but also part of a broader reform agenda aimed at building a professional, accountable, and democratic police force (Martin, 2024). Without fundamental educational reform, police reform efforts will remain partial and fail to address the root of the problem. Conversely, by making education the basis for transformation, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) has the opportunity to implement more structural and sustainable changes.

In the context of the digital democracy era, marked by complex threats and increasing public demands, the Police University can be a strategic instrument in bridging the gap between police practice and scientific developments. This transformation is ultimately expected to not only enhance the capacity of police institutions but also contribute to the conditions that make public trust more likely, the primary foundation of legitimacy in a democratic system.

Research Gap

Several international studies have examined the relationship between police education and officer professionalism. Klose (2024) positions evidence-based policing as a decision-making process that integrates research evidence, professional judgment, and community values. More recent studies also show that higher-education-linked police learning can support the workplace use of evidence-based policing, although implementation depends on leadership, organisational culture, and the quality of police-academic collaboration (Rogers et al., 2022; Richards & Hammond, 2025).

However, recent developments indicate that policing challenges extend beyond conventional professionalism to contemporary issues such as the digitalisation of crime, cybersecurity, public transparency, and demands for accountability in an increasingly democratic and digitally connected society. In this context, most studies still focus on the experiences of Western countries and have not comprehensively examined how police education institutions in developing countries can adapt to these dynamics.

In Indonesia, in particular, studies on the role of police universities as centres for the development of contextual, adaptive, and locally-based police science are still limited. Existing Indonesian discussions on evidence-based policing underline the need for stronger research foundations within Polri, but they have not yet translated this need into a detailed institutional model for PTIK's transformation into a Police University (de Fretes et al., 2024). Therefore, there is a significant research gap regarding how a police higher-education institution can be constructed and optimised as a key pillar in supporting Polri reform through legal-policy alignment, curriculum redesign, research laboratories, academic collaboration, and accountability-oriented governance.

Novelty

The novelty of this research lies in the development of conceptual ideas regarding the transformation of the Police Science College (PTIK) into Police Universities as a basis for developing police science within the framework of Polri institutional reform in the era of digital democracy. Unlike previous research that has focused primarily on the relationship between police education and officer professionalism or the application of evidence-based policing approaches, this study offers a more strategic perspective by positioning police universities as centres for knowledge production, policy research, and innovation in police governance.

Conceptually, this research proposes a framework arguing that the strengthening of professionalism, accountability, and public legitimacy of the police institution not only depends on structural reforms and operational policies but also requires fundamental transformation of the police education system. In this context, the Police University is positioned as an academic institution that integrates education, research, and security policy development in a multidisciplinary manner, thus producing police officers who are not only operationally skilled but also possess the intellectual, analytical, and ethical capacity to face the complexities of modern security.

Furthermore, this research also contributes novelty at the conceptual and policy levels by formulating a Police University model that goes beyond being merely an internal police educational institution, but also develops as a centre for the development of police science connected to the national higher education ecosystem and international academic networks. This approach positions the Police University as a knowledge hub capable of fostering integration between police practice, academic research, and the formulation of evidence-based security policies. Thus, this research not only expands the study of police education but also offers a strategic framework for educational reform and the strengthening of more professional, accountable, and democratic police governance in Indonesia. The term “beyond” refers to institutional criteria such as external accreditation, degree authority, research ethics governance, publication output, and academic partnerships outside the Polri internal training system.

Problem Formulation

1. Why is the transformation of the PTIK into a Police University a strategic necessity for the Indonesian National Police (Polri) in the era of digital democracy?
2. How can the Police University model strengthen the professionalism and accountability of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) through curriculum reform, research capacity, quality assurance, leadership formation, and governance accountability?
3. How does the transformation of police education contribute to the institutional conditions for strengthening public trust?

Research Objectives

1. Analyse the urgency of transforming the PTIK into a Police University.
2. Examine a model for developing police education that is adaptive to modern security challenges.
3. Formulate a strategy for transforming police education to strengthen professionalism and public trust.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a policy-analysis design to examine the urgency and model for transforming the Police Science College (PTIK) into a Police University in the context of Polri institutional reform. This approach was chosen because the research is not only oriented toward describing phenomena but also aims to generate conceptual and strategic recommendations relevant to policymaking. A qualitative approach is appropriate for interpreting policy documents, books, and previous research findings in relation to institutional change. In this study, policy analysis is used to connect the normative mandate of police education, the higher education regulatory framework, and comparative lessons from selected police education institutions.

Research Approach and Type

This research is qualitative-explanatory, focusing on analysing the relationship between police education, officer professionalism, institutional accountability, and public trust. A policy analysis approach is used to evaluate existing conditions, identify gaps, and formulate an institutional transformation model that is adaptive to developments in the strategic environment. The unit of analysis is the institutional transformation of PTIK, while the analytical focus covers curriculum governance, research capacity, accreditation readiness, academic autonomy, and the relationship between police education and public accountability.

Data Sources and Types

This research uses secondary data obtained through:

1. Literature review of books, international journal articles, and scientific publications discussing police education, democratic policing, and evidence-based policing.
2. Analysis of policy documents, including Law Number 2 of 2002 on the Indonesian National Police, Law Number 12 of 2012 on Higher Education, Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology Regulation Number 53 of 2023 on higher education quality assurance, and institutional information related to STIK-PTIK.
3. An international comparative study, examining selected police education models in England and Wales, Finland, and Australia, because these cases represent three different but relevant institutional lessons: university-linked police entry education, a dedicated Police University College, and executive police leadership education.

Data Collection Techniques

Data collection was conducted through:

1. A narrative literature review to identify relevant concepts, theories, and empirical findings. The review did not claim PRISMA-level systematic screening; instead, the selection emphasised conceptual relevance, institutional comparability, policy applicability to the Indonesian context, and preference for recent journal sources where available.
2. Document analysis to understand the policy framework and institutional conditions of police education in Indonesia. Each document was read for institutional mandate, curriculum authority, accreditation implications, governance structure, quality assurance, and research-development relevance.
3. Comparison of international models to identify transferable lessons rather than to copy foreign institutional forms. The comparison focused on institutional status, academic collaboration, curriculum orientation, research role, leadership development, and quality assurance mechanisms.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was conducted through several stages:

1. Descriptive analysis, to describe the existing state of police education and the institutional challenges facing the Indonesian National Police. The descriptive stage mapped current institutional issues against curriculum, research, governance, and accreditation dimensions.
2. Comparative analysis, to compare the Indonesian police education model with selected international practices. The comparative stage used the same dimensions across England and Wales, Finland, and Australia to avoid a merely narrative comparison.
3. Policy analysis, to formulate alternative models for transforming PTIK into a Police University that are contextual and applicable. The policy stage assessed feasibility, institutional authority, expected outputs, and risks of implementation.

In addition, this study also uses a conceptual approach to develop a framework for the Police University model as a centre for the development of police science and security policy.

Data Validity and Reliability

To ensure the credibility and reliability of the data, this study employed the following techniques:

1. Source triangulation, by comparing academic literature, Indonesian legal-policy documents, official institutional information, and comparative country references. Triangulation was conducted to ensure that claims about police education transformation were not based on a single type of source.
2. Conceptual consistency was ensured by referring to key theories in police studies and security governance. Consistency was assessed by matching each argument to the same conceptual matrix of professionalism, accountability, research capacity, and public trust.
3. Analytical linkages were ensured by aligning the problem formulation, theoretical framework, and analytical results.

Research Limitations

This research is limited by the use of secondary data and does not include field-based empirical data such as interviews or surveys. Therefore, the results of this study are more conceptual and normative in nature as a basis for policy formulation, which requires further testing through empirical research. Consequently, claims about institutional performance and public trust are presented as conceptual-policy propositions rather than empirically verified causal effects.

DISCUSSION

Institutional Drivers for Police Education Transformation

Changes in the strategic global and national security environment over the past two decades have demanded fundamental transformations in institutional, curricular, and research aspects of the police, including the education system that serves as the foundation for developing officer professionalism. The complexity of modern crime, the development of digital technology, and increasing public demands for accountability of state institutions have prompted the need for a paradigm shift in police education. In this context, the transformation of the Police Science College (PTIK) into a Police University is a strategic issue related not only to strengthening the human resource capacity of the Indonesian National Police (Polri), but also to broader institutional reform efforts to build a professional, accountable, and publicly trusted police force.

The urgency of this transformation can be understood through several interrelated key dimensions: police professionalism, institutional accountability within a democratic police system, the role of education in law enforcement organisational reform, the changing educational paradigm in the era of digital democracy, the institutional challenges facing the Indonesian National Police (Polri), and the limitations of the current police education model. These six dimensions demonstrate that the transformation of police education is not merely an administrative or institutional necessity, but rather a strategic imperative to address the dynamics of security and the demands of modern society. These dimensions operate as an analytical framework: professionalism relates to officer competence, accountability relates to ethical and legal control, digital democracy relates to public scrutiny and data governance, and institutional reform relates to curriculum, research, accreditation, and collaboration.

Professionalism in the Police Institution

Professionalism is a fundamental principle in the organisation of modern policing. The police institution functions not only as a law enforcement agency but also as a public service institution with significant authority in maintaining social order and ensuring public security. Therefore, the quality of police professionalism is a crucial factor in determining the effectiveness and legitimacy of the institution.

Professionalism in the context of policing encompasses various dimensions, including technical competence, moral integrity, professional ethics, and analytical skills in addressing complex social issues. Recent research on police professionalism emphasises that professional authority is closely connected to the knowledge base and competency standards that underpin police practice (Martin, 2022). In the context of policing, this knowledge base includes police science, criminology, security studies, criminal law, and social science disciplines and policy studies relevant to law enforcement practice. In practical curriculum terms, these capacities should be translated into learning outcomes on cyber investigation, data literacy, intelligence analysis, community engagement, use-of-force accountability, ethics, and human rights.

However, in many cases, police professionalism is often perceived narrowly as operational capability in carrying out police duties. In fact, modern security challenges demand that police officers possess broader capacities, including critical thinking skills, policy analysis, an understanding of social dynamics, and sensitivity to human rights issues. From this perspective, academic-based police education is crucial in developing police officers who are not only technically competent but also possess strong intellectual and moral capacity.

The transformation of PTIK into a Police University can be a strategic step in strengthening police professionalism through the development of a more multidisciplinary, research-based curriculum integrated with developments in science and technology. The Police University will not only function as an internal educational institution but also as a centre for the development of police science capable of producing new knowledge relevant to modern policing practices. This improvement would depend on preconditions such as external quality assurance, qualified academic staff, research funding, clear degree authority, and transparent curriculum evaluation.

Accountability in Democratic Police Governance

In addition to professionalism, accountability is also a crucial principle in democratic police governance. The police, as an institution authorised to use state coercive power, must exercise its authority transparently, responsibly, and in accordance with legal principles and democratic values.

Democratic police governance requires accountability to legal standards, legitimate public authority, and the community. Research on police legitimacy further shows that public cooperation and institutional legitimacy are closely connected to perceptions of fair and accountable exercises of authority (Anrango Narváez et al., 2023). This principle demonstrates that the legitimacy of a police institution is determined not only by the effectiveness of law enforcement, but also by the extent to which the institution is accountable to the public for its actions and policies.

In the Indonesian context, the issue of police accountability often comes under public scrutiny, particularly when cases of abuse of authority or ethical violations involving police officers occur. This phenomenon not only impacts the institution's image but can also undermine public trust in the law enforcement system as a whole.

Police education plays a crucial role in building a culture of accountability within the police organisation. Through education that emphasises the values of integrity, professional ethics, and the principles of democratic policing, police officers can be shaped into professionals with a strong awareness of their public responsibilities. In this context, the Police University can serve as an academic and ethical-reflective space that instils the values of democratic governance while also serving as a centre for critical study of police practices. To protect critical inquiry within a police-affiliated university, the model should include research ethics review, academic senate oversight, publication standards, and safeguards for independent policy evaluation.

Police Education and Institutional Reform

Police institutional reform cannot be separated from reform of the education system that shapes the human resources within the organisation. Police education is a strategic instrument in developing the paradigm, values, and professional orientation of police officers.

Problem-oriented policing research demonstrates that police effectiveness depends on officers' ability to understand the social roots of the problems underlying crime (Bullock et al., 2022). This suggests that police education must develop the analytical and reflective capacity of police officers, enabling them to design more effective and sustainable crime prevention strategies.

However, in practice, police education in several police education systems still tends to be oriented toward operational training that emphasises discipline and technical skills. This approach often leaves little room for the development of intellectual and critical capacities of police officers. As a result, the institutional reforms envisioned through policy changes often fail to materialise optimally due to the lack of a paradigm shift in the education system (Koerner & Staller, 2021).

The transformation of PTIK into a Police University could be an important step in strengthening the role of education in police institutional reform. Through a university-based education model, the learning process not only focuses on operational training, but also includes the development of scientific knowledge, research, and policy analysis that can support innovation in police practice.

Police Education in the Era of Digital Democracy

The era of digital democracy has transformed the way the public interacts with state institutions, including the police. Digital technology has not only created new forms of crime, such as cybercrime and the spread of disinformation, but has also increased digital transparency and real-time public oversight of the performance of law enforcement officers.

In this context, police officers are required to possess new competencies that go beyond conventional law enforcement skills. Skills in digital data analysis, an understanding of cybersecurity, and strategic public communication skills are becoming increasingly important in carrying out police duties in the digital age (Cockcroft et al., 2021; Harkin & Whelan, 2022).

Furthermore, social media and digital platforms have created new spaces for the public to express criticism and aspirations towards state institutions. This situation requires police officers to possess strong communication skills and be sensitive to the social dynamics evolving in the digital public space. The transformation of PTIK into a Police University allows for the development of a curriculum that is more adaptive to technological developments and social dynamics. Study programs related to cybersecurity, criminal data analysis, public communication, and social conflict management can be developed as part of efforts to strengthen the capacity of police officers to face the challenges of the digital era. These courses should be linked to explicit learning outcomes, such as the ability to interpret digital evidence, assess data governance risks, communicate with online publics, and design accountable cyber-policing responses (Wilson-Kovacs & Wilcox, 2023).

Institutional Challenges of the Indonesian National Police in the Era of Digital Democracy

In addition to changes in the security environment, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) also faces various internal challenges related to professionalism, integrity, and public trust. Several cases involving police officers in recent years have sparked sharp public criticism of the performance and integrity of the institution.

This situation demonstrates that police institutional reform is not only related to changes in policy or organisational structure, but also to more fundamental changes in organisational culture. Police education plays a crucial role in shaping this organisational culture through the internalisation of the values of professionalism, integrity, and public service.

The Police University can be a strategic space to encourage organisational culture change through pedagogy and assessment through a more open, critical, and democratic-based educational approach. Through academic interaction across various disciplines and collaboration with other higher education institutions, police officers can gain a broader perspective in understanding the social and political dynamics that influence law enforcement practices. Culture change should be supported through admissions standards, reflective pedagogy, field-based assessment, ethics mentoring, leadership incentives, and periodic institutional evaluation.

Limitations of the Current Police Education Model

Although the Police Science College (PTIK) has played a significant role in police education in Indonesia, the current educational model still faces several curriculum, research, and governance limitations. One major limitation is the dominant orientation toward operational training rather than the development of police science as an academic discipline. The relevant indicators to be examined include existing study programs, research centres, lecturer qualifications, publication output, accreditation status, and collaboration records.

Furthermore, research capacity in police science still needs stronger institutional support. Scientific research is crucial for producing evidence-based policing policies. Without strong research support, police policies are often based more on practical experience or bureaucratic considerations than on systematic scientific analysis (Bullock et al., 2022).

Another limitation is the suboptimal integration of police education with the national and global higher education system. Academic collaboration with other universities is crucial for enriching scientific perspectives and improving the quality of education and research.

Transforming PTIK into a Police University could be a strategic solution to address these limitations. With university status, if accompanied by governance and quality assurance, police education institutions can develop multidisciplinary study programs, strengthen research capacity, and forge broader academic collaborations with various higher education institutions at home and abroad. However, university status is not sufficient by itself; it must be accompanied by governance reform, sustainable resources, academic staffing, accreditation readiness, and quality assurance.

Overall, these findings and discussion indicate that the transformation of the Police Science College (PTIK) into a Police University is a strategic step with broad implications for strengthening the professionalism of officers, enhancing institutional accountability, and developing police science as a knowledge base for law enforcement practices. In the face of increasingly complex security challenges and growing public demands for good governance of state institutions, police education reform through the establishment of a Police

University can provide a crucial foundation for building a professional, modern, and democratic police institution.

The Police Science College (PTIK) holds a strategic position within the Indonesian National Police (Polri) education system, serving as an institution that prepares and develops police human resources at the middle and strategic leadership/professional development levels. Through education at PTIK, Polri officers are equipped not only with operational police knowledge but also with managerial and leadership skills, as well as an understanding of social dynamics and public policies related to security and public order. Therefore, PTIK plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of future Polri institutional leadership. In this context, strengthening the institutional capacity of PTIK is crucial for producing professional, adaptive police human resources with a strategic vision to address modern security challenges. In this article, PTIK is discussed primarily as a higher education and leadership-development institution within the Polri education ecosystem, not as a generic rank-training unit.

With the increasing complexity of security challenges and the development of digital technology, police education is no longer solely focused on technical and operational training. A strengthened academic and research foundation is needed to integrate various disciplines into the police education process. An academic approach enables police officers to understand security issues more comprehensively through scientific analysis, empirical research, and multidisciplinary studies encompassing law, criminology, security, information technology, and public policy. From this perspective, the transformation of PTIK into a Police University can strengthen the position of police education as an academic institution that not only produces law enforcement officers but also produces thinkers, researchers, and policymakers in the fields of security and law enforcement.

Furthermore, the development of police science as an academic discipline is crucial to supporting the professionalisation of the police institution. Police science is not only concerned with law enforcement practices but also encompasses the study of crime prevention strategies, security governance, police-community relations, and the development of evidence-based security policies. By establishing the Police University as a centre for police science, ethics, and policy development, the police institution can build a strong knowledge base to support more rational, effective, and accountable policymaking. In the long term, strengthening police science as an academic discipline can also contribute to the development of more comprehensive and contextual national security studies in Indonesia.

Table 1. Comparative Lessons for PTIK Transformation

Model/country	Main institutional lesson	Relevance for PTIK transformation
England and Wales	Police education is linked to higher education partnerships and evidence-based policing through workplace learning and professional education research (Rogers et al., 2022).	PTIK needs clearer academic collaboration, research-based curriculum, and professional standards beyond operational training.
Finland	Finland provides a higher police education model that connects police professional education with a dedicated academic structure and career development (Terpstra & Schaap, 2021).	PTIK can use this lesson to connect degree authority, research development, and leadership preparation in one police higher-education ecosystem.
Australia	Australian police education illustrates the continuing relationship between tertiary education, professional preparation, and leadership development (Miles-Johnson, 2024).	PTIK can strengthen strategic leadership education, applied research centres, lecturer capacity, and accountability-oriented curriculum outcomes.

Model/country	Main institutional lesson	Relevance for PTIK transformation
Implication for Indonesia	A Police University should not copy foreign models mechanically, but adapt governance, curriculum, research, leadership, and quality-assurance principles to Indonesian law and Polri institutional needs.	Transformation should be phased through legal clarity, accreditation readiness, academic staffing, research output, and accountable institutional governance.

Source: Author’s synthesis based on academic literature, official institutional information, and selected legal-policy documents.

The transformation of the Police Science College (PTIK) into a Police University involves not merely a change in institutional form but also the reconstruction of a police education paradigm that is more adaptive to modern security dynamics and the demands of democratic governance. The Police University development model needs to be designed as an academic ecosystem capable of systematically integrating education, research, and security policy development. From a modern higher education perspective, universities function not only as teaching institutions but also as centres for knowledge production, policy innovation, and critical spaces for understanding and responding to various complex social issues. In this context, the Police University is expected to become a centre for the development of police and security science, contributing to increased professionalism of officers and strengthening democratic police governance.

Institutional Design of a Police University

The development of a Police University requires an institutional design that accommodates the complexity of policing and security studies from a multidisciplinary perspective. The university's institutional structure needs to be designed not only to support police professional education but also to develop various disciplines relevant to law enforcement and public security practices. Comparative research on higher police education supports the need to connect professional police education with broader academic structures and knowledge development (Terpstra & Schaap, 2021). Therefore, the institutional design of a Police University needs to reflect the integration of police science, law, technology, and social sciences.

One possible institutional design option is the establishment of several faculties directly related to the needs of a modern police institution. The Faculty of Police Science could serve as a centre for police science development, examining various aspects of police practice, including crime prevention strategies, public security management, and police-community relations. The Faculty of Law and Criminal Justice could focus on comprehensive studies of the criminal justice system, including criminal law, criminal procedure, and criminal policy. The Faculty of Security and Intelligence could develop studies on national security, intelligence analysis, and strategies for addressing unconventional security threats. The Faculty of Cybersecurity and Technology can play a role in developing police capacity to address digital technology-based crimes, including cybersecurity and criminal data analysis. Furthermore, the Faculty of Leadership and Public Policy can prepare police officers with strategic leadership skills and a deep understanding of governance and public security policy. Any faculty related to intelligence or cybersecurity should be governed through clear academic boundaries, ethical review, data protection rules, and separation between education/research activities and operational secrecy.

This multidisciplinary institutional design enables the Police University to become a centre for the integration of police science and practice. Thus, police education focuses not only on operational training but also on developing the intellectual and analytical capacity of police officers to address increasingly complex security issues.

Developing a Modern Police Curriculum

In addition to institutional design, curriculum development is a crucial aspect in establishing a Police University capable of addressing modern security challenges. The police education curriculum needs to be designed adaptively and responsive to technological developments, social dynamics, and public demands on law enforcement institutions. Recent police-training scholarship supports curriculum designs that connect learning objectives, pedagogical methods, and assessment with professional needs (Koerner & Staller, 2021). A curriculum matrix should connect each competency area with learning outcomes, course clusters, teaching methods, and assessment methods so the model can be evaluated academically.

In the context of police education, the curriculum needs to integrate the various competencies required by police officers in the modern era. These competencies encompass not only technical skills in law enforcement, but also criminal data analysis, an understanding of digital security, and ethical and effective public communication skills. Therefore, the development of the Police University curriculum needs to encompass various areas of study, such as digital security technology, criminal data analysis, human rights, police professional ethics, and social conflict management.

The integration of theory and practice is also a crucial aspect in police curriculum development. Through a problem-based learning approach, students are trained to analyse various real-life cases in police practice and formulate solutions based on scientific analysis. This approach enables police education to produce officers who are not only skilled in carrying out operational duties but also possess critical and strategic thinking skills in addressing various security challenges. Implementation may use documented cases, simulation exercises, supervised field practicum, mentoring by practitioner-academics, assessment rubrics, and ethical safeguards for sensitive police cases.

Integration of Education, Research, and Security Policy

Police Universities also need to be developed as institutions capable of integrating education, research, and security policy development. Evidence-based policing research emphasises that police practice and policy should be informed by systematic research and evaluation (Klose, 2024; Bullock et al., 2022). In the context of policing, academic research can therefore become a crucial foundation for formulating more effective, evidence-based security policies.

The integration of education and research allows for the development of an evidence-based policing approach, where police policies and strategies are based on systematic, ethical, and policy-relevant research findings. Through academic research, Police Universities can identify crime patterns, evaluate the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies, and develop policy innovations that are more responsive to community needs.

Furthermore, universities can also serve as centres for security policy studies, providing strategic input to the government and police institutions in formulating public policy. Thus, Police Universities function not only as internal educational institutions but also as strategic think tanks supporting the development of national security policies. To avoid overlapping mandates, the Police University should function as a research and policy-advisory hub, while formal policy decisions remain with authorised Polri and government policy-making units.

National and International Academic Collaboration

The development of Police Universities also requires strengthening academic collaboration networks at both the national and international levels. Police-academic partnership research shows that collaboration can strengthen knowledge exchange, professional learning, and research capacity (Martin & Wooff, 2020). Through international collaboration, universities can gain access to various academic resources, including student and faculty exchanges, research collaborations, and joint curriculum development. Collaboration should be prioritised through feasible mechanisms such as joint research, guest teaching, credit recognition, staff exchange, joint supervision, and policy laboratories, rather than only symbolic memoranda of understanding.

In the context of police education, collaboration with universities and security institutions in various countries can provide opportunities for police officers to learn contextually adaptable lessons in security management and law enforcement. Furthermore, academic collaboration also allows for the development of joint research that can enrich the study of police and security science.

At the national level, Police Universities can also collaborate with various universities and research institutions to develop multidisciplinary studies related to security and public order. This collaboration is crucial for broadening academic perspectives and improving the quality of research in the field of police science.

PTIK Transformation Implementation Strategy

The transformation of PTIK into a Police University requires a planned and phased implementation strategy to be effective and sustainable. Successful implementation therefore requires clear direction, strong leadership, stakeholder involvement, and sequenced institutional preparation. In the short term, PTIK should conduct legal and feasibility reviews; in the medium term, it should prepare governance, curriculum, accreditation, and research centres; in the long term, it should consolidate degree authority, international collaboration, and policy impact evaluation.

Table 2. Practical Roadmap for Transforming PTIK into a Police University

Stage	Main actions	Expected output
Short term	Conduct legal review, institutional feasibility study, curriculum audit, research-capacity mapping, and stakeholder consultation.	Clear policy basis, transformation feasibility map, and priority issues for institutional preparation.
Medium term	Prepare governance structure, degree authority requirements, accreditation documents, lecturer development plan, research centres, and curriculum matrix.	Accreditation-ready academic governance and a measurable Police University development blueprint.
Long term	Build national-international partnerships, strengthen publication output, establish research ethics governance, and evaluate graduate impact on policing practice.	Sustainable Police University ecosystem connected to police reform, accountability, and evidence-based policy development.
Risk control	Avoid symbolic name change without academic capacity; align transformation with funding, human resources, quality assurance, and external evaluation.	Transformation remains substantive, measurable, and institutionally accountable.

Source: Author’s policy synthesis for PTIK transformation planning.

The initial stage in the transformation process is reforming police education policy, which provides the legal basis for the establishment of a Police University. This policy should include regulations regarding the institutional structure, educational curriculum, and university management mechanisms that align with national higher education standards. The legal pathway should cover higher education licensing, Polri internal regulation, institutional status, accreditation, degree authority, and coordination with the responsible ministry.

The next step is strengthening academic and research capacity by improving the quality of lecturers, developing research centres, and providing adequate educational infrastructure. Furthermore, the transformation must be accompanied by a shift in the organisational culture of police education to be more open to innovation, academic criticism, and the development of scientific knowledge. Measurable indicators may include lecturer doctoral qualifications, teaching certification, research grants, Scopus/Sinta-indexed publications, international exposure, practitioner-academic balance, and annual policy briefs.

Overall, the integrative, multidisciplinary, and research-based development model of a Police University can serve as one institutional foundation for strengthening police professionalism and improving the quality of security governance in Indonesia. By making education the basis for institutional transformation, the Police University is expected to become a centre for the development of police science and security policies, supporting the creation of a professional, accountable, and democratic police institution in the future. The model therefore requires measurable milestones rather than general expectations: legal readiness, governance design, curriculum mapping, quality assurance, research-centre output, and public accountability linkage.

CONCLUSION

Based on the problem formulation and analysis presented in this study, it can be concluded that the transformation of the Police Science College (PTIK) into a Police University is a strategic step in responding to the increasingly complex global and national security landscape in the era of digital democracy. Developments in information technology, the rise in cybercrime, and increasingly open social dynamics demand that the police institution possess stronger professional, intellectual, and institutional capacity. In this context, the police education system is a key factor in developing the quality of Polri's human resources, capable of adapting to changes in the strategic environment while maintaining institutional legitimacy amidst growing public demands for transparency and accountability. The analysis identifies three main findings: the need for legal-institutional readiness, the need for curriculum and research governance, and the need to connect police education reform with accountability mechanisms rather than treating education as a stand-alone solution.

First, the transformation of PTIK into a Police University is proposed as a strategic necessity for the Polri in facing increasingly complex and multidimensional modern security challenges. These challenges relate not only to new forms of technology-based crime but also to the changing relationship between the police institution and society in an increasingly open democratic system. In this context, police education can no longer be understood solely as a technical training process, but rather as an academic process that shapes the intellectual capacity, strategic leadership, and value orientation of police officers. Thus, the transformation of PTIK into a Police University can strengthen the position of police education as an academic institution capable of producing professional, adaptive, and analytical police officers capable of addressing various contemporary security issues.

Second, the integrative and multidisciplinary development model of the Police University can play a crucial role in strengthening the professionalism and accountability of the Indonesian National Police (Polri). By developing an institutional structure encompassing various disciplines relevant to police practice, the Police University can become an academic space that integrates education, research, and security policy development. Strengthening the academic foundation of police education will enable police officers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of social dynamics, law, technology, and public policy related to public security and order. In the long term, this approach can foster a more professional, transparent, and accountable police organisational culture in carrying out their duties as law enforcement officers and public servants.

Third, the transformation of police education through the establishment of a Police University also has important implications for strengthening the institutional conditions of public trust in the Indonesian National Police (Polri). Public trust is a crucial factor in determining the legitimacy of police institutions in a democratic society. However, this study emphasises that public trust is not automatically restored by changing PTIK's institutional name. Trust can be strengthened only if the transformation produces measurable improvements in curriculum quality, research capacity, ethical leadership, transparency, and accountable policing practice.

Overall, this research demonstrates that the transformation of the PTIK into a Police University is a strategic policy option and institutional necessity in facing the increasingly complex and dynamic challenges of modern security. Police education reform provides a crucial foundation for strengthening the professionalism, accountability, and integrity of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) in carrying out its law enforcement and public service functions. Furthermore, the Police University can also serve as a centre for the development of police science and security policy studies, supporting the strengthening of more democratic, transparent, and knowledge-based police governance. Through this transformation, police education is expected to not only produce technically competent law enforcement officers but also police leaders with strategic vision, moral integrity, and the intellectual capacity to respond to future security challenges.

SUGGESTION

Based on the analysis of the urgency of transforming police education to address modern security challenges and the need to strengthen the professionalism and accountability of the Indonesian National Police (Polri), this study proposes several policy recommendations that can serve as a basis for developing police education in Indonesia. These recommendations are aimed at strengthening the role of education as the primary foundation for police institutional reform while supporting the creation of more professional, transparent, and responsive police governance.

First, initiate the institutional transformation of the Police Science College (PTIK) into a Police University through a clear legal-policy roadmap. The transformation needs to be prepared through institutional feasibility review, alignment with higher education quality assurance, curriculum audit, research-capacity mapping, and stakeholder consultation involving Polri, higher education authorities, and relevant academic partners.

Second, develop research-based police education and a multidisciplinary approach. Police education needs to be directed at strengthening academic capacity through the integration of teaching, research, and security policy development. A research-based educational approach enables police officers to understand various security issues more comprehensively through scientific analysis and empirical research. Furthermore, a multidisciplinary approach is also crucial for broadening perspectives in understanding the increasingly complex dynamics of crime and security. Therefore, the police education curriculum needs to integrate various disciplines such as criminology, law, information technology, social sciences, and public policy. The development of security and police research centres is also necessary to support evidence-based policing practices. Research governance should include an ethics committee, data-sharing protocols, research centres, annual publication targets, policy brief mechanisms, and clear funding and evaluation responsibilities.

Third, integrate police education with the national higher education system. To improve the quality of education and research, police education needs to be more closely integrated with the national higher education system. This integration can be achieved through academic recognition of police education programs, the development of study programs that align with national higher education standards, and improving the quality of teaching staff through collaboration with other universities. With this integration, police education will not only become an internal educational system of the institution, but will also become part of the national academic ecosystem that encourages the exchange of knowledge and the development of science. Integration should be understood as accreditation alignment, degree equivalence, curriculum standards, lecturers' career pathways, and access to competitive research funding under national higher education norms.

Fourth, strengthen national and international academic collaboration in the development of police science. The development of a Police University also requires strengthening academic collaboration networks at both the national and international levels. Collaboration with universities, research institutions, and security institutions in various countries can provide access to best practices in security management and police education. This collaboration can be realised through student and lecturer exchange programs, joint research, international curriculum development, and the holding of academic forums discussing global security issues.

Through extensive academic collaboration, the Police University can develop into a centre for the development of police science that is not only relevant nationally but also contributes to the discourse on security and policing globally. International references should be adapted to Indonesian law, Polri structure, public accountability needs, and the available institutional capacity, not copied directly as imported best practices.

Overall, the implementation of these policy recommendations is expected to contribute to strengthening the role of police education as a primary foundation for institutional reform of the Indonesian National Police (Polri). Through institutional transformation, strengthening the academic base, integration with the higher education system, and fostering academic collaboration, the Police University can become a strategic institution supporting the development of police science, enhancing officer professionalism, and strengthening more democratic and accountable police governance.

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Strengthening Ethical Culture in Police Responses to Juvenile Brawls in Semarang

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Abstract

Police responses to juvenile brawls must protect public safety while preserving the rights, dignity, and developmental interests of children in conflict with the law. This article examines how organizational ethical culture shapes police handling of juvenile brawls in Semarang and develops a case-based model for institutional change. Ethical culture is operationalized through the alignment of formal policies, everyday practices, supervisory example, peer norms, complaint control, and disciplinary accountability. The study uses a qualitative instrumental single-case design at Polrestabes Semarang. The dataset comprises semi-structured interviews with police personnel and officials, children and families, oversight actors, local-government representatives, legal-aid and community stakeholders, together with complaint materials, case-related documents, regulations, and institutional records collected from February to September 2025. Data were interpreted through interactive qualitative analysis and source-method triangulation. The findings identify divergent operational orientations within the same organization. Coercive responses were reported more frequently in patrol and public-order encounters, whereas specialist Women and Children Protection Unit practices were more protective, communicative, and legally oriented. The divergence is not treated as a fixed warrior-guardian binary; it reflects context-dependent orientations reinforced by differences in competence, leadership, peer expectations, workflow, procedural guidance, and supervision. The article's contribution is an integrated Ethical Culture Change Model that links the substantive content of ethical culture to Lewin's change sequence and four systemic intervention targets: individual capability, social norms, work methods, and organizational governance. The model translates the case findings into operational instruments for training, PPA coordination, use-of-force review, complaint handling, supervision, and continuous evaluation.

Keywords: ethical culture, child-sensitive policing, juvenile brawls, children in conflict with the law, police use of force, organizational change

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile brawls present a difficult policing problem because the police must interrupt violence, protect victims and bystanders, preserve evidence, and restore public order while recognizing that alleged participants may still be children. The term *brawl* may describe conduct ranging from mutual taunting and an incipient group confrontation to assault, weapon possession, property damage, or conduct causing death. A child-sensitive response therefore cannot presume that every person found near a confrontation has the same role, level of responsibility, or legal status. Initial police action should differentiate children suspected of an offence, child victims, child witnesses, and uninvolved children before coercive measures are selected.

Indonesian juvenile justice law provides a clear normative starting point. A child in conflict with the law is a child who has reached the age of 12 but is under 18 and is suspected of committing a criminal offence. This legal term is narrower than the broader category of children dealing with the law, which also includes child victims and child witnesses. The Juvenile Criminal Justice System Law requires child justice to prioritize protection, the best interests of the child, proportionality, deprivation of liberty as a last resort, and restorative approaches where the legal requirements are satisfied (Republic of Indonesia, 2012). The Child Protection Law further requires special protection for children dealing with the law and safeguards their dignity, identity, physical security, and recovery (Republic of Indonesia, 2014, 2016). These obligations do not negate legitimate public-order enforcement; they govern how it is performed.

The Semarang context makes the institutional problem particularly important. In December 2024, the House of Representatives publicly examined the fatal shooting of a 17-year-old student by a Polrestabes Semarang officer. Official parliamentary reporting stated that the officer faced criminal and police-ethics processes, while the Indonesian Child Protection Commission emphasized the state's duty to protect affected children and fulfil their rights (House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia, 2024; Indonesian Child Protection Commission, 2024). This incident cannot by itself establish an organizational culture or prove a general pattern. It nevertheless demonstrates why police responses involving children, public-order narratives, and the use of force require accurate documentation, independent review, and legal safeguards.

Research on police-youth encounters shows that coercive treatment may affect young people's perceptions of fairness and may reinforce hostility or moral disengagement, particularly when they experience police action as arbitrary or humiliating (Cleary, 2014; Zapolski et al., 2018). Conversely, communication, procedural fairness, de-escalation, and developmentally informed intervention can improve the quality of encounters without requiring officers to abandon safety or lawful enforcement (Engel et al., 2020; Kubiak et al., 2019). The implication is not that force is always unlawful, but that its legality, necessity, proportionality, and accountability must be demonstrable. Indonesian police rules similarly require graded and accountable use of force and respect for human rights in police duties (Indonesian National Police, 2009a, 2009b).

The literature often describes contrasting *warrior* and *guardian* orientations. Warrior-oriented policing privileges command, threat control, and coercive readiness; guardian-oriented policing places greater weight on communication, procedural justice, relationship-building, and citizen safety. Recent empirical work treats these as orientations rather than immutable officer types, and recognizes that an officer may display different orientations across tasks and situations (Murphy & McCarthy, 2024; Rahr & Rice, 2015). This distinction is important for the present case. The article does not classify every patrol officer as a warrior or every PPA officer as a guardian. It asks when, where, and through which organizational mechanisms coercive or protective orientations become more likely.

The central concept is ethical culture. In this study, ethical culture means the organizational conditions that make ethically appropriate conduct understandable, practicable, discussable, supported, and enforceable. It is observed through the consistency of written policy, supervisory example, peer expectations, routine practices, access to advice, complaint handling, and responses to misconduct. Ethical culture is therefore not equivalent to individual morality or the existence of a code of ethics. An organization may have detailed rules while everyday routines, informal modelling, or weak accountability encourage contrary conduct. Ethical-culture research highlights the significance of clarity, congruence between leadership and formal standards, feasibility, transparency, discussability, support, and sanctionability (Chadegani & Jari, 2016; Kaptein, 2008, 2011).

This organizational perspective explains why change management is relevant. If problematic handling results only from isolated misconduct, individual discipline may be sufficient. If the same operational choices are repeatedly learned, copied, tolerated, or left uncorrected, the intervention must also address the conditions that reproduce them. Lewin's unfreezing-changing-refreezing sequence provides a temporal logic for disrupting inherited routines, implementing alternatives, and consolidating new standards. A systemic change perspective then identifies where intervention must occur: individual capability, social relationships and leadership, work methods, and organizational governance. Ethical culture supplies the substantive standard by which each intervention is assessed. The three perspectives are therefore not merely placed side by side; they perform different and complementary analytical functions.

Prior Indonesian studies have examined juvenile brawls, restorative justice, police organizational transformation, and the treatment of children dealing with the law (Aulia, 2021; Nizarli, 2011; Syahputra et al., 2023). International studies have examined police interviewing of juveniles, youth-focused crisis intervention, police injustice, de-escalation, and warrior-guardian orientations (Cleary, 2014; Engel et al., 2020; Kubiak et al., 2019; Murphy & McCarthy, 2024; Zapolski et al., 2018). Less attention has been paid to how contrasting handling practices arise within one Indonesian police organization and how those practices can be translated into a staged, management-oriented ethical-culture model. The gap is thus both empirical and design-oriented: the literature identifies desirable values and harmful practices, but offers less guidance on how a territorial police unit can convert those insights into coordinated changes in personnel capability, supervisory norms, operational workflow, and accountability.

The article addresses two questions. First, what patterns of police action and organizational conditions shape the handling of children in conflict with the law in juvenile-brawl cases at Polrestabes Semarang? Second, how can those findings be translated into an integrated model for strengthening ethical culture in child-sensitive policing? The novelty lies in distinguishing the field-derived problem structure from the theoretical architecture used to respond to it. The field material identifies the points at which ethical risk is produced; ethical-culture theory defines the desired institutional qualities; Lewin sequences the change process; and the systemic model specifies the targets of intervention. This produces a model that can be audited through concrete police-management instruments rather than remaining a general appeal for cultural change.

Research Design, Data Analysis, and Ethical Safeguards

This research uses a qualitative instrumental single-case study of Polrestabes Semarang. The case is instrumental because the organization is examined not only as a unique site but also as a means of understanding how a territorial police unit can develop different operational orientations toward the same category of child-related public-order incident. The unit of analysis is the organizational handling process: initial encounter, control and arrest decisions, communication, protection of identity, transfer or referral, investigation, supervision, complaint review, and organizational learning. The research period reported in the source manuscript was February to September 2025.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and document study. The reported participant categories include Polri personnel and officials; children in conflict with the law or children affected by police action; family members; neighbourhood or community representatives; local-government and child-protection actors; legal-aid or civil-society representatives; and external police-oversight stakeholders. These details are essential because the breadth of stakeholder categories cannot substitute for transparent sampling information.

The documentary corpus reportedly included complaint materials submitted to the professional and security function, case-related or official records, applicable legislation and police regulations, institutional procedures, and public documents concerning the Semarang case. Public reports were used as contextual and corroborative sources, not as proof that an alleged pattern existed across the organization.

Analysis followed the interactive logic of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2014). For publication transparency, the revised analytical structure distinguishes: (1) descriptive handling practices; (2) the operational setting in which they appeared; (3) the organizational mechanisms that enabled or constrained them; (4) their consistency with child-protection, use-of-force, restorative-justice, and ethical standards; and (5) implications for the proposed model. Initial categories were derived from the legal and theoretical framework, while case-specific patterns were retained where they did not fit the initial categories. Findings were compared across interview-source classes and documents.

Credibility was pursued through source triangulation and method triangulation: accounts from different stakeholder groups were compared with available documents and regulatory standards. The analysis avoids converting the recurrence of a theme into a prevalence estimate because the study is qualitative and does not provide a statistically representative sample. It also avoids attributing institutional intent from an individual incident. Transferability is supported through a thick description of the organizational mechanisms rather than by claiming that all Indonesian police units share the same pattern.

Research involving children and allegations of police violence requires explicit safeguards. Publication should identify the approving ethics body and approval number; the process for parental or guardian consent and child assent; procedures for voluntary participation, withdrawal, confidentiality, trauma-sensitive interviewing, referral for support, and protection from retaliation; and the method for removing names, ranks, locations, and details that could enable re-identification. Until those facts are supplied, no direct quotation from a child participant is reproduced in this revision. Findings are instead presented through a cross-source thematic matrix to reduce identification risk while preserving analytical traceability (UNICEF, 2013).

DISCUSSION

Child-Sensitive Policing as the Normative Baseline

A legally accurate terminology is indispensable. *Anak yang berkonflik dengan hukum* is translated as *child in conflict with the law*, not child under five, child with disabilities, an armed group, or any other variant. The category refers to a child aged 12 to under 18 suspected of committing a criminal offence. It should not be used automatically for every child found at a brawl scene, because some may be victims, witnesses, or bystanders. The first ethical obligation is therefore classification based on verified role and age rather than on appearance, group association, or an undifferentiated label such as *brawler*.

The child-sensitive baseline consists of several linked duties. Officers must protect life and bodily integrity, prevent further violence, use the least harmful lawful intervention reasonably available, preserve the child's privacy, provide access to parents or guardians and legal assistance where required, and assess the possibility of diversion or restorative handling in accordance with the law. Restorative justice is not synonymous with informally ending a case. It requires a lawful process, voluntary participation, attention to victims, and compliance with the eligibility and procedural requirements of the Juvenile Criminal Justice System Law and Police Regulation No. 8 of 2021 (Indonesian National Police, 2021; Republic of Indonesia, 2012).

Use of force and child protection must be analysed together. Police may face actual weapons, group violence, flight, or immediate danger, and the presence of a child does not eliminate the duty to protect others. Nevertheless, force must satisfy legality, necessity, proportionality, reasonableness, and accountability, with firearms reserved for circumstances involving a threat to life or serious injury. An ethical culture makes these principles operational through pre-deployment briefing, age-sensitive threat assessment, verbal communication, de-escalation where feasible, medical assistance, prompt reporting, supervisory review, and corrective action. It also rejects humiliating practices, unnecessary exposure of a child's identity, collective punishment, and treatment designed to produce spectacle rather than lawful control.

The Code of Professional Ethics provides an institutional accountability layer. Compliance cannot be reduced to whether an officer is eventually sanctioned. It includes whether supervisors communicate the rule before an incident, whether officers can seek advice under pressure, whether unsafe or unlawful orders can be questioned, whether force and custody are documented, whether complaints are protected from retaliation, and whether lessons are fed back into training and deployment. These indicators translate ethical culture from an abstract value into observable organizational practice (Indonesian National Police, 2022; Kaptein, 2008).

Divergent Operational Orientations within Polrestabes Semarang

The source manuscript reports two recurring orientations within Polrestabes Semarang. The first appeared in routine patrol, large-scale patrol, and functional-duty encounters and involved verbal intimidation, physical coercion, humiliating treatment, or other control-oriented practices. The second appeared more clearly in the Women and Children Protection Unit, where handling was described as more communicative, protective, and attentive to legal procedure. The analysis does not treat these accounts as frequency estimates. It treats them as patterns that require explanation because they were reported across different source classes and were compared with complaint or case-related materials.

The setting of the encounter matters. Patrol officers often make rapid decisions in uncertain, mobile, and potentially violent conditions. Their immediate task may be to separate groups, secure weapons, protect bystanders, and prevent escape. PPA personnel usually enter at a later or more controlled stage, have specialist mandates, and are more likely to work with families and child-protection partners. These institutional differences partly explain the divergence. They do not excuse unlawful force, but they caution against interpreting the contrast solely as a difference in personal morality. Ethical risk arises when an organization expects general-duty officers to manage child cases without equivalent access to specialist knowledge, consultation, documentation, and supervisory support.

The warrior-guardian framework is therefore used as a continuum of operational orientation. Indicators of a coercive orientation in the data include treating the group primarily as a threat, relying on domination or fear to obtain compliance, using generalized labels, and giving limited weight to the child's role or developmental status. Indicators of a protective orientation include differentiated assessment, explanation of police action, proportionate control, privacy protection, family or PPA involvement, and attention to restorative or referral options. The same officer may move between these orientations depending on threat, supervision, unit expectations, and available procedures. The organizational task is not to eliminate tactical readiness, but to ensure that readiness is governed by legality, proportionality, and child-sensitive judgment.

The structured evidence matrix in Table 1 addresses a limitation in the original manuscript, which relied heavily on broad narrative claims. It makes visible which source classes support each theme and limits the resulting inference. Direct quotations should be added only after the author verifies consent, de-identification, and the risk of recognizing child participants. Where complaint or case records are used, the final submitted version should provide non-identifying document codes and dates so that the chain from evidence to finding can be audited without exposing protected information.

Table 1. Cross-source evidence matrix

Analytical theme	Interview source classes	Document source classes	Cautious analytical inference
Coercive handling in public-order encounters	Police personnel; children and families; external oversight and community representatives	Complaint records; case-handling documents; use-of-force and child-protection rules	The dataset reports recurring verbal or physical coercion in patrol and public-order settings, but does not support attributing the pattern to every officer or every brawl response.
Child-sensitive handling	PPA personnel and officials; children and families; child-protection stakeholders	Juvenile justice, restorative justice, ethics, and child-protection materials	Protective, communicative, and legally oriented practices were more visible in specialist PPA handling than in general patrol settings.
Organizational normalization	Police personnel and supervisors;	Complaint, supervision,	Repetition, senior modelling, fragmented guidance, and

Analytical theme	Interview source classes	Document source classes	Cautious analytical inference
	external oversight actors	training, and procedural materials	inconsistent supervision may normalize practices that depart from child-sensitive standards.
Change requirements	All reported stakeholder categories	Applicable regulations, internal governance documents, and scholarly literature	Sustainable change requires simultaneous intervention in individual competence, social norms, work methods, and governance arrangements.

Source: Reconstruction from the manuscript's reported interview categories, document review, and thematic findings. Participant counts and document identifiers require author confirmation.

Organizational Mechanisms that Normalize Ethical Risk

Four interacting mechanisms help explain how an unethical handling practice can become normalized. The first is individual capability. General-duty officers may have unequal knowledge of juvenile justice, child development, trauma, communication, and restorative pathways. A rule may be formally known but not recognized as relevant during a rapidly escalating encounter. Ethical competence therefore requires more than memorizing prohibitions; it includes moral awareness, legal issue recognition, threat discrimination, judgment among alternatives, commitment to the chosen ethical option, and the practical skill to carry it out.

The second mechanism is social. Police learn not only from formal training but also from supervisors, senior colleagues, stories about effective policing, and peer reactions after an incident. When harsh treatment is praised as decisive, not questioned during debriefing, or reproduced by senior personnel, it acquires normative force. Conversely, a supervisor who requires justification for force, protects officers who report concerns, and models respectful communication makes child-sensitive conduct safer and more credible. This is why the article uses leadership congruence, discussability, and peer support as ethical-culture indicators rather than assuming that written policy determines practice.

The third mechanism is the organization of work. The source manuscript describes insufficient separation between public-order control and child-sensitive follow-up, limited PPA involvement at the earliest stage, and an absence or incompleteness of integrated guidance. A fragmented workflow can cause a child to move from street control to custody, interview, documentation, and family contact without a clear point at which age, role, vulnerability, or diversion eligibility is reassessed. The remedy is not to require PPA personnel to attend every patrol. It is to define consultation triggers, handover standards, mandatory records, referral pathways, and responsibilities that connect frontline action to specialist support.

The fourth mechanism is governance and accountability. Incomplete use-of-force reporting, weak complaint triage, inconsistent supervisory review, or the absence of cross-unit evaluation reduces the organization's ability to distinguish justified action from preventable harm. It also permits each incident to be treated as isolated. Ethical governance requires records that can answer basic questions: what threat was perceived, what alternatives were attempted, what force was used, whether the child was injured, when a guardian or lawyer was contacted, whether identity was protected, whether PPA was consulted, and what corrective action followed. These are management questions as much as legal questions.

These mechanisms show why the claim of a *deviant subculture* must be used cautiously. The material supports an institutional risk of normalization where recurring practices are learned and insufficiently corrected. It does not justify labeling the entire Polrestabes, a whole unit, or every officer as deviant. A more defensible conclusion is that organizational arrangements may create pockets of practice in which coercive handling becomes easier to reproduce than child-sensitive handling. This formulation preserves the seriousness of the finding without exceeding the qualitative evidence.

The Integrated Ethical Culture Change Model

The proposed model integrates three analytical functions. First, ethical-culture theory defines the desired organizational condition. Policies, practices, and norms should consistently encourage ethical conduct and inhibit misconduct. For a public police organization, this corporate-origin framework must be adapted to public-law duties: legality, coercive authority, human rights, external oversight, and accountability to affected communities. The model therefore adds supervision, complaint protection, force review, and child-rights compliance to the general policy-practice-norm structure (Chadegani & Jari, 2016; Kaptein, 2008).

Second, Lewin's sequence supplies the temporal architecture. *Unfreezing* means establishing that the existing routine is neither inevitable nor institutionally acceptable. It requires review of cases and complaints, leadership acknowledgment of the gap, safe discussion of operational pressures, and a shared legal baseline. *Changing* means implementing new competencies, supervisory routines, workflows, and accountability instruments. *Refreezing* means embedding the changes in recurrent training, promotion and evaluation expectations, standard documentation, recognition and discipline, and periodic audit. Refreezing is not permanent closure; it is stabilization with a mechanism for continued learning.

Third, the systemic targets prevent change from being reduced to training. The individual target covers knowledge, communication, de-escalation, child development, and moral decision-making. The social target covers leadership example, peer norms, psychological safety for reporting, and supervisory coaching. Work methods cover age and role assessment, operational briefing, PPA consultation, use-of-force reporting, referral, diversion, and family communication. Governance covers SOPs, complaint handling, data review, ethical discipline, external coordination, and evaluation. Each target responds directly to a mechanism identified in the case analysis.

The model's added value is thus not the novelty of any one component. Its contribution is the traceable connection between field-derived risks, an ethical standard, a sequence of change, and auditable management instruments. Table 2 shows this logic. Figure 1 presents the model visually. The model remains a normative and organizational proposal: the present study does not test whether implementation reduces force, complaints, or ethical violations. Those outcomes require subsequent evaluation using a transparent baseline and mixed qualitative and quantitative indicators.

Table 2. Analytical integration of the ethical culture change model

Model component	Function in the integrated framework	Semarang case problem addressed	Expected management instrument
Ethical culture	Defines the substantive standard: policies, practices, norms, leadership example, discussability, enforcement, and accountability must support ethical conduct and inhibit misconduct.	A gap between formal child-protection rules and recurring operational habits.	Ethics-linked SOPs; supervisor review; safe reporting; proportionate discipline; recognition of ethical conduct.
Lewin's change sequence	Orders the process into unfreezing, changing, and refreezing so that reform is not reduced to one-off training.	Entrenched routines and reluctance to question inherited handling practices.	Diagnostic review; staged implementation; consolidation through routine

Model component	Function in the integrated framework	Semarang case problem addressed	Expected management instrument
			evaluation.
Systemic change targets	Locates intervention in four mutually dependent domains: individual, social, work methods, and governance.	The source of risk is distributed across competence, peer norms, fragmented workflow, and incomplete oversight.	Training and coaching; leadership standards; PPA referral protocol; force documentation; complaint and audit controls.
Moral decision process	Connects awareness, judgment, intent, and action to scenario-based police decision-making.	Officers may know a rule but fail to identify its relevance or act on it under pressure.	Scenario assessment; reflective supervision; decision logs; feedback on proportionality and child impact.

Source: Authors' analysis.

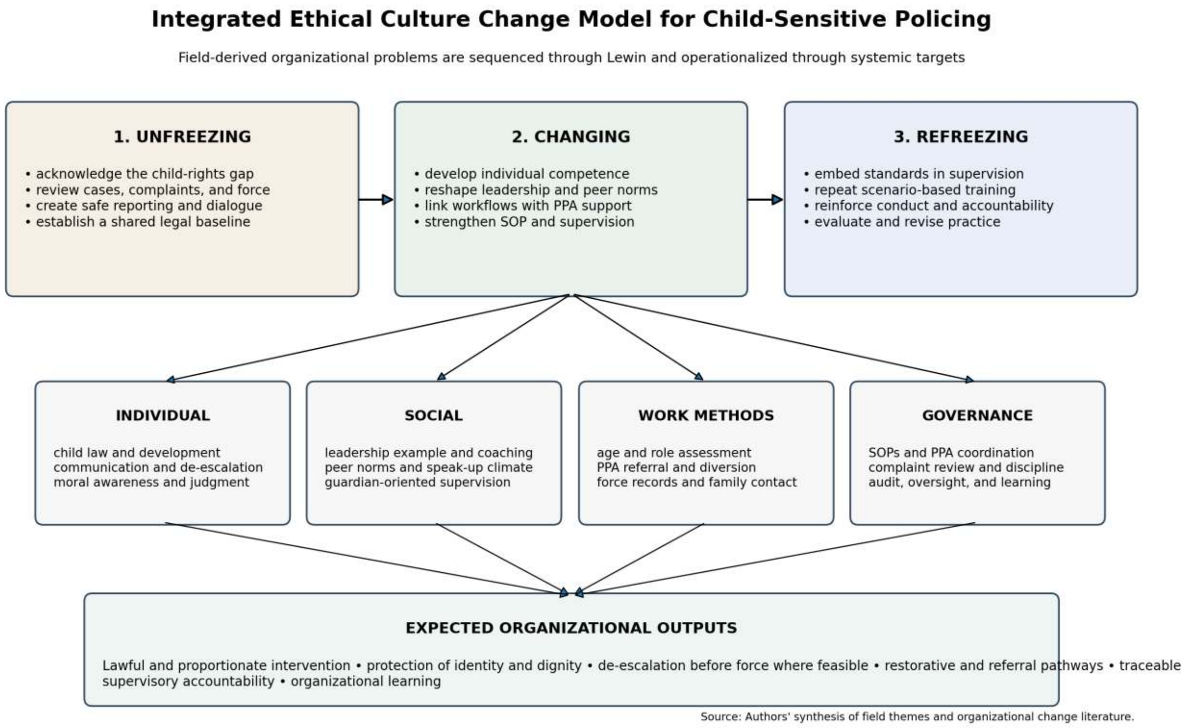

Figure 1: Integrated Ethical Culture Change Model for Child-Sensitive Policing.
Source: Authors' synthesis of field themes and organizational change literature.

Operational Implications for Police Management

Implementation should begin with an interim child-sensitive instruction while a full SOP is developed. The instruction should require age and role verification; prohibit humiliating treatment and unauthorized disclosure of identity; define when PPA consultation is mandatory; require medical attention and guardian notification; link diversion and restorative pathways to legal eligibility; and require a written justification for force. It should also clarify that protecting the child and protecting officers are compatible objectives: accurate risk assessment, communication, coordinated tactics, and documentation reduce uncertainty for both.

Training should be scenario-based rather than lecture-only. Scenarios should involve mixed groups of children, uncertain roles, weapons discovered after initial contact, injured children, filming by bystanders, pressure from crowds, and conflicting information. Officers should be assessed on threat recognition, communication, tactical positioning, proportionality, privacy, PPA referral, reporting, and post-incident care. De-escalation research warns that training alone has an uneven evidence base and must be reinforced through supervision and organizational systems (Engel et al., 2020). Field coaching, after-action review, and feedback are therefore integral rather than optional.

Supervision should use a standardized review instrument for juvenile-brawl incidents. The instrument should examine the reason for intervention, perceived threat, sequence of commands, force level, injuries, age verification, separation of suspects from victims and witnesses, family and legal contact, PPA involvement, diversion assessment, confidentiality, and completeness of records. A review that identifies a procedural weakness should trigger an accountable corrective action: coaching, additional training, workflow repair, discipline where warranted, or policy revision. The purpose is not automatic punishment but consistent organizational learning.

Complaint handling requires both independence and protection. Children and families may fear retaliation or may not understand internal police procedures. Complaints should therefore be received through accessible channels, registered promptly, protected from informal settlement pressure, and reviewed alongside body-worn video, CCTV, medical records, custody logs, force reports, and witness accounts where available. External child-protection and oversight institutions can contribute to periodic anonymized review without assuming operational command. This arrangement strengthens credibility while preserving lawful internal responsibility.

Evaluation should avoid a single metric. A decline in complaints may reflect better practice, but it may also reflect reduced access or confidence. Useful indicators include completeness of force reports, timeliness of guardian contact, PPA consultation, documented diversion assessment, injuries, repeated findings against the same unit, completion and retention of scenario competence, stakeholder experience, and the quality of corrective actions. Table 3 translates the model into staged responsibilities, outputs, risks, and controls. Public trust should be treated as a possible long-term implication, not as an outcome measured by this study.

Table 3. Operational implementation roadmap

Stage	Responsible level	Priority action	Verifiable indicator	Principal risk and control
0-3 months	Polrestabes leadership, Satreskrim/PPA, Samapta, Propam, training function	Issue an interim child-sensitive handling instruction; review recent brawl cases and force reports; map referral and diversion pathways.	Approved instruction; completed case review; named focal points; documented referral map.	Symbolic compliance. Control through signed supervisory review and documented follow-up.
3-6 months	Training function, unit commanders, PPA specialists	Deliver scenario-based training on age assessment, communication, de-escalation, lawful force,	Completion records; pre/post scenario assessment;	Training without transfer to practice. Control through field

Stage	Responsible level	Priority action	Verifiable indicator	Principal risk and control
		privacy, family contact, diversion, and trauma-sensitive interaction.	supervisor observation checklist.	coaching and repeat assessment.
6-12 months	Polrestabes leadership, Propam, operational units, external child-protection partners	Institutionalize an integrated SOP, complaint triage, mandatory force documentation, PPA consultation triggers, and periodic external case review.	SOP adoption; proportion of cases with complete records; response time to complaints; PPA consultation rate.	Defensive reporting or data manipulation. Control through cross-source audit and confidentiality safeguards.
Continuous	Polda and Polrestabes evaluation functions	Evaluate child outcomes, proportionality, complaint trends, officer learning, and consistency across units; revise policy and training based on findings.	Quarterly dashboard; closed-loop corrective actions; reduced repeat findings; documented policy revision.	Metric fixation. Control through qualitative file review and stakeholder feedback, not numerical targets alone.

Source: Authors' analysis.

CONCLUSION

This study finds that police handling of juvenile brawls at Polrestabes Semarang cannot be understood through a single organizational label. The reported data reveal divergent operational orientations. Patrol and public-order encounters were associated with accounts of verbal or physical coercion, while specialist PPA handling was described as more communicative, protective, and legally oriented. The distinction does not establish two fixed categories of officers. It shows that ethical conduct is conditioned by operational setting, specialist competence, leadership, peer expectations, workflow, guidance, documentation, and supervision.

The legal baseline requires police to maintain order and protect safety while distinguishing children in conflict with the law from victims, witnesses, and bystanders; protecting identity and dignity; using force lawfully and proportionately; and assessing restorative or diversion pathways where legally available. The central institutional problem is therefore not whether the police should exercise authority, but whether the organization consistently structures that authority around child-sensitive legality and traceable accountability.

The article contributes an integrated Ethical Culture Change Model. Ethical-culture theory defines the desired alignment of policies, practices, leadership, norms, and accountability. Lewin's model sequences the transition through unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. The systemic model directs intervention toward individual capability, social norms, work methods, and governance. The resulting framework converts an abstract call for cultural reform into a staged set of police-management instruments. Its effectiveness remains to be empirically tested; the study supports its analytical and institutional rationale rather than claiming proven causal effects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Polrestabes Semarang should adopt an integrated child-sensitive handling protocol for juvenile-brawl incidents. The protocol should define age and role assessment, lawful-force standards, PPA consultation triggers, privacy protection, medical and family contact, diversion screening, handover, documentation, and complaint review. Unit-level procedures should be aligned with the Juvenile Criminal Justice System Law, the Child Protection Law, police restorative-justice rules, use-of-force rules, human-rights standards, and the Police Professional Code of Ethics.

The training and personnel functions should develop recurrent scenario-based modules that connect moral awareness, judgment, intent, and action to operational decisions. Completion should not be measured only by attendance. Officers and supervisors should demonstrate competence in communication, tactical de-escalation, child development, proportionality, documentation, and referral. PPA personnel should serve as specialist instructors and consultation partners without transferring all responsibility away from general-duty units.

Commanders and Propam should institute mandatory supervisory review of force, injury, identity disclosure, and complaints involving children. Review results should produce documented follow-up and be aggregated for organizational learning. Accessible complaint channels and anti-retaliation safeguards should be developed with child-protection institutions and legal-assistance providers. The model should be piloted, independently evaluated, and revised before wider replication. Evaluation should combine administrative indicators with confidential qualitative feedback from officers, children, families, and oversight actors.

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Gen-Z Police Officers' Ethical Compliance in Social Media Use: A PLS-SEM Study

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of attitude, subjective norms, and self-efficacy on motivation to comply with the professional code of ethics, and the effect of that motivation on self-reported ethical compliance in social media use among Generation Z members of the Indonesian National Police (Polri) under the East Java Regional Police. A quantitative, cross-sectional explanatory survey was conducted with 769 active personnel aged 18-28 years who use social media, drawn through voluntary-response (convenience) sampling from 38,861 active personnel recorded in the Sistem Informasi Personel Polri (SIPP, 2026). Data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3. Attitude did not significantly affect motivation to comply with the code of ethics ($\beta = -0.010$, $t = 0.347$, $p = .728$). Subjective norms ($\beta = 0.328$, $t = 4.108$, $p < .001$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.598$, $t = 7.057$, $p < .001$) had positive and significant effects on motivation, while motivation positively and significantly affected self-reported compliance ($\beta = 0.738$, $t = 18.697$, $p < .001$). The findings indicate that ethical compliance in digital environments is associated more strongly with social pressure and perceived behavioural control than with personal attitude. Polri should therefore strengthen peer- and supervisor-based ethical norms alongside confidence-building digital-ethics training. Because the study is cross-sectional and based on self-report data, the results should be interpreted as associational rather than strictly causal.

Keywords: Theory of Planned Behaviour, Generation Z, Polri Code of Ethics, social media compliance, self-efficacy, subjective norms

INTRODUCTION

Professional ethics competency is a central component of human resource (HR) development in any organisation that depends on public trust, and it is especially consequential for a law-enforcement institution such as the Indonesian National Police (Polri). The stronger the professional ethics of its members, the greater Polri's opportunity to sustain a credible institutional image and public confidence.

One current challenge for Polri's HR development concerns professional ethics competency among members of Generation Z (Gen-Z). Although Generation Z is widely regarded as digital natives (Prensky, 2001), more recent studies have shown that this generation demonstrates intensive social media engagement, high digital connectedness, and greater exposure to ethical risks associated with online communication (Dimock, 2019; Francis & Hoefel, 2018; OECD, 2021). In recent years alone, several such cases have drawn public attention: an officer in Jakarta was investigated by the Professional and Security Affairs Division (Propam) after brandishing a firearm in a social media video (CNN Indonesia, 2020); an officer in Jambi was examined for misusing a patrol vehicle's siren to produce social media content (CNN Indonesia, 2025); a Mobile Brigade (Brimob) member in North Sumatra challenged a soldier to a duel during a live-streamed dispute on TikTok (Viva, 2025); an officer in Central Sulawesi issued a public "shooting challenge" to a critical social media user (Kompas.com, 2025); and an officer in Banten staged a fabricated criminal scenario for entertainment purposes (Radar Banten, 2025). These cases, discussed further below, are used here to illustrate a recurring pattern rather than to claim a precise frequency, since no official aggregate statistics on social media-related ethics violations among Gen-Z officers specifically are publicly available.

For example, Briptu KH, an officer assigned to a police station in Cikande, Banten, was reported to have recorded and posted a social media video depicting a staged prank presented as a genuine criminal case: a fabricated "hit-and-run" involving a duck, with a compensation demand acted out inside a holding cell together with a civilian acquaintance (initialised AG) (Radar Banten, 2025). The video was later found to be fabricated for entertainment purposes rather than an authentic report, which raised concerns about the officer's compliance with the duty to disseminate only accurate public information. This single case is used here as an illustrative entry point rather than evidence of a generalised pattern among Gen-Z officers; it is not intended to suggest that Gen-Z personnel as a group violate the code of ethics more often than other cohorts.

The case nonetheless illustrates a broader tension: that digital fluency does not, on its own, guarantee compliance with the Indonesian National Police Code of Professional Ethics (Kode Etik Profesi Polri, KEPP). Under the Regulation of the Indonesian National Police (Peraturan Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia Nomor 7 Tahun 2022 tentang Kode Etik Profesi Polri dan Komisi Kode Etik Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia, Pasal 13 huruf g angka 1), every Polri member is prohibited from using social media or other media platforms to upload, post, or disseminate false information and/or hate speech. It is useful at this point to distinguish three categories of conduct that Perpol 7/2022 treats separately, since a single incident such as the one above can implicate more than one at once. An ethical violation (Pelanggaran KEPP) concerns a breach of the moral or professional norms set out in the Code itself (Perpol 7/2022, Pasal 1(1)) and is examined and adjudicated through the Police Ethics Commission (Sidang Kode Etik Profesi Polri, KKEP); depending on its severity, it is classified as minor, moderate, or serious, based on criteria such as intent, personal gain, public impact, and whether it coincides with a criminal conviction (Perpol 7/2022, Pasal 16-17), and it is sanctioned through ethical sanctions (e.g., a formal declaration of misconduct, a public or written apology, mandatory spiritual/professional coaching) or administrative sanctions (e.g., demotion, reassignment) rather than imprisonment (Perpol 7/2022, Pasal 107-109). A disciplinary violation (Pelanggaran Disiplin) is governed by a separate instrument, Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 2 Tahun 2003 tentang Peraturan Disiplin Anggota Polri, though Perpol 7/2022 allows the same Police Ethics Commission session to examine certain disciplinary matters referred under that regulation's Pasal 13 alongside an ethics case (Perpol 7/2022, Pasal 53). A criminal offence (Tindak Pidana) is a breach of ordinary criminal law and is handled through the general criminal-justice process (investigated by the Reserse Kriminal function and tried in the ordinary courts) rather than through the Police Ethics Commission; evidence relevant to a criminal offence is handed over to that separate function even when it arises from the same incident as an ethics case (Perpol 7/2022, Pasal 28-29). The three tracks are therefore procedurally distinct but not mutually exclusive: the same act, such as the fabricated case discussed above, can trigger an ethics process, a disciplinary process, and, where the underlying conduct is also a crime, a separate criminal process, each with its own forum and its own sanction.

KEPP is designed to guide the moral and professional conduct of every officer, both in official duties and in daily life outside working hours. Violations of the code by Polri members in their social media use generally involve inappropriate conduct, the dissemination of misleading information, or content that provokes public controversy. The five cases cited above, spanning 2020 to 2025 and several different provincial police forces, suggest a persistent gap between formal regulation and its implementation on the ground, though a systematic count of such incidents nationally was not available for this study.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), developed by Ajzen (1991) as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1975), is used here to explain compliance-related motivation. TPB was selected over alternative frameworks such as organisational-justice theory, ethical-climate theory, or deterrence-based compliance models because it offers a parsimonious, empirically well-validated structure (attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control) that maps directly onto the individual-, peer-, and institution-level factors relevant to Polri's hierarchical command environment, while remaining flexible enough to accommodate the digital-conduct context examined here.

In TPB, behavioural intention is shaped by three factors. Attitude toward the behaviour is a person's positive or negative evaluation of that behaviour, shaped by beliefs about its consequences (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Subjective norms are an individual's perception of social pressure to perform or not perform a behaviour, formed from normative beliefs about the expectations of significant others (Conner & Armitage, 1998); in a police organisation this includes not only family and peers but also command hierarchy, supervisory expectations, and public scrutiny, which may operate differently from the informal social pressure typically studied in consumer or health-behaviour contexts. Perceived behavioural control (PBC) is the extent to which a person feels able to control a behaviour, and is closely related to, though not identical with, the concept of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Ajzen, 2002); in this study, self-efficacy is treated as the primary operationalisation of PBC, reflecting confidence specifically in complying with the police code of ethics online rather than general technological confidence. It is also worth noting that high self-efficacy is not unconditionally protective: in an ethics context, overconfidence could plausibly encourage risk-taking online, a possibility the present instrument does not distinguish from responsible self-control and which future research should address.

These three factors shape behavioural intention (here operationalised as motivation), which TPB treats as the most proximal predictor of behaviour. Ajzen (2002) noted that intention does not always translate automatically into behaviour, since situational and external constraints can intervene; the present study did not separately measure such external constraints, so this remains a theoretical rather than an empirically tested caveat here.

TPB has been applied across health behaviour (Godin & Kok, 1996), environmental behaviour (Han et al., 2010), education (Cheon et al., 2012), and organisational behaviour (Armitage & Conner, 2001), and, closer to the present context, to whistleblowing among police officers (Park & Blenkinsopp, 2009). In policing, TPB can help explain compliance with professional codes of ethics, particularly in social media use: officers' attitudes toward social media shape how they evaluate its professional use; internal norms, including pressure from superiors and peers, shape their inclination to comply; and self-efficacy in using social media relates to perceived behavioural control (Bandura, 1997).

This research therefore has both theoretical and practical relevance. Theoretically, it extends TPB to the understudied setting of police digital ethics. Practically, its findings may inform how Polri designs strategies for socialising the code of ethics, strengthening digital literacy, and preventing violations. Any implications for public trust in Polri are offered here as a potential downstream consequence of stronger internal ethical compliance, not as a finding directly measured in this study, since public trust itself was not included as a variable in the model.

Based on the review above, this study tests the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** Attitude toward behaviour has a positive effect on motivation to comply with the code of ethics in social media use.
- **H2:** Subjective norms have a positive effect on motivation to comply with the code of ethics in social media

use.

- **H3:** Perceived behavioural control (self-efficacy) has a positive effect on motivation to comply with the code of ethics in social media use.
- **H4:** Motivation has a positive effect on compliance with the code of ethics in social media use.

METHOD

This research used a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional explanatory survey design. Explanatory research aims to test hypothesised relationships between variables rather than only describe phenomena; consistent with this design, causal language in the discussion below is limited to statements the cross-sectional data can support, and associations are not interpreted as strict causal effects.

The study population comprised active personnel of the East Java Regional Police (Polda Jawa Timur), totalling 38,861 personnel (36,256 male, 2,605 female) as recorded in the Sistem Informasi Personel Polri (SIPP, 2026). From within this population, the study focused specifically on personnel meeting two eligibility criteria: (1) active Polri members who use social media, and (2) aged 18-28 years as of the end of 2025, corresponding to birth years of approximately 1997-2007, a subset of the broader Generation Z cohort (1997-2012; Dimock, 2019) old enough to have entered active police service. "Use social media" was assessed as active use of a social media account, without a further minimum-frequency threshold. Because the study's scope is limited to a single regional command (Polda Jawa Timur) rather than Polri nationally, its findings should be generalised to other regional police forces with caution; this is discussed further as a limitation below.

From the eligible subset of this population, 769 valid respondents were retained for analysis, meeting the following criteria: (1) active Polri personnel serving under Polda Jawa Timur, (2) aged 18-28 years as of the end of 2025, and (3) active social media account use as defined above. The sample was recruited through voluntary-response (convenience) sampling among Polda Jawa Timur personnel meeting these criteria, since the questionnaire was distributed openly via WhatsApp and completed voluntarily rather than drawn through a randomised procedure from the sampling frame. The survey was conducted on 10 October 2025, distributed as a Google Forms questionnaire shared through WhatsApp messages, using a standard recruitment text that introduced the researcher and study title, stated the two eligibility criteria above, and asked recipients meeting those criteria to complete the questionnaire truthfully; the message also stated that responses would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. Participation was voluntary, contingent on each recipient's willingness to take part. All participants provided informed consent before completing the questionnaire: the recruitment message explained the study's purpose, affirmed that participation was voluntary and could be declined at any time, and assured respondents that their responses would remain confidential, be reported only in aggregate, and be used solely for research purposes; no personally identifying information was collected.

The respondent pool consisted of 739 male and 30 female officers (96.1% and 3.9%, respectively). This is more heavily skewed toward male respondents than the underlying Polda Jawa Timur personnel population, in which men and women constitute approximately 93.3% and 6.7% (36,256 of 38,861 and 2,605 of 38,861), suggesting the sample somewhat under-represents female officers relative to the parent population, in addition to whatever gender imbalance exists specifically among Gen-Z, social-media-using personnel. This is discussed further as a limitation in the Suggestion section.

Note on terminology: the initial and final measurement-model assessments reported in the Results and Discussion section below are not two separate surveys. Both were run on the same full sample of 769 respondents; the initial assessment identified two weak indicators, which were then removed before the model was re-estimated to obtain the final measurement model. This initial-versus-final sequence on the same data is standard PLS-SEM practice.

Data were analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3, following the standard PLS-SEM workflow: missing-data screening, outlier checks, a common-method-bias check, measurement (outer) model assessment, structural (inner) model assessment, and bootstrapping for significance testing with 500 bootstrap subsamples.

Measurement model assessment evaluated convergent validity through outer loadings (threshold ≥ 0.70) and average variance extracted (AVE, threshold ≥ 0.50); internal consistency reliability through Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability (threshold ≥ 0.70, Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994); discriminant validity through the Fornell-Larcker criterion (the square root of each construct's AVE should exceed its correlations with other constructs); and multicollinearity through the variance inflation factor (VIF, threshold < 5.0). These are conceptually distinct diagnostics: discriminant validity concerns whether constructs are empirically separable, whereas multicollinearity (VIF) concerns redundancy among the indicators of a single construct's structural predictors; they are reported and discussed separately throughout this article.

Variables

Attitude Toward Behaviour

Within TPB (Ajzen, 1991), attitude toward behaviour is a person's positive or negative evaluation of a particular behaviour. If Polri members hold a positive attitude toward the professional use of social media (for example, viewing it as a platform for enhancing institutional image or enabling transparent public communication), they are expected to be more motivated to align their digital conduct with the code of ethics. Conversely, a negative attitude, viewing social media as purely personal or irrelevant to professionalism, is expected to weaken that motivation.

Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) found that positive attitudes increase the likelihood of forming intentions aligned with norms and regulations. Han, Hsu, and Sheu (2010) found that positive attitudes toward environmentally friendly practices significantly influenced consumers' intentions to choose sustainable products. In the domain of professional ethics, Arli and Tjiptono (2014) showed that a positive attitude toward ethical business values is associated with motivation to comply with organisational rules. Building on this literature, H1 proposes that attitude toward social media use in a professional context positively predicts motivation to comply with the code of ethics.

A five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree," was employed to assess the responses. Attitude toward behavior was measured by three items:

S1: I believe that social media can improve my professional image.

S2: I feel that using social media could risk damaging my professional reputation.

S3: I feel it is important to maintain ethics when using social media as a member of the police.

Subjective Norms

In TPB, subjective norms are the social pressures an individual perceives from significant others that shape beliefs about whether a behaviour is appropriate. In this study, subjective norms are operationalised as Polri members' perceptions of the expectations of colleagues, superiors, and institutional rules and standards regarding compliance with the code of ethics in social media use, distinct from any general awareness of the formal regulations themselves.

Where internal norms are strong (through leadership example, organisational oversight, or a culture that emphasises digital integrity), Polri members are expected to feel stronger social pressure to comply with the code of ethics, which may in turn support their motivation to behave ethically as both an individual obligation and a reflection of institutional loyalty. Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) emphasised the role of subjective norms in shaping behavioural intention and motivation; Venkatesh and Davis (2000), in developing the Technology Acceptance Model, showed that social influence significantly affects intention to adopt new behaviours; and Park and Blenkinsopp (2009) found that internal organisational norms strongly influence police officers' motivation to report violations (whistleblowing). On this basis, H2 proposes that subjective norms positively predict motivation to comply with the code of ethics.

A five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree," was employed to assess the responses. Subjective norms was measured by three items:

SN1: My leader expects me to act ethically on social media.

SN2: My colleagues often talk about the importance of ethics on social media.

SN3: I feel that society has high expectations for professional behavior on social media.

Perceived Behavioural Control

Ajzen (1991) added perceived behavioural control (PBC) to TPB as a further determinant of intention; self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to execute a course of action (Bandura, 1997), is used here as its principal indicator. In this study, self-efficacy in social media use refers specifically to Gen-Z officers' confidence in using social media in a manner consistent with the code of ethics, that is, confidence in complying with professional conduct rules online, rather than general technological confidence. Officers with high self-efficacy in this sense are expected to manage their accounts, filter content, and interact with the public while avoiding unethical conduct more readily than officers with low self-efficacy.

Bandura (1997) argued that high self-efficacy increases intrinsic motivation to regulate behaviour toward one's goals; Cheon et al. (2012) found that self-efficacy in technology use supports readiness to adapt to digital learning; and Chan and Lu (2004) found that self-efficacy significantly predicts intention to use information technology responsibly, consistent with Armitage and Conner's (2001) meta-analytic finding that perceived behavioural control is a strong predictor of intention and motivation. On this basis, H3 proposes that self-efficacy positively predicts motivation to comply with the code of ethics.

A five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree," was employed to assess the responses. Perceived behavioral control was measured by three items:

PBC1: I am confident in maintaining my professional image on social media

PBC2: I feel capable of avoiding unethical content when using social media.

PBC3: I feel confident in managing my social media accounts in a professional manner.

Motivation

Motivation is the internal force that directs, drives, and sustains behaviour toward a goal. In TPB, behavioural intention, operationalised here as motivation, is treated as the most proximal determinant of subsequent action (Ajzen, 1991); motivation/intention precedes behaviour and is not itself the same construct as compliance behaviour. In this study, motivation to comply with the code of ethics is treated as the psychological link between the cognitive, social, and self-regulatory antecedents above and Gen-Z officers' subsequent, self-reported ethical conduct on social media.

Deci and Ryan (2000) argued that intrinsic motivation supports sustained, values-consistent behaviour; Tyler (2006) found that motivation to comply with legal rules relates closely to actual compliance; and Treviño et al. (1999) found that employees' ethical motivation encourages compliance with organisational codes of ethics. On this basis, H4 proposes that motivation positively predicts ethical compliance in social media use.

A five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree," was employed to assess the responses. Motivation was measured by three items:

M1: I want to always act according to the code of ethics when using social media.

M2: I feel compelled to maintain my professionalism on social media.

M3: I am worried about the negative consequences if I violate the code of ethics on social media.

Compliance with the Code of Ethics

Behaviour is the concrete realisation of prior intention. In TPB, actual behaviour is an individual's observable, measurable action within a given context (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). In the present study, however, compliance is measured through respondents' self-reports rather than direct observation; self-reported compliance may be subject to social-desirability bias and should not be equated with observed behaviour. This limitation is revisited in the Suggestion section.

Ajzen (2002) noted that intention does not automatically translate into behaviour, since situational or organisational constraints can intervene; this study did not directly measure such external constraints, so any reference to them below is offered as a theoretical rather than an empirically tested explanation. Armitage and Conner (2001) found that intention explains a substantial share of behavioural variance across health, education, and organisational settings, and Beck and Ajzen (1991) found that ethically consistent behaviour tends to follow from strong intentions accompanied by adequate perceived control.

A five-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree," was employed to assess the responses. Compliance with the code of ethics was measured by three items:

Y1: I always share content that complies with the code of ethics on social media.

Y2: I keep my interactions on social media professional.

Y3: I maintain professionalism in my interactions on social media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initial Measurement Model Assessment

The initial measurement-model assessment evaluated reliability and validity to confirm that each construct's indicators were consistent, stable, and measured the intended construct rather than an unrelated one, as Table 1 shows, indicator S2 had an outer loading of 0.321, below the commonly accepted 0.70 threshold, indicating that S2 did not adequately represent the attitude construct. In addition, only the attitude construct's Cronbach's alpha fell below 0.70, at 0.535, indicating weak internal-consistency reliability for that construct prior to adjustment. Finally, PBC indicator 3 (PBC3) had a VIF of 5.157, above the 5.0 threshold, indicating a collinearity risk among the PBC indicators.

Table 2 reports the Fornell-Larcker discriminant-validity test for the initial measurement model, in which the square root of each construct's AVE (the diagonal values) is compared with its correlations with other constructs (the off-diagonal values). At the initial stage, the motivation construct's diagonal value (0.871) was lower than its correlation with PBC (0.879), indicating a discriminant-validity concern between motivation and PBC, that is, a risk that the two constructs are not empirically distinct, rather than a multicollinearity issue, which is assessed separately through VIF. This result, together with the S2 and PBC3 findings above, motivated the indicator adjustments described in the next section.

Table 1. Measurement Model Results (Reliability and Validity), Initial Measurement Model

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	VIF	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Attitude	S1	0.804	1.424	0.535	0.530
	S2	0.321	1.028		
	S3	0.917	1.426		
Subjective Norm	SN1	0.857	2.016	0.872	0.797
	SN2	0.931	3.180		
	SN3	0.889	2.541		
Perceived Behavioural Control	PBC1	0.946	4.437	0.947	0.905
	PBC2	0.951	4.867		
	PBC3	0.957	5.157		
Motivation	M1	0.900	2.515	0.840	0.758
	M2	0.925	2.727		
	M3	0.780	1.594		
Compliance to Code of Ethics	Y1	0.836	1.693	0.780	0.692
	Y2	0.860	1.575		
	Y3	0.798	1.597		

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion), Initial Measurement Model

	Attitude	PBC	SN	Compliance	Motivation
Attitude	0.728				
PBC	0.589	0.951			
SN	0.663	0.818	0.893		
Compliance	0.505	0.714	0.696	0.832	
Motivation	0.559	0.879	0.797	0.738	0.871

Source: Authors' elaboration. Diagonal values are the square root of AVE.

PLS-SEM Test

The final sample comprised 769 respondents (739 male, 30 female; this imbalance is discussed as a limitation below). The initial measurement-model results in Tables 1 and 2 indicated two measurement-model issues: indicator S2 showed an outer loading below the recommended threshold of 0.70, whereas indicator PBC3 exhibited a variance inflation factor (VIF) exceeding the recommended maximum value of 5. Following the measurement-model evaluation, both indicators were removed simultaneously, and the PLS model was re-estimated once using the revised measurement model rather than through a sequential indicator-removal procedure (Henseler et al., 2009). This approach is consistent with the recommended PLS-SEM practice, whereby indicators that clearly fail to satisfy predefined measurement-quality criteria may be removed before re-estimating the measurement model to obtain a more reliable and valid specification (Hair et al., 2022; Henseler et al., 2009). Hair et al. (2022) state that indicators with insufficient outer loadings may be removed from reflective measurement models when their elimination improves construct reliability and convergent validity, provided that the remaining indicators continue to adequately represent the theoretical domain of the construct.

After these adjustments, Table 3 shows that every remaining indicator's outer loading exceeded 0.70, supporting convergent validity, and every construct's Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability exceeded 0.70, indicating acceptable to good internal-consistency reliability. Following the removal of PBC3, none of the remaining indicators exhibited variance inflation above the 5.0 threshold (the highest outer VIF was 3.517, for PBC1 and PBC2), resolving the collinearity concern identified at the initial stage.

Table 3. Measurement Model Results After Adjustment

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Attitude	S1	0.813	0.703	0.806	0.865	0.763
	S3	0.930				
Subjective Norm	SN1	0.857	0.872	0.877	0.922	0.797
	SN2	0.931				
	SN3	0.889				
Perceived Behavioural Control	PBC1	0.961	0.917	0.917	0.960	0.923
	PBC2	0.960				
Motivation	M1	0.900	0.840	0.873	0.903	0.758
	M2	0.925				
	M3	0.780				
Compliance to Code of Ethics	Y1	0.836	0.780	0.800	0.871	0.692
	Y2	0.860				
	Y3	0.798				

Source: Authors' elaboration, based on SmartPLS output.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion) After Adjustment

	Attitude	PBC	SN	Compliance	Motivation
Attitude	0.874				
PBC	0.582	0.961			
SN	0.673	0.796	0.893		
Compliance	0.513	0.693	0.696	0.832	
Motivation	0.558	0.853	0.797	0.738	0.871

Source: Authors' elaboration. Diagonal values are the square root of AVE.

After adjustment, every diagonal value in Table 4 (the square root of each construct's AVE) exceeds that construct's correlations with the other constructs; for example, motivation's diagonal value of 0.871 now exceeds its correlation with PBC (0.853), where at the initial stage the reverse had been true. This confirms discriminant validity under the Fornell-Larcker criterion. This discriminant-validity result is a separate diagnostic from multicollinearity, which is instead assessed through VIF and was addressed above through the removal of PBC3.

Beyond the criteria above, several additional diagnostics were assessed. First, discriminant validity was cross-checked using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT; Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Most construct pairs fell below the 0.85 threshold, but the motivation construct returned HTMT values above it with perceived behavioural control (0.957), subjective norms (0.916), and compliance (0.885), while subjective norms and perceived behavioural control were likewise not fully separable (0.890); the first two values also exceeded the more lenient 0.90 criterion. Thus, although the Fornell-Larcker criterion was satisfied, HTMT indicates that motivation is not cleanly distinguishable from its antecedents and outcome; this discriminant-validity concern is revisited in the Limitations section, and the affected path estimates should

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be read with caution. It is worth noting that, within TPB, perceived behavioural control and intention (here motivation) are conceptually adjacent, since PBC is theorised to feed directly into intention (Ajzen, 2002), so a degree of empirical overlap is expected; the magnitude observed here (HTMT = 0.957), however, exceeds what discriminant validity requires, and the unique effects of these constructs are therefore treated as tentative rather than definitive throughout the discussion below. Second, common method bias was examined through the inner (full-collinearity) variance inflation factors (Kock, 2015), which reached at most 3.341 (subjective norms → motivation) and remained below the 5.0 threshold, although this value marginally exceeded the stricter 3.3 criterion, indicating that common method bias is limited but not fully excluded. Third, overall model fit was acceptable, with an SRMR of 0.073 for the saturated model and 0.079 for the estimated model, both below the 0.08 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 5 reports the structural-model (path) results. Attitude toward behaviour showed a small, negative, and non-significant association with motivation to comply with the code of ethics (β = -0.010, SE = 0.029, t = 0.347, p = .728). Because the effect is not statistically significant, it should not be interpreted as a substantive negative influence; the more accurate reading is that this study found no detectable effect of attitude on motivation in this sample. This runs counter to TPB's usual expectation that attitude is a significant antecedent of intention, and is consistent with H1 not being supported. One plausible explanation is that in a highly regulated, hierarchical organisation such as Polri, personal attitude toward a behaviour may carry comparatively less weight than institutional pressure and command expectations, though this is offered as an interpretation rather than a directly tested mechanism, since institutional pressure was not itself measured as a separate construct in this model. This pattern is broadly consistent with Lubi and Sanaji (2015), who found attitude to be a non-significant predictor of intention in some technology-adoption contexts, with other TPB constructs proving more influential.

Table 5. PLS-SEM Structural Model Test Results (Path Coefficients)

Path	β	SE	t-statistic	p-value
Attitude → Motivation	-0.010	0.029	0.347	.728
Subjective Norm → Motivation	0.328***	0.080	4.108	.000
Perceived Behavioural Control → Motivation	0.598***	0.085	7.057	.000
Motivation → Compliance to Code of Ethics	0.738***	0.039	18.697	.000

Note: *** p < .001, based on bootstrapping of the final (post-adjustment) model. Source: Authors' elaboration, based on SmartPLS output.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Category
Motivation	0.766	Strong
Compliance to Code of Ethics	0.544	Strong

Note: R^2 categorised following Hair et al. (2022): weak (< 0.25), moderate (0.25-0.50), strong (> 0.50).

Source: Authors' elaboration, based on SmartPLS output.

Subjective norms had a significant positive effect on motivation to comply with the code of ethics in social media use (β = 0.328, SE = 0.080, t = 4.108, p < .001), supporting H2. This indicates that social pressure from colleagues, superiors, or the wider community shapes an individual's belief about the appropriateness of a behaviour: the stronger the perceived expectations of significant others, the stronger the drive to comply with the code of ethics.

Perceived behavioural control (self-efficacy) also had a significant positive effect on motivation ($\beta = 0.598$, SE = 0.085, t = 7.057, p < .001), supporting H3, and represented the strongest predictor of motivation in the model. This path should nonetheless be read together with the discriminant-validity concern reported above: because motivation and perceived behavioural control were not fully separable under the HTMT criterion, part of this strong association may reflect conceptual overlap between the two constructs rather than a wholly distinct effect. This finding is consistent with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which posits that individuals who perceive greater control over performing a behaviour are more likely to develop stronger behavioural intentions (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen, 2002). In the present context, officers with higher confidence in their ability to manage social media responsibly and comply with the police code of ethics reported stronger motivation to engage in ethical online behaviour. This result further supports Bandura's (1997) argument that self-efficacy strengthens self-regulation and goal-directed behaviour, suggesting that confidence in one's capability constitutes an important psychological resource for promoting ethical compliance in digital environments. The dependent construct, Motivation, generated an R^2 value of 0.766 (see Table 6), categorised as strong following Hair et al. (2022), suggesting that the model can explain 76.6% of the variance in motivation to comply with the code of ethics.

Finally, motivation had a significant positive effect on self-reported compliance with the code of ethics (β = 0.738, SE = 0.039, t = 18.697, p < .001), supporting H4 and matching the value obtained before the S2/PBC3 adjustment, since these indicators belonged to the attitude and PBC constructs rather than the compliance construct. Officers reporting stronger motivation to comply were more likely to report ethical conduct on social media consistent with organisational guidelines. Because compliance was measured through self-report rather than direct observation, this finding is best read as showing that motivation predicts self-reported ethical conduct, and it should not be described as evidence of observed behaviour. The dependent construct, compliance with the code of ethics, generated an R^2 value of 0.544 (see Table 6), also categorised as strong, suggesting that the model can explain 54.4% of the variance in compliance with the code of ethics. In addition to R^2, effect sizes (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2, obtained through blindfolding) were examined following Hair et al. (2022). Perceived behavioural control had a large effect on motivation ($f^2 = 0.554$), subjective norms a small-to-medium effect ($f^2 = 0.137$), and attitude no meaningful effect ($f^2 = 0.000$), while motivation had a large effect on compliance ($f^2 = 1.194$). Blindfolding returned Q^2 values above zero for both endogenous constructs (motivation = 0.564; compliance = 0.364), confirming that the model has predictive relevance.

Taken together, these results provide partial rather than full support for TPB in this context: subjective norms, self-efficacy, and motivation behaved as the theory predicts, but attitude did not.

CONCLUSION

The PLS-SEM results show that attitude toward behaviour did not significantly predict Gen-Z Polri officers' motivation to comply with the code of ethics in social media use, suggesting that personal evaluations of social media are not, on their own, a dominant driver of compliance motivation in this hierarchical, rule-governed organisational setting. Subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (self-efficacy) both had positive and significant effects on motivation, with self-efficacy showing the strongest association. In turn, motivation had a positive and significant effect on self-reported compliance with the code of ethics. Overall, the model receives partial support for TPB, and its findings should be read as pertaining to self-reported rather than directly observed compliance.

SUGGESTION

For Polri as an institution, the findings suggest several concrete directions. First, the institution should prioritise peer- and supervisor-based ethics reinforcement (e.g., unit-level ethics mentoring and visible leadership example) over generic rule dissemination, given the strength of the subjective-norm and PBC paths. Second, it should invest in practical, confidence-building digital-ethics training for Gen-Z officers, covering

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account management, content filtering, and public interaction, rather than compliance briefings alone. Third, periodic, low-stakes social-media compliance audits and supervisory check-ins could be introduced to reinforce motivation between formal ethics trainings. Finally, the attitude-construct instrument should be revisited and revalidated before future use, given its weak reliability at the initial stage in this study.

For future research, several directions could extend this study. Additional or substitute psychological antecedents to attitude, such as organisational commitment, moral obligation, or institutional work culture, could be explored. Moderating variables such as leadership style, unit culture, intensity of code-of-ethics socialisation, or digital literacy could also be tested. Where feasible, self-report measures should be complemented with behavioural or supervisory-reported indicators of compliance to address social-desirability and common-method-bias concerns. Finally, future studies could apply longitudinal or multi-source designs and additional model-fit indices to test the robustness of these relationships further, beyond the diagnostics reported here.

LIMITATIONS

This study relies on self-reported, cross-sectional survey data collected within a single instrument, which limits causal inference and raises the possibility of common-method bias and social-desirability bias in the compliance measure. The sample was imbalanced by gender (739 male, 30 female; 96.1% and 3.9%), somewhat more skewed toward male respondents than the 93.3%/6.7% split in the underlying Polda Jawa Timur personnel population, though the exact gender composition of the Gen-Z, social-media-using subgroup specifically was not separately available for comparison. In addition, because the population and sample are drawn from a single regional command (Polda Jawa Timur) rather than Polri nationally, the findings may not generalise to Polri personnel in other provinces with different demographic, organisational, or supervisory characteristics. The attitude construct showed weak reliability at the initial stage and required indicator removal, which may have altered its theoretical scope; future studies should revalidate this instrument. In addition, after indicator removal both the attitude and perceived behavioural control constructs were represented by only two indicators each, the minimum for identification in PLS-SEM, which narrows their content coverage; future studies should employ additional validated indicators for both constructs. Relatedly, although discriminant validity was supported under the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the stricter HTMT criterion returned values above 0.85 between motivation and perceived behavioural control (0.957), subjective norms (0.916), and compliance (0.885); motivation is therefore not fully distinct from its antecedents and outcome, and the structural estimates involving these constructs should be interpreted with corresponding caution. The most likely source of this overlap is a pronounced ceiling effect in the data: across the subjective-norm, perceived-behavioural-control, motivation, and compliance items, roughly 85-95% of respondents selected the top two scale points, leaving little variance with which to statistically distinguish these closely related constructs. This pattern is consistent with social-desirability pressures in a self-report survey that asks serving officers about their own ethical conduct. Supplementary analyses confirmed that removing individual overlapping indicators did not bring HTMT below the 0.85 threshold, indicating that the concern is structural rather than attributable to any single item. Accordingly, these constructs are best understood as a tightly interrelated ethical-professional orientation, and the structural coefficients among them should be read as indicative of a shared underlying disposition rather than as fully independent construct effects. Future research should adopt more discriminating measurement (for example, reverse-keyed items, forced-choice or frequency-based response formats, and behaviourally anchored scales) and, where possible, non-self-report indicators of compliance, in order to reduce the ceiling effect and allow a cleaner separation of these constructs.

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Pacta Sunt Servanda, Electronic Agreements, and Police Evidentiary Practice

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Abstract

Electronic agreements are increasingly used in online sales, platform services, online credit, and digital commercial transactions. Their binding force is commonly justified through pacta sunt servanda under Article 1338 of the Indonesian Civil Code. However, electronic agreements create problems that cannot be resolved by repeating classical civil-law doctrine alone, because electronic consent, standard clauses, authentication, electronic signatures, system reliability, and electronic evidence affect whether a digital agreement is valid, fair, enforceable, and provable. This article analyses how the binding force of electronic agreements should be interpreted under the Indonesian Civil Code, Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions as amended by Law Number 19 of 2016 and Law Number 1 of 2024, Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019, and consumer-protection principles. It also explains the relevance of electronic agreements to police handling of digital transaction disputes and online fraud complaints. This study uses normative legal research with statutory, conceptual, and issue-based approaches. Primary legal materials include the Civil Code, the ITE Law and its amendments, Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019, and relevant rules on electronic evidence and standard clauses. The findings of this study demonstrate that electronic agreements bind the parties only when electronic consent is legally meaningful, the contractual clauses are not contrary to good faith or fairness, and the electronic system can support evidentiary reliability. In police practice, electronic agreements are relevant as initial evidentiary materials for distinguishing ordinary contractual default from online fraud. Thus, pacta sunt servanda in electronic agreements must be interpreted proportionally: it protects legal certainty, but it is limited by valid consent, good faith, consumer protection, system reliability, and evidentiary accountability.

Keywords: Pacta Sunt Servanda, Electronic Agreements, Digital Transaction Dispute, Police Evidentiary Practice

INTRODUCTION

Electronic agreements have become a dominant legal instrument in online sales, platform services, digital payment arrangements, online lending, remote working, and other technology-based transactions. Their legal relevance does not lie only in the shift from paper to electronic media, but in the question of whether digital acts such as clicking an agreement button, registering an account, using a platform, or accepting pre-drafted terms can create a valid and binding legal relationship under Indonesian contract law. The validity of an agreement must still be read through Article 1320 of the Indonesian Civil Code, especially the requirements of consent, legal capacity, a specific object, and a lawful cause (Senda et al., 2024). The binding force of the agreement is then connected with Article 1338 of the Indonesian Civil Code as the doctrinal basis of pacta sunt servanda (Syamsiah et al., 2023).

The Civil Code was drafted for conventional legal relationships and does not expressly regulate electronic consent, electronic signatures, transaction logs, system records, or platform-based standard clauses. Nevertheless, the classical requirements of consent, legal capacity, a specific object, and a lawful cause remain applicable to electronic agreements. The challenge is interpretive: old contract-law concepts must be applied to digital acts that are produced, stored, and proven through electronic systems. The ITE Law provides the digital-specific layer for electronic information, electronic documents, electronic signatures, and electronic contracts (Hariningsih, 2018). Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 further strengthens the discussion because electronic agreements depend on the reliability and accountability of electronic systems.

The problem becomes sharper because electronic agreements are often formed through standard-form mechanisms. A user may be required to accept terms and conditions without negotiation, to click an 'I agree' button, to continue browsing after a notice, or to register an account while being deemed to accept contractual terms. These mechanisms do not have the same legal quality. A click-wrap agreement may show stronger affirmative consent than a browse-wrap agreement, while a sign-in-wrap agreement depends on whether the user was clearly informed that registration constitutes acceptance. Therefore, electronic consent must be tested not only formally, but also through notice, accessibility, attribution, and fairness (Scivi et al., 2020).

The binding force of electronic agreements is also limited by good faith and balance. Based on the principles of contract law, especially the principle of balance, justice in an agreement is not solely measured by the equality of the performances exchanged, but rather places more emphasis on the equal position between the parties in the legal relationship (Haerani et al., 2023). This is important in electronic agreements because the stronger party, usually a platform or service provider, often controls the interface, the wording of clauses, the storage of data, and the evidence of consent. If pacta sunt servanda is applied mechanically, it may protect formal consent while ignoring substantive imbalance, unfair standard clauses, or evidentiary asymmetry (Basarah, 2023).

The article also has direct relevance to police science and law-enforcement practice. Reports involving online sales, digital services, electronic payments, online loans, account misuse, fictitious goods, fake confirmations, or deceptive platform conduct often begin with a private electronic agreement. Police officers who receive such reports must clarify whether the facts show ordinary civil default or online fraud. This clarification cannot be made only by asking whether an agreement exists; it requires examination of the offer, identity, consent, payment records, delivery obligations, electronic communications, system logs, and possible deception from the beginning (Firdaus & Shaleha, 2024).

Previous research has provided important foundations. Hasibuan and Ginting examined pacta sunt servanda in online sales using the Cash on Delivery system and focused on buyer default and seller protection (Hasibuan, 2024). Sulistyarini and Priyono discussed the actualization of pacta sunt servanda in e-contracts to support business activities in cyberspace (Sulistyarini & Priyono, 2024). Fatahillah et al. analysed the validity of electronic contracts as electronic transaction agreements under Indonesian laws and regulations (Fatahillah et al., 2025). These studies confirm the validity and binding force of electronic contracts, but they do not sufficiently integrate electronic consent, standard clauses, evidentiary reliability, and police-relevant digital dispute handling.

The novelty of this article is the construction of a proportional framework for electronic pacta sunt servanda. The article argues that an electronic agreement must pass three connected tests before its binding force can be relied upon: a consent test, a fairness test, and an evidentiary reliability test. This framework contributes to civil-law doctrine by harmonizing Article 1320 and Article 1338 of the Civil Code with the ITE framework. It also contributes to police science by explaining how electronic agreements may be used as initial evidentiary materials in digital transaction disputes and online fraud complaints. Based on this background, the article addresses three legal questions. First, how should pacta sunt servanda be interpreted in electronic agreements under the Indonesian Civil Code and the ITE Law? Second, how should electronic consent and standard clauses be assessed to prevent an overly mechanical application of binding force? Third, how are electronic agreements relevant to police evidentiary practice in handling digital transaction disputes and online fraud complaints?

This research employs normative legal research because it analyses legal norms, statutory provisions, legal principles, and doctrines concerning electronic agreements, pacta sunt servanda, and electronic evidence. It does not conduct empirical measurement of platform users, electronic system providers, or police officers. Instead, it interprets the legal meaning of electronic consent, contractual binding force, good faith, standard clauses, system reliability, and evidentiary use in digital transaction disputes (Amiruddin & Zainal Asikin, 2018).

The research applies statutory, conceptual, and issue-based approaches. The statutory approach is used to interpret Article 1320 and Article 1338 of the Indonesian Civil Code, Article 1 point 17 and Article 18 paragraph (1) of the ITE Law on electronic contracts, Article 5 of the ITE Law on electronic information and electronic documents as evidence, Article 11 of the ITE Law on electronic signatures, Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 on the implementation of electronic systems and transactions, and Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection on standard clauses. The conceptual approach is used to clarify pacta sunt servanda, electronic consent, good faith, fairness, standard-form contracts, authentication, attribution, integrity, and evidentiary reliability. The issue-based approach is used to connect those norms and concepts with practical legal problems in digital transaction disputes and online fraud complaints.

The legal materials consist of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. Primary legal materials include the Indonesian Civil Code, Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions, Law Number 19 of 2016, Law Number 1 of 2024, Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019, and Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection. Secondary legal materials include books and journal articles on contract law, electronic contracts, consumer protection, electronic signatures, and electronic evidence. Tertiary legal materials are used only to support terminology when necessary.

Legal materials were selected according to three criteria. First, the source must directly regulate or discuss contractual validity, electronic transactions, electronic evidence, electronic signatures, system reliability, standard clauses, or digital transaction disputes. Second, primary legal materials are prioritized over secondary commentary. Third, older doctrinal sources are retained only when they remain necessary to explain the structure of Indonesian contract law and are balanced with more recent journal articles and current legislation. The analysis uses systematic and teleological interpretation. Systematic interpretation connects the Civil Code with the ITE Law, Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019, and consumer-protection law. Teleological interpretation examines the purpose of those rules, namely legal certainty, protection of parties, technological reliability, and evidentiary accountability in electronic transactions. The analysis is then organized into three tests: the consent test, the fairness test, and the evidentiary reliability test. These tests are used to determine whether an electronic agreement can properly be treated as valid, binding, fair, and usable in police evidentiary practice.

DISCUSSION

The Pacta Sunt Servanda Principle under the Civil Code and Electronic Contract Validity

Pacta sunt servanda is a principle of contractual binding force. It does not create an agreement by itself; rather, it attaches legal force to an agreement that has already satisfied the requirements of validity. This means that Article 1338, paragraph (1) of the Civil Code must be read after Article 1320. Consent, legal capacity, a specific object, and a lawful cause are sequential prerequisites. Only after these requirements are fulfilled can an agreement bind the parties as law (Senda et al., 2024). Article 1313 of the Civil Code is often used as the starting definition of an agreement, but the provision should not be treated as the sole doctrinal basis. Its formulation is broad because it describes an agreement as a legal act by which one or more persons bind themselves to one or more other persons. The more decisive provisions for electronic agreements are Article 1320 and Article 1338, because they determine validity, binding force, and good-faith performance. Therefore, the legal analysis must distinguish contract formation from contract enforcement (Syamsiah et al., 2023).

In electronic agreements, the validity requirements of Article 1320 remain applicable, but each requirement requires digital interpretation. Consent may appear through click-wrap, sign-in-wrap, electronic signatures, or other recorded acts of acceptance. Legal capacity may be difficult to verify when the user acts through an account, phone number, email address, or platform profile. A specific object must be clear in the digital offer, including goods, services, price, delivery obligations, payment terms, or data-related services. A lawful cause requires that the agreement does not violate law, public order, morality, consumer rights, or prohibited electronic transaction rules (Salsabila & Ispriyarso, 2023). The ITE Law does not replace the Civil Code's contract doctrine. It supplies the electronic layer through which civil-law consent, record, signature, and proof may operate. Article 1 point 17 of the ITE Law defines an electronic contract as an agreement of the parties made through an electronic system. Article 18 paragraph (1) provides that electronic transactions expressed in electronic contracts bind the parties. These provisions recognize the legal effect of electronic contracts, but they do not remove the need to test consent, capacity, object, lawful cause, and good faith under the Civil Code (*UU No. 1 Tahun 2024*, n.d.).

The current statutory framework must also be updated. Law Number 1 of 2024 is the second amendment to Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions. It forms part of the current legal framework that should be cited together with Law Number 19 of 2016 and the original ITE Law. A manuscript that stops at the 2016 amendment risks legal inaccuracy because the current form of the ITE Law has been amended again in 2024. Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 is relevant because it regulates the implementation of electronic systems and transactions. For electronic agreements, this regulation matters not only administratively but also evidentially. A contract formed through an unreliable system creates practical problems for proving who agreed, when consent occurred, whether the record was altered, and whether the system preserved transaction data. Therefore, system reliability is part of the legal environment in which pacta sunt servanda operates in digital transactions (Filmadina et al., 2025).

The Civil Code and the ITE framework should therefore be harmonized rather than separated. The Civil Code supplies the basic doctrine of validity, binding force, and good faith. The ITE Law supplies recognition of electronic information, electronic documents, electronic signatures, electronic contracts, and electronic evidence. Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 supplies the technical and institutional framework for electronic systems. (*PP No. 71 Tahun 2019*, n.d.) Together, these rules show that electronic agreements may bind the parties, but the binding force is conditional and must be supported by valid consent, lawful content, good faith, and reliable electronic records (Fatahillah et al., 2025). International electronic commerce principles support this interpretation. The UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce is built on non-discrimination, technological neutrality, and functional equivalence, meaning that electronic form should not be denied legal effect merely because it is electronic, but it must still satisfy equivalent functions such as writing, signature, original, and record (*UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Commerce (1996)*, n.d.). This comparative reference is not used to replace Indonesian law, but to support the functional interpretation of electronic agreements under the Civil Code and ITE framework.

Electronic Consent and Standard Clauses as Limits to Binding Force

The strongest doctrinal problem in electronic agreements is not whether electronic contracts can exist, but when electronic consent is legally meaningful. Electronic consent must not be reduced to a mere technical action. A click, a login, a continuation of browsing, or a digital signature becomes legally relevant only when it can be connected to a clear offer, accessible terms, an identifiable user, and a system record that can show the time and manner of acceptance (Scivi & Maramis, 2020).

A click-wrap agreement generally requires the user to actively click 'I agree' or tick a box after being presented with terms and conditions. This form is usually stronger because it contains an affirmative act. A browse-wrap agreement attempts to bind the user by use of a website where the terms are placed through a hyperlink or notice. This form is weaker because the user may not have actual or reasonable notice of the terms. A sign-in-wrap agreement connects registration, login, or account creation with acceptance of terms. Its validity depends on whether the notice is clear and whether the user is informed that registration has contractual consequences. Implied consent may be relevant, but it is insufficient when the contractual terms are hidden, inaccessible, or materially burdensome (Artanti & Widiatno, 2024).

The consent test in electronic agreements should contain at least five elements. First, the contractual terms must be accessible before acceptance. Second, the system must make the acceptance mechanism clear. Third, the user must perform an affirmative act or receive sufficiently clear notice that continued use creates legal consequences. Fourth, the identity or account attribution of the accepting party must be reasonably verifiable. Fifth, the agreement must not contain an unlawful object or unlawful cause. Without these elements, the formal appearance of consent may not satisfy the substance of Article 1320 of the Civil Code (Senda et al., 2024). Good faith is the doctrinal limit to mechanical binding force. Article 1338, paragraph (3) of the Civil Code requires agreements to be performed in good faith. This means that a valid agreement is not enforced only according to literal wording, but also according to fairness, propriety, and the legitimate expectations of the parties. The application of pacta sunt servanda often has the potential to conflict with justice and good faith when one party uses a superior bargaining position, informational control, or technological control to impose unfair obligations (Azami dan Kustanto, 2025).

The principle of balance also supports this limitation. Based on the principles of contract law, especially the principle of balance, justice in an agreement is not solely measured by the equality of the performances exchanged, but rather places more emphasis on the equal position between the parties in the legal relationship. This test is necessary because electronic standard contracts often create imbalance. Users usually cannot negotiate terms, cannot change clauses, and cannot access services without accepting the provider’s terms. Clauses concerning unilateral amendment, limitation of liability, forced dispute-resolution mechanisms, automatic renewal, data-use consent, cancellation restrictions, or one-sided sanctions may place the weaker party in a disadvantaged position. In this context, pacta sunt servanda should not be used to protect all terms mechanically (Basarah, 2023).

Good faith is the doctrinal limit to mechanical binding force. Article 1338 paragraph (3) of the Civil Code requires agreements to be performed in good faith. This means that a valid agreement is not enforced only according to literal wording, but also according to fairness, propriety, and the legitimate expectations of the parties. The application of pacta sunt servanda often has the potential to conflict with justice and good faith when one party uses a superior bargaining position, informational control, or technological control to impose unfair obligations (Azami & Kustanto, 2025). The principle of balance also supports this limitation. Based on the principles of contract law, especially the principle of balance, justice in an agreement is not solely measured by the equality of the performances exchanged, but rather places more emphasis on the equal position between the parties in the legal relationship (Haerani et al., 2023). In electronic agreements, equal position is difficult to achieve because the platform usually controls the interface, the terms, the transaction data, and the proof of acceptance. Therefore, fairness analysis must become a central thread in applying pacta sunt servanda to electronic standard contracts (Haerani et al., 2023).

Consumer-protection law strengthens the same conclusion. Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection is relevant when electronic agreements involve business-to-consumer transactions and standard clauses. Its relevance is not to transform every digital contract into a consumer dispute, but to prevent unfair standard terms from being protected by the formal doctrine of binding force. Where a clause removes essential rights, shifts unreasonable risks, or is presented in a way that prevents meaningful consent, pacta sunt servanda must be limited by consumer-protection values (Basarah, 2023). The difference between voidable and null-and-void agreements must also be maintained. Defective consent, such as mistake, coercion, fraud, or lack of meaningful consent, generally affects the subjective requirements of Article 1320 and may make the agreement voidable. Unlawful object or unlawful cause affects the objective requirements and may cause the agreement null and void. In electronic contexts, this distinction is important because a hidden or misleading consent mechanism differs from an illegal digital object, a prohibited transaction, or a fraudulent scheme disguised as a contract (Senda et al., 2024).

Thus, the fairness test asks whether the electronic agreement is enforceable not only because it was clicked, but because the consent is meaningful and the contractual structure is not abusive. This test protects legal certainty while preventing pacta sunt servanda from becoming a shield for unfair standard clauses. Legal certainty is not achieved by enforcing every electronic clause; it is achieved by enforcing valid, fair, and provable agreements (Azami & Kustanto, 2025).

Electronic Agreements and Electronic Evidence in Police Handling of Digital Transaction Disputes

The third dimension of electronic agreements concerns evidence and police handling of digital transaction disputes. In many online disputes, an electronic agreement is not only a civil-law document but also an initial evidentiary material. It may show the offer, acceptance, price, delivery terms, payment obligation, account identity, platform terms, and sequence of communication. This evidentiary function explains why the article belongs within a policing journal: police officers increasingly receive reports in which contractual records, screenshots, chats, invoices, payment receipts, electronic signatures, and platform logs must be clarified before the case can be classified as civil default or online fraud (Firdaus & Shaleha, 2024).

Article 5 of the ITE Law recognizes electronic information and electronic documents as legal evidence and as an expansion of lawful evidence. This makes electronic agreements important in digital transaction disputes, but recognition alone is not enough. The value of electronic evidence depends on authenticity, integrity, attribution, completeness, preservation, and legality of acquisition. A screenshot may show words on a screen, but it does not automatically prove who sent the message, whether the conversation is complete, whether the image was altered, or whether the account belongs to the reported person (Rura & Nalle, 2025).

Electronic signatures also have several legal functions. They may identify the signatory, indicate approval, connect the signatory with electronic information, and help preserve the integrity of the electronic document. In Indonesian law, this supports the interpretation that an electronic signature should not be treated merely as an image or symbol, but as a method of authentication and integrity protection when it satisfies statutory requirements (Rura & Nalle, 2025). The UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Signatures may be used only as a supporting comparative reference because it also emphasizes technical reliability in electronic signatures (*UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Signatures (2001)*, n.d.).

The evidentiary reliability test should include four elements. First, attribution: the electronic record must be connected to a person, account, device, phone number, email address, digital certificate, or platform identity. Second, integrity: the record must be shown not to have been altered, selectively cropped, or manipulated. Third, preservation: the data must be capable of being stored and presented in readable form while maintaining its evidentiary value. Fourth, lawful acquisition: electronic evidence should be obtained and handled through lawful procedures so it can support subsequent legal process. Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 is relevant because electronic-system reliability affects whether electronic records can support legal certainty in digital transactions. System-provider accountability is central to this test. In electronic agreements, the provider may hold the most important evidence: user registration data, IP logs, click records, timestamps, transaction history, payment confirmation, delivery information, and complaint records. If the provider's system is unreliable or refuses to preserve relevant records, the weaker party may face evidentiary difficulty. Therefore, system reliability under Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 is not merely a technical requirement; it affects the ability of parties and law-enforcement officers to prove consent, authenticity, timing, and contractual performance (Filmadina et al., 2025).

Police handling of digital transaction disputes requires a civil-criminal filter. A dispute tends to remain civil when the parties are identifiable, the transaction object is real, the agreement exists, and non-performance arises from delay, inability, misunderstanding, defective performance, or ordinary breach. A dispute may indicate online fraud when there are signs of deception from the beginning, such as false identity, fictitious goods or services, fake payment confirmation, repeated victimization, manipulated platform information, immediate disappearance after payment, or a pattern showing that the contract was used as a tool to deceive (Firdaus & Shaleha, 2024). This filter is important because pacta sunt servanda should not be used to criminalize every breach of electronic agreement. Civil default and criminal fraud have different legal characters. Default concerns failure to perform obligations arising from a valid agreement, while fraud concerns deception, dishonest representation, or fraudulent intent. However, the existence of an electronic agreement may help police officers reconstruct the facts: what was promised, what was accepted, what was paid, what was delivered, and whether the suspect had fraudulent intent from the beginning (Tanjaya et al., 2025).

For that reason, the police-relevant contribution of this article is the use of electronic agreements as a legal and evidentiary bridge. Under civil law, they establish rights and obligations. Under electronic transaction law, they are created, stored, and proven through electronic systems. Under police practice, they may become initial materials for receiving, clarifying, and directing reports involving digital transaction disputes. This integrated approach answers the need to connect Civil Code analysis with digital evidence, online fraud complaints, and law-enforcement practice (Fatahillah et al., 2025).

Consequently, electronic pacta sunt servanda should be formulated as follows: electronic agreements bind the parties when validity, meaningful electronic consent, lawful clauses, good faith, consumer protection, and evidentiary reliability are satisfied. This formulation avoids two extremes. It avoids denying the legal effect of electronic agreements merely because they are electronic. It also avoids enforcing every electronic clause mechanically without regard to consent defects, unfair standard terms, system unreliability, or evidentiary weakness (Azami & Kustanto, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Pacta sunt servanda remains applicable to electronic agreements in Indonesia, but its application is conditional. Article 1338 of the Indonesian Civil Code gives binding force only to agreements that first satisfy Article 1320: consent, legal capacity, a specific object, and a lawful cause. The ITE Law and Government Regulation Number 71 of 2019 do not replace this civil-law doctrine; they provide the electronic layer for contract formation, electronic information, electronic documents, electronic signatures, electronic contracts, and system reliability.

Electronic consent cannot be treated mechanically. Click-wrap, browse-wrap, sign-in-wrap, implied consent, and standard-form electronic contracts have different legal and evidentiary strengths. The act of clicking 'agree' binds the user only when the terms are accessible, the acceptance mechanism is clear, the user’s identity or account can be reasonably attributed, and the contractual clauses are not contrary to good faith, fairness, consumer protection, public order, or law. Therefore, pacta sunt servanda must be read together with Article 1338 paragraph (3) on good faith and with protection against unfair standard clauses.

Electronic agreements are relevant to police evidentiary practice because they often appear as initial materials in digital transaction disputes and online fraud complaints. They may help identify the parties, the offer, consent, payment, performance obligations, and the alleged breach. However, police handling must distinguish civil default from online fraud by examining whether deception existed from the beginning and whether the electronic evidence is attributable, intact, preserved, and lawfully obtained. In this sense, pacta sunt servanda contributes not only to civil-law certainty but also to evidentiary clarification in digital law-enforcement practice.

SUGGESTION

Regulatory and institutional strengthening should focus on four practical areas. First, electronic system providers should design consent mechanisms that clearly display contractual terms before acceptance and preserve records of acceptance. Second, platform providers and business actors should avoid unfair standard clauses, especially clauses that unilaterally change obligations, remove essential rights, or shift all risks to users. Third, parties should preserve complete electronic records, including transaction history, payment proof, communication records, account data, electronic signatures, and system logs. Fourth, police handling of digital transaction complaints should use a structured civil-criminal filter so that ordinary contractual default is not over-criminalized and genuine online fraud can be investigated effectively.

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Revitalizing Police Patrols as a Crime Prevention Effort

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Abstract

Police patrol is one of the crime prevention efforts that has long been implemented by the police institution. However, patrols should not be understood solely as routine operational activities; they need to be studied and developed to have a more effective impact on crime prevention. Therefore, revitalising police patrols is necessary, both in terms of the meaning of police presence in the community and in terms of their implementation, including utilising advances in information technology. The revitalisation of police patrols in Bandar Lampung City Police jurisdiction is implemented through *Patroli Janji Jaga* (Promise to Guard) innovation, consisting of jingle patrols and QR code patrols. Jingle patrols adopt the communication patterns of traditional street vendors, such as meatball or satay vendors, to signal to the public that police are nearby. Meanwhile, QR code patrols digitise conventional patrols by replacing patrol boxes in crime-prone locations with QR codes accessible to officers and the public. During the implementation, patrol officers conduct attendance checks and dialogue visits, and facilitate public participation through satisfaction surveys, complaints, and suggestions. This study aims to analyse the role and implementation of this revitalised police patrol as a crime prevention effort using Routine Activity Theory and Rational Choice Theory approaches. The research method employs a mixed-methods approach, and data are collected through observation, documentation, and QR code-based public satisfaction surveys. The results indicate that the revitalised police patrols have a strong theoretical basis and practical benefits in crime prevention, as well as increasing public safety and trust in police presence in public areas.

Keywords: police patrol, crime prevention, patrol revitalisation, QR code, Routine Activity Theory, Rational Choice Theory

INTRODUCTION

Public security and order constitute one of the main pillars in the life of a nation and state. In Indonesia, public security and order are regulated by Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police (Usfunan, 2023). Public security and order are the key prerequisites for creating a safe and conducive social life. In urban areas, including Bandar Lampung City, the increasingly complex dynamics of community activities, population growth, and high social mobility contribute to the potential for crimes. This situation demands a crime prevention strategy that is not only repressive but also preventive, by positioning the police as the vanguard in maintaining security through a visible presence in public spaces.

Normatively, crime prevention is an integral part of the police's function. Article 13 of Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police (Polri) emphasises that the main duties of Polri include maintaining security and public order, enforcing the law, and providing protection, guidance, and services to the community. Furthermore, Article 14 paragraph (1) letter b of the Police Law states that in carrying out these duties, Polri is assigned to carry out all activities to ensure security, including police patrols as a form of crime prevention.

Police patrols have long been understood as a means of police presence in the community, aimed at preventing crime, providing a sense of security, and building relationships between police and residents. However, in practice, patrols are often carried out routinely and administratively, thus not having an optimal impact on crime prevention. Conventional patrol patterns, which are static and lack community participation, have the potential to reduce the effectiveness of patrols as a monitoring and early detection instrument (Ariel et al., 2016; Braga et al., 2019; Williams & Coupe, 2017).

Police patrols are activities that are frequently carried out to prevent crime and prevent disturbances to public order and security. Crime prevention requires knowledge of how crimes occur and the environmental conditions influenced by social, cultural, and economic factors. Therefore, combating and disclosing crime requires personnel who have studied these factors and subsequently developed appropriate methods for handling them (Ate, 2012, p. 2).

One of the main functions of the Indonesian National Police in carrying out its duties is through patrol, which aims to prevent and combat crime as well as provide a sense of security to the community. Police patrol is part of a preventive strategy in efforts to maintain security and order (Wahyuningrum et al., 2023). This strategy prioritises prevention by reducing opportunities for crime through the presence of police in the field. The active presence of police within the community not only aims to prevent crime but also to foster a sense of security and public trust in law enforcement officers (Basford et al., 2021; Bilach et al., 2022; Bland et al., 2021).

However, the role of police patrols in crime prevention and combat in Indonesia still faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is the limited number of police personnel relative to the vast territory and population that must be protected. Based on statistical data, Indonesia has a relatively low police-to-population ratio compared to other countries. This causes police patrol coverage to be less than optimal, particularly in remote areas or regions with high crime rates (Rajagukguk, 2023).

Beyond the limitations in personnel numbers, inadequate budget also constitutes a significant obstacle in the implementation of patrol. The available budget is often insufficient to support effective patrol operations, including the need for patrol vehicles, communication equipment, and other necessary supplies. This budgetary constraint also impacts the quality of training and the welfare of police officers, which ultimately affects their motivation and performance in the field (Berutu, 2023).

In the context of internal police policy, strengthening patrol functions has also been regulated in various technical regulations, including Indonesian National Police Regulation (Perpol) Number 1 of 2021 concerning Community Policing (Polmas) and the implementation of preventive police duties, which emphasises the importance of an active, communicative, and service-oriented police presence. Furthermore, the paradigm of predictive and preventive policing encourages the police to utilise information technology as part of the modernisation of police duties to increase transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of public services.

Community policing emerged as a new approach following research conducted in the 1970s, which found benefits in increased interaction between citizens and police (Kelling & Moore, 1988). Community members were then regarded as 'co-producers of public safety', while police were no longer merely reacting to emergencies, but served as the 'primary diagnosticians and care coordinators' in the fight against crime (Bayley & Shearing, 1996, pp. 585-606; O'Reilly, 2024; Peyton et al., 2019; Signori et al., 2023).

In line with these developments, revitalising police patrols has become an inevitable necessity. This revitalisation addresses not only technical operational aspects but also strengthens the meaning of police presence as a symbol of supervision and protection. Bandar Lampung City Police responds to this need through the innovative *Patrol Janji Jaga* (Promise Guard Patrol), which combines cultural approaches and information technology. Patrol jingles use familiar sounds, resembling those of street vendors, to signal police presence in the surrounding area. Meanwhile, QR Code-based patrols digitise conventional patrols by replacing patrol boxes in crime-prone areas with QR codes connected to lombajanjijaga.com, accessible to both officers and the public.

Bandar Lampung City Police, through its *Janji Jaga patrol* program, is one of the police units that initiated the digitalisation of patrols by utilising QR codes, integrated with the lombajanjijaga.com platform. This allows the public to directly assess patrol implementation, including the perceptions of safety and the quality of officer presence in the field. This initiative reflects Bandar Lampung City Police's efforts to position the public as active partners in maintaining environmental security, and at the same time also enabling the implementation of officer attendance records, documentation of patrol activities, and the collection of data in the form of satisfaction surveys, complaints, and suggestions quickly and easily via mobile devices. As a liaison tool between police patrols and the public, the QR code, integrated with the online platform, supports the process of data collection, documentation, and measurement of public satisfaction in real-time and transparently. This is in line with the principles of public service and information transparency, as well as strengthening police performance accountability as mandated by bureaucratic reform and the transformation towards the *Presisi* (Predictive, Responsible, and Transparency with Justice) (Dau et al., 2023; Hutt et al., 2021; Khalfa et al., 2024).

From a criminological perspective, the consistent and recognisable presence of police patrols is relevant to RAT (Routine Activity Theory), which emphasises the importance of a capable guardian in preventing the meeting of motivated perpetrators and suitable targets. Furthermore, RCT (Rational Choice Theory) explains that criminals consider the risks and benefits before committing a crime. The presence of patrols that are digitally monitored and directly experienced by the public has the potential to increase the perceived risk of being caught, thereby reducing the perpetrator's intention to commit a crime.

Based on this normative, empirical, and theoretical background, this research is crucial to examine the revitalisation of police patrols through *the Patroli Janji Jaga* program implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police. The results of the research are highly expected to provide an overview of the alignment between policy, patrol implementation, and criminological theory, as well as provide material for evaluation and recommendations in developing a more effective, adaptive, and community-oriented police patrol model.

Based on the background and problems outlined, the research questions are: (1) What is the concept and implementation of the revitalisation of police patrols through *the Patroli Janji Jaga* program implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police as a crime prevention effort? (2) What is the role of jingle patrols and QR code-based patrols in strengthening police presence and visibility in public spaces? (3) How relevant is the application of RAT and RCT to police patrols as a crime prevention strategy? (4) What is the public response and level of satisfaction with the revitalised police patrols implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police? (5) How do digital-based police patrols contribute to increasing public security and trust in the police institution?

In accordance with the research questions, the objectives of this paper are: (1) To analyse the concept and implementation of revitalized police patrols through *Patroli Janji Jaga* program implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police as a crime prevention effort; (2) To examine the role of jingle patrols and QR code-based patrols in strengthening police presence and visibility in public spaces; (3) To analyse the relevance of the application of RAT and RCT to police patrols as a crime prevention strategy; (4) To determine the public's

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response and level of satisfaction with the revitalized police patrols implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police; and (5) To identify the contribution of digital-based police patrols to increasing public security and trust in the police institution.

Theoretically, the research is expected to contribute to the development of criminology studies, particularly in understanding the role of police patrols as a crime prevention strategy. This research enriches the application of RAT and RCT in the context of modern policing that integrates cultural and digital approaches. Furthermore, this research can serve as an academic reference for future research examining crime prevention based on police presence and the use of information technology. Practically, the results of this research are expected to provide evaluation material and input for Polri in general and Bandar Lampung City Police in particular, in improving the quality and effectiveness of police patrols. This research is also expected to provide policy recommendations regarding the development of adaptive, participatory, and technology-based police patrols. Furthermore, this research benefits the public by increasing a sense of security and strengthening trust in the presence and performance of the police in public spaces.

In order to answer the research questions comprehensively, the authors plan to conduct a step-by-step research action as follows: First, the study is focused on identifying and mapping problems with conventional police patrols. This stage involves an in-depth analysis of current patrol patterns, including the frequency of patrols, the nature of officer presence in the field, and the intensity and quality of interactions between police and the public. The identification process is conducted through field observations and a review of internal police documents to obtain an initial overview of the challenges, limitations, and gaps that still exist in conventional patrol practices. Second, the study is focused on analysing the implementation of revitalised police patrols through the *Patroli Janji Jaga* program. This study focuses on the implementation of jingle patrols and QR code-based patrols, including operational mechanisms, the level of officer attendance discipline, and the form of dialogue visits conducted at patrol points. The analysis at this stage aims to assess the extent to which the patrol innovations have increased police visibility and strengthened the meaning of police presence in public spaces as protectors and guardians of the community. Third, the study is focused on the collection and analysis of data related to public participation and perceptions of the revitalised patrols. Data is obtained through public satisfaction surveys, complaints, and suggestions submitted directly through QR Code facilities available at patrol locations. This information is used to measure the level of security, public trust, and public response to the presence and performance of police patrols. Fourth, the study is focused on the assessment of the revitalised police patrols from a criminological theoretical perspective. The empirical findings are analysed using RAT to examine the role of patrols as capable guardians in preventing opportunities for crime. Furthermore, RCT is used to assess the extent to which patrol presence influences the rational judgment of criminals in making decisions. This theoretical approach is intended to ensure that the implemented patrol practices have a strong conceptual foundation and are scientifically relevant. Fifth, the study is focused on the evaluation and formulation of recommendations. Data from observations, documentation, and surveys are analysed qualitatively and quantitatively to assess the effectiveness of the revitalised police patrols. The evaluation results will then be used as a basis for formulating policy recommendations and developing more effective, adaptive police patrol patterns that are oriented toward increasing public safety and trust.

The authors are highly confident that through this systematic problem-solving plan, the research is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive overview of the implementation and impact of revitalised police patrols, while also offering a patrol model that can be replicated and developed in the context of crime prevention in other areas.

Patrol is a police activity carried out by two or more police officers to prevent the confluence of intentions and opportunities. This activity involves approaching, exploring, observing, or observing situations and conditions that are expected to give rise to any form of violation, crime, or disturbance of public order and security, and/or criminal acts/violations of the law that require or require the presence of police officers (police hazard) to take police action to maintain order and ensure public safety (…..: 2). Police patrol is essentially a form of active police presence in a specific area to maintain public order and security. Conceptually, patrol can be understood as a planned and continuous mobile activity carried out by police officers to monitor the environment, prevent disturbances to public order and security, and foster a sense of security within the community. Patrols are not only oriented towards physical supervision of the area but also encompass social interaction between police and residents as part of preventive efforts. From a normative perspective, police patrols are a manifestation or concrete implementation of the duty of maintaining public order and security as stipulated in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning Polri. Articles 13 and 14 of the Law establish patrols as a form of police activity to ensure security, prevent crime, and provide protection and services to the public. Thus, patrols have clear legal standing as a crime prevention instrument. In modern policing practices, patrols are no longer understood as merely routine or administrative activities. Ideally, patrols are carried out dynamically, adapting to regional characteristics, and oriented towards community needs. The presence of police through patrols serves as a symbol of deterrence and a means of building communication and public trust in the police institution.

Revitalising, according to Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI, 2005, p. 954), is defined as the process, method, or act of reviving or reactivating. In general, the word "revitalisation" is derived from the combination of the words "re," "vital," and "isasi" "re" means "again," "vital" means "important," and "isasi" means "process." Currently, the topic of service revitalisation has been widely discussed and implemented. Therefore, revitalisation is part of bureaucratic reform. Conducting revitalisation, it is hoped that changes will occur in an organisation or institution for the better in the future. Revitalisation is defined as a process to make or restore activities important or to be better than before. Public service revitalisation is an action by the public sector to improve service quality, thereby creating higher quality services so that customer satisfaction can be achieved and increased. Public service revitalisation is an action by the public sector to improve service quality, thus creating higher quality services so that customer satisfaction can be achieved and increased. Capacity building is a strategy that can be implemented to carry out revitalisation (Putri et al., 2014, pp. 184-185). The revitalisation of police patrols can be understood as an effort to renew and strengthen the patrol function to make it more effective, relevant, and in line with social and technological developments. Revitalisation is not solely about technical changes to patrol implementation, but also encompasses a renewed perspective on the meaning of police presence in public spaces. Conceptually, patrol revitalisation means reviving the preventive function of patrols, which in practice are often reduced to formalities. Revitalisation is aimed at making patrols a means of truly preventing crime, increasing a sense of security, and strengthening relations between the police and the community. In this context, patrols are assessed not only by the frequency of officer presence, but also by the quality of interactions, visibility, and impact on public perceptions of security. Patrol revitalisation is also in line with the direction of Polri's transformation policy toward Presisi (Predictive, Responsible, and Transparency with Justice). Through revitalisation, patrols are expected to become more accountable, measurable, and open to public evaluation, including by utilising information technology as a supporting tool.

Technology-based police patrols are an extension of conventional patrols, utilising information systems and digital devices. Patrol digitalisation can be understood as a strategic effort to integrate information technology into patrol activities to support monitoring, recording, reporting, and communication between the police and the public in a more effective and measurable manner. In its implementation, the use of QR Codes serves as a connecting medium between the physical presence of patrol officers and an integrated digital system. By scanning QR Codes, officers can record attendance, document patrol activities, and collect data directly on public perceptions and satisfaction levels in the field. This mechanism allows the monitoring of patrol implementation to be carried out not only internally by the police but also involves external evaluation through active community participation. QR Codes themselves are a technique that converts written data into 2-dimensional codes printed on a more compact medium. QR codes are two-dimensional barcodes first introduced by the Japanese company Denso Wave in 1994. These barcodes were first used to record inventory data for vehicle spare parts production and are now used in various fields. QR stands for Quick Response because it is intended to translate its contents quickly. A QR code is a type of barcode that can be read with a mobile phone camera (Rouillard, 2008, pp. 50-55). Digitising patrols has significant implications for increasing transparency and accountability in police performance. Providing a space for the public to easily and quickly convey assessments, criticisms, and input encourages transparency in the implementation of police duties. Thus, patrols serve not only as an instrument for maintaining public security and order, but also as part of a public service that can be monitored and evaluated collectively by the public (de Brito & Ariel, 2017; Hutt et al., 2021; Khalfa et al., 2024).

Dialogic patrols are a form of police patrol that emphasises direct interaction and two-way communication between officers and the public. In dialogic patrols, officers not only focus on monitoring the area but also visit residents, listen to complaints, and convey public order and security messages to residents. This pattern aligns with the concept of community policing, which positions residents as active partners in maintaining neighbourhood security. Community participation in patrols can be understood as citizen involvement in the crime prevention process, whether through providing information, providing input, or evaluating police performance. This participation does not replace the role of the police, but rather strengthens the effectiveness of patrols by strengthening social control and a sense of shared responsibility for security. In technology-based patrols, community participation is facilitated through digital media such as QR Codes, which allow residents to submit assessments and complaints directly without administrative barriers. This pattern reflects a shift in the patrol paradigm from a top-down approach to a collaborative approach. Therefore, dialogic patrols are a preventive and proactive approach, focusing on direct interaction between the police and the community. The effectiveness of dialogic patrols in preventing crime in an area can be measured by the level of community support, namely whether the public trusts security forces, feels comfortable interacting with them, and is willing to participate in maintaining neighbourhood security (Ghaemmaghami et al., 2021; O'Reilly, 2024; Piliang & Madjid, 2025, p. 80; Signori et al., 2023).

Routine Activity Theory (RAT) is a criminological theory that explains crime as the result of the confluence of three main elements: a motivated perpetrator, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. In this theory, crime prevention focuses on reducing opportunities by strengthening one element, specifically the presence of a guardian. According to RAT, proposed by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson, unemployment creates more opportunities for individuals to engage in criminal activity because they have more free time and are less tied to legitimate routines (Purpura, 2013, pp. 55-58). In the context of police patrols, patrol officers act as capable guardians whose presence can prevent the encounter between perpetrators and targets. A consistent, visible, and easily recognised patrol presence serves to disrupt the perpetrator's routine and increase public vigilance. Revitalising patrols, through both cultural and technological approaches, strengthens the function of patrols as capable guardians. The increased visibility of patrols and community involvement in surveillance make RAT relevant to explaining the effectiveness of patrols as a crime prevention strategy (Ariel & Partridge, 2017; Kochel & Weisburd, 2017).

Rational Choice Theory (RCT) views criminals as individuals who act based on rational considerations, assessing the benefits and risks before committing a crime. Crime is understood as the result of conscious choices, not merely impulsive impulses or structural factors. Larry Siegel (2010) states in RCT that before committing a deviant act, an individual considers several factors, such as: (1) personal factors such as feelings, money, entertainment, and so on; and (2) situational factors such as the level of security around them, potential victims, the environment conducive to criminal activity, and so on. Perpetrators always evaluate the risks they face before committing a particular act, such as the risk of arrest or punishment, the benefits of the action, the likelihood of success, and the potential benefits they will derive from the action. Within this framework, police patrols serve to increase the perceived risk of being caught or detected. The higher the visibility and certainty of patrol presence, the greater the perceived risk to perpetrators, making crime a less profitable option. Revitalised patrols supported by digital systems strengthen situational deterrence mechanisms. The presence of patrols, which can be monitored, documented, and tangibly perceived by the public, creates an environment that is not conducive to criminals acting rationally (Ariel & Partridge, 2017; Bucci, 2024).

Several previous studies have shown that police patrols play a significant role in increasing public safety, although their impact on crime reduction often depends on the context and method of implementation. Dialogic and participatory patrols tend to be more effective than passive and administrative patrols. However, studies integrating police patrol revitalisation with cultural approaches, digitalisation, and analysis using RAT and RCT are still relatively limited. Therefore, this study is strategically positioned to fill this gap by examining the *Patroli Janji Jaga* innovation implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police. Through normative, empirical, and theoretical approaches, this research is expected to contribute to the development of a more adaptive, participatory, and crime-prevention-oriented police patrol model that enhances public trust (Ariel et al., 2016; Braga et al., 2019; Kochel & Weisburd, 2017; Mitchell, 2017; Williams & Coupe, 2017).

METHOD

This research employs a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. This approach was chosen because the research not only examines the normative basis and concept of police patrols, but also examines their implementation in the field and the public's response to the revitalisation of police patrols implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police.

The qualitative approach was used to analyse legal provisions and police policies related to patrol functions, as well as the practice of patrol revitalisation through *the Patroli Janji Jaga* program, including the patrol jingle mechanism and QR Code-based patrols. Meanwhile, a quantitative approach was used to measure public perceptions and satisfaction with the presence and performance of police patrols through a QR Code-based public satisfaction survey.

Methodologically, this research is an empirical-normative study with a criminological approach. Data are analysed using Routine Activity Theory and Rational Choice Theory to explain the role of police patrols as a crime prevention effort and the influence of patrol presence on increasing public safety and trust.

This research was designed as an empirical-normative study using a field study design combined with a literature review. This design was used to obtain a comprehensive overview of the revitalisation of police patrols through the *Patroli Janji Jaga* program implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police, both in terms of policy and implementation practices.

The field study was conducted within the jurisdiction of Bandar Lampung City Police, focusing on the implementation of jingle patrols and QR Code-based patrols in crime-prone areas. The research aimed to observe patrol attendance patterns, the nature of officer interactions with the public, and the mechanisms for utilising QR Codes for attendance, activity documentation, and public feedback collection.

This research design also integrates normative and criminological analysis. Normative analysis was used to examine the compliance of patrol implementation with statutory provisions and police policy, while criminological analysis was used to interpret empirical findings based on RAT and RCT. Through this design, the research is expected to fully explain the relationship between the concept, implementation, and impact of revitalised police patrols as a crime prevention effort.

The data sources employed by the author in this study consist of primary and secondary data. This division is intended to obtain comprehensive data, both empirical and normative, to support the analysis of the revitalisation of police patrols as a crime prevention effort. Primary data was obtained from direct observations of police patrols through the *Patroli Janji Jaga* program implemented by Bandar Lampung City Police. In addition, primary data also came from the results of a public satisfaction survey accessed via QR Codes at patrol points, which included public assessments regarding patrol presence, feelings of security, and the quality of officer interactions in the field. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through a literature review that included primary and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials consisted of laws and regulations related to the duties and functions of the police, including Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning Polri and other police regulations governing preventive functions and community policing. Secondary legal materials included scientific literature, textbooks, legal and criminology journals, and previous research relevant to police patrols and crime prevention. The legal materials used include:

1. **The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia as Amended**
2. **Law Number 1 of 1946 concerning the Enforcement of the Criminal Code (KUHP)**
3. **Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code**
4. **Law Number 8 of 1981 concerning Criminal Procedure Law (KUHAP)**
5. **Law Number 20 of 2025 concerning Criminal Procedure Law (KUHAP)**
6. **Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning Polri**
7. Regulation of the Chief of Polri Number: 1 of 2019 concerning the System, Management, and Operational Success Standards of Polri.

Then, data is analysed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis. Qualitative data obtained from field observations and literature review were analysed by interpreting and linking empirical findings to applicable laws and regulations and police policies. Meanwhile, quantitative data from a QR Code-based public satisfaction survey were analysed descriptively to determine trends in public assessments of patrol presence, sense of security, and public trust. All analysis results were then examined using RAT and RCT to explain the role of revitalised police patrols as a crime prevention effort.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings from the Analysis of Legislation

Based on the analysis of relevant legislation, it was found that the function of police patrols as a crime prevention effort has a strong constitutional and normative basis. The amended 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia affirms that the state is responsible for guaranteeing a sense of security and protection for all citizens as referred to in Article 28G paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution, stating that "everyone has the right to protection of themselves, their families, their honour, their dignity, and their property under their control, and has the right to a sense of security and protection from the threat of fear for doing or not doing something that is a human right." Furthermore, Article 28I paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution affirms that "the protection, advancement, enforcement, and fulfilment of human rights are the responsibility of the state, especially the government." Furthermore, the principle of the rule of law (*rechtstaat*) as stipulated in Article 1 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution, stating that "Indonesia is a state based on the rule of law," places the maintenance of security and public order as an integral part of the state's obligations, which in practice is carried out through the police institution.

In the context of substantive criminal law, the existence of Law Number 1 of 1946 concerning the Enforcement of the Criminal Code and Law Number 1 of 2023 concerning the Criminal Code demonstrates that crime prevention relies not only on enforcement after a crime has occurred but also allows for a preventative approach. Although both regulations emphasise the criminal aspect, crime prevention is implicitly the primary objective of criminal law, so the presence of police patrols can be understood as an initial instrument to prevent legal violations before they enter the realm of repression.

Furthermore, from a criminal procedural law perspective, Law Number 8 of 1981 concerning the Criminal Procedure Code and Law Number 20 of 2025 concerning the Criminal Procedure Code position the police as one of the primary actors in the CJS (Criminal Justice System), particularly during the investigation and inquiry stages. Within this framework, police patrols function as part of legitimate police actions to detect potential criminal acts early, maintain public order and security, and gather initial information necessary to support the law enforcement process.

Specifically, Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning Polri provides the most relevant normative basis for the implementation of police patrols. Article 13 of the Law emphasises that the primary duties of Polri include maintaining security and public order, enforcing the law, and providing protection, assistance, and services to the community. Furthermore, Article 14 of the Law explicitly stipulates that maintaining security and public order is the primary duty of Polri, which is realised through various preventive activities, including patrols. This provision emphasises that police patrols are not merely routine operational activities but are an integral part of the legal mandate inherent in the police's function as an institution that protects, safeguards, and serves the public.

The Regulation of the Chief of Polri Number 1 of 2019 concerning the System, Management, and Operational Success Standards of Polri provides technical guidelines for the implementation of police operational duties, including patrols, investigations, and community services. This regulation emphasises the importance of measurable success standards through operational indicators, such as patrol frequency, officer discipline, and the effectiveness of interactions with the community. With these guidelines, police patrols are no longer merely administrative routines, but are directed toward achieving tangible results in maintaining security, reducing the potential for disturbances, and increasing public trust. Patrol revitalisation through *Patrol Janji Jaga* innovation, including patrol jingles and QR Codes, aligns with the Chief's Regulation Number 1 of 2019 above.

Thus, the findings from the analysis of laws and regulations indicate that the revitalisation of police patrols, including through *Patroli Janji Jaga* innovation, does not conflict with the applicable legal framework. Rather, this innovation strengthens the implementation of police duties as mandated by the constitution and law, particularly by prioritising an adaptive, accountable, and public service-oriented approach to crime prevention.

Legal Theory Perspective

From a legal theory perspective, police patrols as a crime prevention effort can be understood as a manifestation of the law's function in maintaining order and protecting the interests of society. Within the framework of the rule of law theory, the law functions not only to regulate and impose sanctions but also to prevent violations through mechanisms of oversight and social control. The presence of police patrols in public spaces reflects the state's role in ensuring certainty, order, and a sense of security for citizens.

Furthermore, in the responsive legal theory developed by Philippe Nonet and Philip Selznick, prominent legal sociologists who formulated the theory of legal evolution in their book *Law and Society in Transition: Toward Responsive Law* (1978), the law is seen as being able to adapt to the needs and dynamics of society. The revitalisation of police patrols through a cultural approach and the use of information technology demonstrates the police's efforts to enforce the law adaptively and orient themselves towards public service. The innovations of patrol jingles and QR Code-based patrols not only strengthen the oversight function but also open up space for public participation in the process of maintaining security and order.

Furthermore, from a law enforcement theory perspective, the effectiveness of the law is largely determined by the presence of law enforcement officers and the level of public compliance. Easily identifiable and digitally monitored police patrols play a role in increasing legal awareness and social compliance. Therefore, revitalising police patrols can be understood as a preventative legal strategy that emphasises not only enforcement but also strengthening legal legitimacy through a state presence directly felt by the public.

Criminological Theory Perspective

From a criminological theory perspective, police patrols play a strategic role as a crime prevention instrument, operating in the early stages before a crime occurs. Routine Activity Theory explains that crime occurs when there is a motivated perpetrator, a suitable target, and a lack of adequate supervision. A consistent, recognisable, and active police patrol presence in public spaces serves as a capable guardian, reducing the opportunity for crime by interrupting encounters between perpetrators and targets.

Furthermore, RCT views criminals as individuals who act rationally, weighing the risks and benefits before committing a crime. Revitalising police patrols through jingle patrols and QR Code-based patrols increases the visibility and observability of police presence, thereby increasing the perceived risk of being caught. This has the potential to reduce perpetrators' intentions to commit crimes, especially in locations that are actively and regularly patrolled.

Thus, from a criminological perspective, the revitalisation of police patrols serves not only as a symbol of the officer's presence but also as an effective and measurable prevention mechanism. The integration of cultural and technological approaches in patrols strengthens the supervisory function while influencing the behaviour of criminals and the public's sense of security, making it relevant to the development of modern crime prevention strategies.

This section presents the research results obtained from field data processing. The findings are then logically interpreted and linked to relevant reference sources. This research is based on the patrol implementation that took place from January 1, 2026, to January 31, 2026, throughout Bandar Lampung City Police jurisdiction, including Sector Police, KSKP (Community Police Unit), and Sat Samapta (Community Security Unit). To facilitate understanding and analysis, the research results are presented in tables, graphs, figures, and charts, allowing readers to see the relationship between patrol implementation, community response, and the effectiveness of crime prevention as follows:

Patrol Activity Recapitulation

Based on the recapitulation of data from the Janji Jaga Patrol Dashboard system, Bandar Lampung City Police has cumulatively conducted 5,227 patrols, with 11,369 supporting photographs. From these activities, officers successfully garnered public participation from 16,923 respondents who provided assessments/surveys as presented in Table 1

Table 1. Summary of Patrol Activities by Police Sector in Bandar Lampung City Police Area for January 2026

No.	Police Sector	Total of Patrol Activity	Total of Documentation	Total of Respondents
1.	West Tanjung Karang	538	865	1358
2.	East Tanjung Karang	290	829	964
3.	South Teluk Betung	251	813	867
4.	North Teluk Betung	438	1198	1069
5.	East Teluk Betung	523	1095	1838
6.	Sukarame	542	1323	1797
7.	Kedaton	909	1913	3842
8.	Panjang	509	872	1880
9.	Kemiling	411	697	691
10.	Tanjung Senang	259	533	809
11.	KSKP	179	267	702
12.	SATSAMAPTA	378	964	1106
	GRAND TOTAL	5227	11369	16923

Source: Bandar Lampung City Police QR JANJI JAGA Patrol Dashboard (2026)

Table 1 shows the distribution of patrol activities across twelve (12) police sectors and units within the Bandar Lampung City Police area. Kedaton Police Sector recorded the highest performance with 909 patrols, 1913 documentations, and 3842 respondents. This high figure indicates a high police presence in the area, likely due to the Kedaton area's high population density and significant economic activity. Sukarame and Teluk Betung Timur Police Sectors also performed well with 542 and 523 patrols, respectively. Meanwhile, KSKP recorded the lowest number of patrols (179), which is understandable given the nature of the KSKP's duties, which focus more on transportation and traffic. The overall ratio of documentation to patrol activities reached 2,18:1, indicating that each patrol activity generated, on average, more than two photographic documents as evidence of implementation. This reflects strong accountability and transparency in task execution.

Public Perception Analysis (Public Satisfaction Index - IKM)

Public participation is a crucial indicator in measuring the success of *Janji Jaga* QR Patrol implementation, particularly in assessing the quality of presence, responsiveness, and humane approach of police personnel in the field. Based on survey statistics on the *Janji Jaga* QR Patrol Dashboard application, a total of 19,110 public respondents participated in providing assessments during the implementation period. This number demonstrates a very high level of public involvement and reflects increasing public awareness and trust in digital-based police service assessment mechanisms. Such participation was achieved through two mechanisms:

a. Direct participation through dialogic patrols, where officers actively invited residents at patrol locations to complete the survey after two-way interaction and communication (16,923 respondents).
b. Independent participation, where residents voluntarily scanned the QR Code and completed the survey without direct assistance from officers (2,187 respondents).

Table 2. Composition of Respondents in Janji Jaga QR Patrol Survey

Participation Mechanism	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Direct Participation (Dialogic Patrol)	16,923	88.56%
Independent Participation (QR Code Scanning)	2,187	11.44%
Total	19,110	100%

Source: Janji Jaga QR Patrol Dashboard, Bandar Lampung Police (January 2026)

The high number of independent respondents (11.44%) is a positive indicator that the public is not merely present as an object of service, but has actively played a role as a subject of monitoring and evaluation of Polri performance. This aligns with the spirit of Precision Polri Transformation, particularly in the aspects of transparency, accountability, and trust-based public service.

With a large number of respondents and a consistent distribution of ratings in the Very Good category (±89-90%), it can be concluded that *Janji Jaga* QR Patrol has successfully encouraged widespread public participation and served as an effective means of gathering public aspirations and perceptions regarding the performance of Bandar Lampung City Police.

Public Satisfaction Index (IKM)

The Public Satisfaction Index (IKM) is used to measure public perception of the quality of service and performance of Bandar Lampung City Police through the implementation of *Janji Jaga* QR Patrol. This IKM measurement refers to the principles of the Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 14 of 2017 concerning Guidelines for Compiling Public Satisfaction Surveys. Based on survey statistics on *the Janji Jaga* QR Patrol Dashboard application, with 19,110 respondents, the average scores for service elements were as follows:

Table 3. Results of Bandar Lampung City Police Public Satisfaction Index (PSI) Measurement

Service Element	Average Score	Conversion Value	Category
Patrol Intensity	4,47	89,40%	Very Good
Quick Response	4,45	89,00%	Very Good
Sense of Security	4,52	90,40%	Very Good
Public Satisfaction	4,47	89,40%	Very Good
Police Performance	4,52	90,40%	Very Good
Humane	4,95	99,00%	Very Good

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Service Element	Average Score	Conversion Value	Category
Average PSI		4.48	89.72%
Service Quality			Very Good (A)

Source: Janji Jaga QR Patrol Dashboard, Bandar Lampung Police January 2026

Overall, the average IKM score was 4.48, or 89.72%. Based on the service quality table issued by the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (Permenpan RB):

- **IKM Score: 89.72**
- **Service Quality: A**
- **Service Unit Performance: VERY GOOD**

Figure 1: Public Satisfaction Index (IKM) for Janji Jaga QR Patrol, Bandar Lampung City Police.
Source: QR JANJI JAGA Patrol Dashboard, Bandar Lampung Police Headquarters, January 2026.

Based on survey data from 19,110 respondents, the Public Satisfaction Index (IKM) for Bandar Lampung City Police achieved an average conversion rate of 89.72%, which, according to Ministerial Regulation No. 14 of 2017, falls within Service Quality A, categorised as Very Good. The highest scores were for the "Humanitarian" (score of 4.95), "Sense of Security," and "City Police Performance" (score of 4.52), indicating that the effectiveness of the police presence in the community is highly valued. Although all elements were in the green zone, the "Quick Response" aspect (score of 4.45) could be a top priority in the continuous improvement follow-up plan to maintain and enhance the quality of public services in the future.

Interpretation and Discussion

The highest score was for the "Humanitarian" element (score of 4.95 or 99%), indicating that the approach of Bandar Lampung City Police personnel is highly valued by the public. This aligns with the research findings of Wesley G. Skogan in his journal "Asymmetry in the Impact of Encounters with Police. Policing & Society (2006)," which states that police legitimacy is highly dependent on how officers interact with citizens, particularly in terms of politeness, procedural fairness, and respect for individual dignity (Skogan, 2006, pp. 99-126).

The "Sense of Security" and "City Police Performance" elements both scored 4.52 (90.40%), indicating that the effectiveness of police presence in the community is highly beneficial. The concept of "reassurance policing," developed by Innes in his journal "Reinventing Tradition? Reassurance, Neighbourhood Security and Policing (2004)," emphasises that a visible and accessible police presence can increase a community's sense of security even without a significant decrease in crime (Innes, 2004, pp. 151-171).

Although all elements were in the green zone (Very Good category), the "Quick Response" aspect scored the lowest at 4.45 (89%), which could be a top priority in a continuous improvement follow-up plan. According to Rob I. Mawby in his journal "Handbook of Policing (2008)," responsiveness is a critical element in modern police services, as it directly relates to public expectations regarding the speed and accuracy of handling complaints or incidents (Mawby, 2008, pp. 17-46).

The high average IKM (89.72%) indicates that the implementation of the "Janji Jaga" QR Patrol has successfully increased public trust in the police institution. This aligns with the concept of "police legitimacy" proposed by Tom R. Tyler in his book "Enhancing Police Legitimacy (2004), where public trust in the police is built through transparency, accountability, and the quality of interactions between officers and citizens (Tyler, 2004, pp. 84-99).

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion outlined, this study concludes that the revitalisation of police patrols through "*Janji Jaga* " QR Patrol in the jurisdiction of Bandar Lampung City Police from January 1-31, 2026, has proven effective in supporting crime prevention and increasing public trust. This conclusion is formulated based on three main analytical dimensions: normative-legal foundations, empirical findings, and theoretical perspectives in criminology as follows:

Normative-legal

Normatively, the implementation of police patrols has a strong constitutional and legal basis. Article 30 paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution mandates Polri as a state instrument responsible for maintaining security and public order. This mandate is reinforced in Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning Polri, Article 13 letter a and Article 14 paragraph (1) letter b, which explicitly emphasise the police's preventive function in maintaining public security and order, including through patrol mechanisms.

In an operational context, Polri Chief Regulation Number 1 of 2019 concerning the Standard Procedures for the Implementation of Police Patrols provides a technical framework and standard operating procedures

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(SOPs), governing the implementation of patrols as an instrument for crime prevention, early detection of potential security disturbances, and fostering relations between the police and the community. Furthermore, the implementation of "*Janji Jaga*" QR Patrol aligns with the spirit of the Precision Police Transformation, which prioritises transparency, accountability, and digital technology-based public service. Thus, patrols serve not only as post-incident repressive measures, but also as a proactive and measurable preventive strategy for maintaining regional security.

Empirical Data and Public Participation

Empirically, the implementation of "Janji Jaga" QR Patrol has demonstrated significant achievements. In January 2026, 5,227 patrol activities were recorded, supported by 11,369 photographic documents, reflecting accountability and transparency in task implementation. The ratio of documentation to patrol activities reached 2.18:1, indicating that each patrol activity generated an average of more than two documents.

The level of public engagement was recorded as very high, with 19,110 respondents participating, consisting of 16,923 respondents through direct dialogue mechanisms (88.56%) and 2,187 respondents through QR Code-based independent participation (11.44%). The high rate of independent participation indicates that the community does not only act as an object of service, but has played an active role as a subject of monitoring and evaluation of police performance. This is in line with the principle of community policing, which emphasises the importance of partnerships between the police and the community in maintaining mutual security (Peyton et al., 2019; Signori et al., 2023; Skogan, 2006).

Public Satisfaction Index (PSI) and Service Effectiveness

The score of the Public Satisfaction Index (PSI) is 89.72% (Grade A - Very Good), which is very good based on the Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform Number 14 of 2017. This indicates that the presence of patrols is perceived as effective in increasing a sense of security and positive perceptions of police performance. The "Humanistic" element scored the highest at 4.95 (99%), indicating that the public highly values the personnel's polite, fair, and respectful approach to citizen dignity. This aligns with Skogan's (2006) findings that police legitimacy is highly dependent on the quality of officer-citizen interactions (Weisburd et al., 2022; Wood et al., 2020).

The "Sense of Security" and "Police Performance" elements both scored 4.52 (90.40%), confirming the effectiveness of patrols in creating perceptions of security. The concept of reassurance policing developed by Innes (2004) emphasises that a visible and accessible police presence can increase a public sense of security even without significantly reducing crime. However, the "Quick Response" aspect recorded the lowest score (4.45 or 89%), indicating that although still in the Very Good category, officer responsiveness to complaints or incidents remains an area that requires continuous improvement. According to Mawby (2008), responsiveness is a critical element in modern police services because it is directly related to public expectations regarding speed and accuracy of handling (Basford et al., 2021; Bland et al., 2021; Ghaemmaghami et al., 2021).

Criminology Theoretical Perspective

From a criminological perspective, the findings of this study align with two major criminological theories: Routine Activity Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) and Rational Choice Theory (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Routine Activity Theory explains that a crime occurs when there is a convergence between a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. In this context, police patrols function as capable guardians, reducing the opportunity for crime through a regular and documented physical presence.

Meanwhile, Rational Choice Theory explains that criminals rationally calculate the potential benefits against the risk of being caught. The visible and documented presence of patrols through the QR Code system increases the perception of risk for potential perpetrators, thereby reducing their intention to commit crime.

Furthermore, digital documentation and public participation through QR Codes create a social surveillance mechanism that strengthens the deterrent effect. Thus, the integration of digital technology into conventional patrols not only improves operational efficiency but also strengthens the preventive function of patrols within the context of situational crime prevention developed by Clarke (1997).

Digital Technology Innovation and Accountability

The integration of QR Code technology into conventional patrols is an adaptive and relevant innovation in addressing urban security challenges in the digital age. This system not only facilitates real-time documentation and verification but also opens up space for public participation in monitoring and evaluating police performance. This aligns with the concept of police legitimacy proposed by Tyler (2004), where public trust in the police is built through transparency, accountability, and quality interactions. The QR Code mechanism, which allows the public to provide direct assessments, reflects the police institution's commitment to the principles of responsive governance and citizen-centric policing (Peyton et al., 2019; Weisburd et al., 2022; Wood et al., 2020).

Based on the five dimensions above, it can be concluded that "*Janji Jaga*" QR Patrol is not merely a procedural innovation, but rather a comprehensive, accountable, and evidence-based preventive strategy. This patrol model successfully integrates a strong legal foundation, measurable empirical results, theoretical support from criminology, and active community participation into a coherent system. Going forward, the sustainability and development of this model require strengthening rapid-response capacity, replicating good practices across all functional units, and developing a feedback-loop mechanism to ensure systematic, measurable follow-up on survey results, thereby supporting the continued optimisation of the preventive patrol function in maintaining public order and security (Dau et al., 2023; Khalfa et al., 2024).

SUGGESTION

Based on the research results, findings, and conclusions outlined, the researcher proposes several recommendations addressed to various stakeholders regarding the development and sustainability of "*Janji Jaga*" QR Patrol as a digital technology-based preventive policing model. These recommendations were formulated by considering policy, operational, capacity development, and opportunities for further research.

For Bandar Lampung City Police and Police Institutions

Strengthening Digital Systems and Quick Response

It is recommended that the "*Janji Jaga*" QR Patrol model continue to be developed as an integral part of a preventive police strategy that adapts to technological developments and the dynamics of community needs. Given that the quick response aspect recorded the lowest score in the Public Satisfaction Index (4.45 or 89%), strengthening the digital system in the responsiveness dimension needs to be a top priority. Concrete efforts that can be taken include:

1) optimising real-time monitoring through an operational dashboard integrated with the public reporting system;
2) increasing personnel capacity through crisis communication and incident management training;
3) integration with online public complaint systems (such as the Presisi app or e-complaint channel) to expedite report follow-up and strengthen the feedback loop between the public and the police.

Replication and Standardisation of the Digital Patrol Model

The "*Janji Jaga*" QR Patrol model, which has proven effective in increasing public trust and security perceptions, can be replicated in other areas under the coordination of Lampung Regional Police and Polri Headquarters. This replication needs to be accompanied by adjustments to local social, geographic, and demographic characteristics, and supported by the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) to ensure consistent implementation. Furthermore, the development of standard training modules for personnel conducting patrols is essential.

Strengthening Public Participation and Transparency

The high level of independent community participation (11.44% of total respondents) indicates significant potential for strengthening public oversight of police performance. Therefore, it is recommended to:

1) expand public awareness of the QR Code mechanism through public campaigns, social media, and collaboration with community leaders;
2) provide a public dashboard that transparently displays patrol statistics, including the number of activities, regional distribution, and community satisfaction survey results;
3) establish a public consultation forum (community forum) that involves community representatives in periodic evaluations of patrol implementation.

For Policymakers and Local Governments

Integration of Digital Patrols in Regional Security Policies

The findings of this study can serve as a basis for local governments to integrate digital patrol models into security and public order (*Kamtibmas*) policies at the provincial and district/city levels. This integration can be realised through the development of Regional Regulations (*Perda*) or Governor/Regent/Mayor Regulations that encourage collaboration between the police, local governments, and the community in technology-based security oversight. Budget support from the Regional Budget (APBD) for technological infrastructure procurement, personnel training, and public campaigns is also key to the program's sustainability.

Development of Smart City and Safe City Ecosystems

The "*Janji Jaga*" QR Code Patrol Model has the potential to be integrated into smart city and safe city ecosystems currently being developed in various regions. This integration could include synchronising patrol data with CCTV systems, emergency services (such as 112 or 110), and existing e-government platforms. Thus, police patrols would function not only as a preventive instrument but also as part of an integrated and responsive urban security system.

For Researchers and Academics

Further Research with an Experimental Approach

Further research could be conducted by extending the observation period and using an experimental or quasi-experimental design to compare crime rates before and after the implementation of QR Code-based patrols. Interrupted time series analysis or difference-in-differences approaches could be used to measure the causal impact of patrols on crime reduction, allowing for a more comprehensive assessment of their preventive effectiveness based on robust empirical evidence.

Deeper Quantitative Analysis

A more in-depth quantitative approach, such as correlation and regression analysis between patrol intensity (number of activities, frequency, and distribution) and trends in public order disturbances (crime rates, public reports, or fear of crime), can enrich the empirical findings and provide data-based recommendations for optimising patrol resource allocation. Furthermore, longitudinal studies tracking changes in public perceptions of the police over the long term will provide a deeper understanding of the impact of patrols on police legitimacy.

Regional Comparative Studies

Comparative research comparing the implementation of digital patrols in various regions with different social, economic, and geographic characteristics will provide insight into the contextual factors that influence patrol effectiveness. Such studies can identify best practices and lessons learned that can be adapted by police institutions in various regions.

Exploration of Social and Psychological Dimensions

Qualitative research exploring social and psychological dimensions, such as public perceptions of surveillance technology, levels of trust in the police, and the dynamics of interactions between officers and residents in the context of dialogic patrols, can complement the quantitative findings in this study. A mixed-methods approach combining surveys, in-depth interviews, and participant observation will provide a holistic understanding of the complexities of police-community relations in the digital age.

For the Community

The public is expected to continue to actively participate in providing assessments and feedback on police patrol performance through QR Code mechanisms or other digital platforms. High public participation not only strengthens police accountability but also contributes to the creation of a safe and orderly environment through collaborative social surveillance. Furthermore, the public needs to understand that data provided through surveys will be used to improve services, ensuring transparency and trust are the foundations of a healthy relationship between the police and the community.

Overall, the integration of conventional and digital patrols oriented towards public participation has been proven to strengthen police transparency, accountability, and legitimacy. The "*Janji Jaga*" QR Patrol model has the potential to become a best practice for transforming trust-based public services, particularly within the Precision Police Transformation, which prioritises professionalism, accountability, and closeness to the community. With the support of appropriate policies, institutional commitment, and active community participation, this model can be a catalyst for the creation of sustainable security and responsive police services in the digital era.

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Heartfelt gratitude is also extended to all residents of Bandar Lampung City who actively participated in completing the public satisfaction survey, both through the dialogic patrol mechanism and through independent QR Code-based participation. Constructive feedback, criticism, and suggestions provided by the public are an important part of evaluating police performance and continuously improving public services. This active community participation reflects the spirit of cooperation in maintaining security and public order.

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Conflict Archaeology-Based Community Policing for Post-Conflict Ambon

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Abstract

The communal conflict in Ambon City between 1999 and 2002 produced lasting social, cultural, and spatial impacts that continue to shape local communities. Beyond casualties and physical destruction, the conflict generated material remains that became embedded in the post-conflict social landscape, actively shaping collective memory and security perceptions. This article develops a conceptual framework that integrates conflict archaeology, collective memory theory, and community policing paradigms into a unified model by defining one core construct from each field and stating five explicit propositions that link them. Using theoretical synthesis and a structured synthesis of Scopus- and Web of Science-indexed sources, supplemented by Google Scholar results, books, official reports, and policy documents, it constructs a conceptual argument for the relevance of conflict material remains as a strategic knowledge resource for community-based security management. The theoretical synthesis demonstrates that conflict material remains, including socially segregated areas, historical conflict sites, peace monuments, and post-conflict public spaces, function as repositories and transmitters of collective memory that are theorised to shape security perceptions and intergroup relations. By integrating Lefebvre's spatial triad, Nora's concept of lieux de mémoire, and Halbwachs's social frameworks of memory, this article develops the Conflict Archaeology-Based Community Policing Model as an original conceptual framework. The article calls for empirical testing of the model in Indonesian post-conflict regions, including Ambon, Poso, and Aceh.

Keywords: conflict archaeology, collective memory, community policing, public security, Ambon, post-conflict society

INTRODUCTION

The 1999-2002 communal conflict in Ambon City and the Maluku region left an unresolved post-conflict problem: material traces of the violence remain embedded in the city's social landscape and continue to shape how residents interpret security today. This conflict was one of the conflicts with the most profound effects on social life in Indonesia. This conflict not only resulted in thousands of casualties and material losses, but also left social, cultural, and material traces that can still be found today (Bertrand, 2004; Braithwaite et al., 2010).

The Ambon conflict is complex because it involves many interacting factors: tensions over religious identity, local political dynamics, weak security controls during the reform transition, and conflict narratives that reinforce social segregation. Even when armed conflict ends, its social and psychological impacts can still be felt decades later. The effects of conflict may persist through collective memory, symbolic practices, and conflict-marked spaces (Bartels, 2003; Adam, 2010).

Communal conflicts of the kind documented in Ambon often produce material remains that can serve as important sources of information, although the character of these traces varies: some remain visible, while others are dispersed, altered, or deliberately erased: damaged buildings, places of worship that serve as symbols of conflict or peace, memorials to victims, former security posts, spaces of social segregation, and artifacts related to communities' experiences during the conflict (Schofield, 2005; Saunders, 2012). Attention to the material dimensions of conflict has developed within a field of study known as conflict archaeology, a field that studies the relationship between conflict, violence, and material remains, both past and contemporary.

From a conflict archaeology perspective, the materiality of conflict is understood as part of a social process that continues to influence how communities understand identity, trauma, and intergroup relations. A building that was once the target of an attack holds symbolic meaning that can shape people's perceptions of security and social relations. Analysing the material remains of conflict can identify contested spaces, patterns of segregation, and competing memories that matter for policing (Moshenska, 2008; Gonzalez-Ruibal, 2018).

Officers deployed in areas such as Ambon may work in spaces where historical meaning affects trust, communication, and escalation risk. The modern policing paradigm is shifting from an approach oriented solely toward law enforcement to a more participatory one. Community policing positions the community as a strategic partner for the police in identifying security issues and building a safe and sustainable environment (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990; Skogan, 2006). In post-conflict areas, understanding the history of conflict and the community's collective memory is crucial, certain symbols and spaces often retain high social sensitivity and, if ignored, have the potential to undermine the effectiveness of security management.

This article examines how documented conflict sites and collective memories could inform community policing in Ambon. By integrating the perspectives of conflict archaeology, collective memory, and community policing, this article proposes a conceptual model, explains its components, and sets out propositions for later empirical testing for utilising conflict legacies in efforts to prevent social conflict and strengthen community security. This research contributes theoretically by integrating conflict archaeology, collective memory theory, and community policing into one framework. It also has practical potential in helping police agencies and local governments design security strategies that are more sensitive to the historical context and local social dynamics. As a long-term hypothesis rather than an expected outcome, the proposed approach may contribute to more inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding, in the sense described by Lederach (1997), if intermediate conditions hold, including sustained community-police contact, consistent application of the model's ethical safeguards, and the absence of new triggering incidents in Ambon City and other post-conflict areas in Indonesia.

Based on this background, this study seeks to answer several questions: (1) What types of conflict-related material remains are documented in the existing literature on the Ambon conflict, and how are these remains theorised to relate to collective memory and community policing? (2) What is the relationship between material remnants of conflict and the formation and maintenance of collective community memory, according to the reviewed literature? (3) What is the potential for utilising a conflict archaeology approach to support the implementation of community policing in post-conflict areas? (4) How can a conceptual model of community policing based on conflict archaeology be formulated to support social conflict prevention, with sustainable peacebuilding treated as a long-term hypothesis, in Ambon City?

This study aims to: (1) synthesise the categories of material remnants of conflict documented in the existing literature on Ambon City; (2) analyze the relationship between material remnants of conflict and the formation of collective community memory; (3) analyze the relevance and potential of utilizing a conflict archaeology approach to support the implementation of community policing; (4) formulate a Community Policing Model Based on Conflict Archaeology; and (5) provide academic and practical recommendations for the development of community-based security policies in post-conflict areas.

This research has dual significance. Academically, it broadens the scope of studies on the archaeology of conflict in Indonesia and opens an interdisciplinary dialogue between archaeology, social sciences, and police science, which have previously developed separately. It also strengthens the study of collective memory in the context of contemporary social conflict in Indonesia, adding an analytical dimension that has received little attention in the literature on post-conflict in Southeast Asia. Practically, this research provides input for the development of community policing strategies that are more contextual and sensitive to local history, particularly for the Indonesian National Police (Polri) in managing security in areas experiencing communal conflict. Thus, this research is expected to make a tangible contribution to sustainable peacebuilding efforts in Indonesia.

Conflict archaeology is a branch of archaeological study that has developed rapidly since the late 20th century in response to increasing academic attention to war, violence, social trauma, and the long-term impact of conflict on society. Unlike traditional archaeology, which generally focuses on past societies, conflict archaeology focuses on various forms of human conflict and the material traces they leave behind, both in ancient and historical periods, as well as contemporary conflicts.

John Schofield, in his work "Combat Archaeology" (2005), asserts that modern conflict produces various forms of materiality that have historical, social, and political value. Methodologically, this approach follows the broader archaeological process described by Hodder (1999), applied here to sites of communal violence rather than to earlier historical periods. Nicholas J. Saunders introduced the concept of "Modern Conflict Archaeology," which argues that 20th- and 21st-century conflicts are characterised by their involvement of modern technology, national identity, political ideology, and mass violence that has a broad impact on civil society. McAtackney's (2014) study of Long Kesh/Maze Prison illustrates how contested sites can themselves become objects of ongoing political dispute long after a conflict formally ends. One of the key characteristics of conflict archaeology is its attention to the concept of materiality: objects produced by conflict are understood as social agents capable of storing, reproducing, and transmitting social meaning. A building damaged by conflict not only reflects the violent event but can also become a symbol of trauma, group identity, or reconciliation.

Conflict archaeology also pays attention to the concept of landscape, various elements such as battle zones, evacuation routes, social segregation areas, security posts, and memorial monuments that shape specific spatial configurations. In the Indonesian context, the application of conflict archaeology remains relatively limited compared to similar studies in Europe and North America, despite Indonesia's numerous sites bearing traces of social, political, and military conflict. This gap points to a specific unresolved question: how documented conflict-related material remains and collective memory processes can be systematically incorporated into community-policing practice in post-conflict Ambon.

The concept of collective memory refers to the shared memories held, maintained, and passed down by a social group. In the context of social conflict, collective memory becomes a crucial element because experiences of violence, suffering, and reconciliation often persist in the group's consciousness even after the conflict has formally ended.

Maurice Halbwachs, in his work "On Collective Memory," argues that human memory is never entirely individual because the process of remembering always occurs within a specific social framework (social frameworks of memory). From Halbwachs' perspective, space plays a crucial role in the formation and maintenance of collective memory: buildings, roads, monuments, places of worship, and residential areas serve as markers that help communities maintain connections with their past.

Pierre Nora developed the concept of lieux de mémoire, or "memory sites", places that serve as repositories of a community's collective memory. Memory sites provide a way to analyse how physical places become carriers of contested or reconciliatory narratives, since violent events often leave behind spaces with strong symbolic meaning for communities. Jan Assmann introduced the concept of cultural memory, knowledge of the past preserved through material symbols, rituals, monuments, documents, and various other forms of cultural representation.

Henri Lefebvre, in his work, "The Production of Space," argued that space is a social product formed through the interaction of social practices, symbolic representations, and everyday experiences. Space always contains political and ideological dimensions because it reflects the power relations that develop within society. In post-conflict contexts, certain spaces can become symbols of domination, segregation, trauma, or reconciliation, depending on how society interprets them. In Ambon City, the 1999-2002 communal conflict left various material traces that can still be found in the cityscape, from peace monuments and social segregation areas to spaces with specific historical significance for the community (Adam, 2010; Al Qurtuby, 2016).

Community Policing

Partnership-based local problem-solving is the feature of community policing most relevant here. It is a modern policing paradigm, emerging as a response to the limitations of the traditional policing model, which overemphasised repressive law enforcement. This paradigm developed in the 1970s and 1980s, when various studies showed that increasing the number of police personnel did not always translate directly to decreased crime rates or increased public sense of security (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990; Skolnick & Bayley, 1988).

Community policing can be defined as a policing strategy that emphasises partnerships between the police and the community in identifying, analysing, and resolving various security issues. The police are no longer viewed solely as law enforcement officers, but rather as facilitators, mediators, and community partners in creating sustainable security. According to Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990), there are three main elements in community policing: partnership, problem-solving, and organisational transformation, building on the earlier strategic shift documented by Kelling and Moore (1988) away from purely reactive, incident-driven policing.

Herman Goldstein, through his concept of Problem-Oriented Policing (POP), argues that the police need to understand the root causes of social problems that lead to security disturbances. Policing effectiveness depends heavily on the ability of officers to thoroughly identify problems, analyse their causes, and design solutions tailored to the local characteristics of the community. In the context of communities experiencing social conflict, community policing may be particularly useful, since conflict often leaves trauma, distrust, social segregation, and various forms of vulnerability that complicate conventional enforcement and that also hinder the reconciliation process. Therefore, a security approach that relies solely on law enforcement tends to be less effective in building long-term stability. Community policing offers a more inclusive approach through dialogue, mediation, trust-building, and active community involvement (Bayley, 2006; Denney & Jenkins, 2013). In practice, however, community-policing programmes can reproduce existing local power imbalances or exclude less visible groups; genuine inclusivity requires deliberate safeguards such as targeted outreach to marginalised groups and rotating community representation.

In Indonesia, the concept of community policing has gained traction since the post-1998 security sector reforms. The Indonesian National Police (Polri) developed the concept of Community Policing (Polmas) as a local adaptation of this paradigm (Polri, 2008). Polmas is implemented through Bhabinkamtibmas officers, who serve as the front line of police-community engagement at the village and sub-district levels, part of the broader shift toward civilian-oriented policing discussed by Rahardjo (2007) in the Indonesian reform context.

Literature Map and Research Gaps

Studies on the archaeology of conflict, collective memory, and community policing have grown significantly in the past two decades, but each field has generally developed separately. A search of the literature indexed in Scopus and Web of Science between 2019 and 2024, as a recent-literature scan nested within the broader

2000-2024 synthesis window described in Section 3.2, which also draws on earlier foundational theoretical texts (Lefebvre, Halbwachs, Nora), identified several relevant but unintegrated groups of studies.

First, studies on the archaeology of contemporary conflict. Gonzalez-Ruibal and Vila (2019) demonstrate how the materiality of conflict functions as an active social agent that continues to shape post-violence community relations. In Southeast Asia, Tjoa-Bonatz (2021) explores the material traces of ethnic conflict in Myanmar, demonstrating the potential of archaeological studies in understanding post-conflict spatial segregation. However, these studies do not link archaeological findings to security or policing policies.

Second, studies on collective memory and post-conflict security. Vinitzky-Seroussi and Teeger (2020) demonstrated that collective memory of conflict is associated with community perceptions of security, particularly through the mechanism of "mnemonic battles" that occur in public spaces. Aronson and Subotic (2022) analysed the relationship between memory politics and security stability in post-conflict societies. These studies indicate that conflict-marked spaces and transmitted memories may continue to shape security perceptions, but have not yet operationalised it within a community-based policing framework.

Third, studies of community policing in post-conflict Southeast Asia. Denney and Domingo (2021) concluded that the effectiveness of community policing programs depends heavily on the extent to which police officers understand the historical context and trauma of the communities they serve. In Indonesia, Setiawan and Darmawan (2023) identified a gap between formal policies and field practices of community policing, particularly related to personnel's limited understanding of local history.

Based on the literature review above, significant conceptual and methodological gaps exist. The literature reviewed here shows limited integration of a conflict archaeology approach as an instrument for developing community policing strategies in areas affected by interreligious communal conflict, referring here to communal violence with a religious-identity dimension of the kind documented for Ambon and Maluku between 1999 and 2002, particularly in the Indonesian context. Existing studies are generally partial: conflict archaeology is studied separately from security policy, collective memory is discussed independently of policing strategies, and community policing is developed without an adequate methodological basis for systematically understanding the material landscape of the conflict. This research addresses this gap by proposing an integrative framework that bridges these three areas using Ambon City as an illustrative context.

Framework

This research starts from the assumption that social conflict does not end when physical violence ceases. In Ambon City, the 1999-2002 communal conflict shaped a social landscape that still harbours various symbols, spaces, and artefacts associated with the experience of conflict. These material remains become part of community life and play a role in shaping how people understand history, group identity, and their perceptions of security and peace.

The relationship between the material remains of the conflict and collective memory is not automatic: it depends on who interprets the sites (residents, religious and customary leaders, and Bhabinkamtibmas officers), the channels through which interpretations are transmitted (oral narrative, commemorative ritual, and everyday spatial avoidance or use), and the conditions under which these interpretations become security-relevant (proximity to unresolved grievance, recurrence of triggering events, and limited intergroup contact). Under these conditions, the relationship may influence community perceptions of security. Perceptions of security are shaped not only by objective conditions such as crime rates but also by historical experiences and social memory. In post-conflict areas, certain spaces often hold strong symbolic meaning, influencing how communities perceive other groups and respond to potential threats.

Framework Model: Ambon Communal Conflict 1999-2002 → Material Remnants of the Conflict (damaged buildings, peace monuments, memorial sites, former security posts, social segregation spaces) ↔ Collective Community Memory (conflict memories, social trauma, group identity, peace narratives) ↔ Perceptions of Security and Social Relations (level of social trust, threat perceptions, inter-community interactions) ↔ Community Policing Approach (police-community partnerships, sensitive space mapping, early conflict detection, social mediation) → Strengthening Sustainable Peace and Security (long-term hypothesis). The double-headed arrows indicate feedback: community-policing practice can itself reshape collective memory and the meaning of material remains, not only the reverse. Each link is moderated by contextual factors, including time elapsed since the conflict, generational composition, quality of intergroup contact, and the police's own conduct history.

To integrate these three literatures rather than merely place them side by side, this article defines one core construct from each field and states the mechanism linking it to the next. From conflict archaeology, the core construct is material remains as evidence: physical traces of the conflict that store and transmit information not always captured in official records. From collective memory theory, the core construct is the social transmission of meaning, following Halbwachs's social frameworks of memory: memory is sustained through ongoing social interaction rather than individual recall alone. From community policing, the core construct is partnership-based local problem-solving: security is produced jointly by police and community rather than by police acting alone. The mechanism linking the first two constructs is interpretation: material remains acquire security-relevant meaning only when residents, religious and customary leaders, or police interpret them through social frameworks of memory. The mechanism linking the second two constructs is translation: socially framed memory becomes actionable for policing only when it is deliberately incorporated into partnership-based practice, rather than left to individual officers' informal knowledge.

On this basis, the synthesis yields five explicit propositions, stated in testable form for future empirical validation rather than as findings already established: P1 - Conflict-related material remains are theorised to function as repositories of collective memory (supported by Adam, 2010; Al Qurtuby, 2016; qualified by the absence of Ambon-specific measurement studies). P2 - The security-relevant meaning of material remains depends on active interpretation by residents, leaders, and police, not on the presence of the remains alone (supported by Halbwachs, 1992; Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2020). P3 - Collective memory of conflict may shape community perceptions of security, moderated by generational distance, community affiliation, and recent intergroup contact (supported by Assmann, 2011; Olick, 2021; challenged by the absence of comparative incident data). P4 - Formalising conflict-archaeology knowledge into community-policing practice can strengthen officers' contextual understanding, but only where accompanied by adequate training and ethical safeguards (supported by Setiawan & Darmawan, 2023; Denney & Domingo, 2021). P5 - Public spaces that undergo inclusive reconstruction may create opportunities for cross-community contact, without this being read as proof of achieved reconciliation (supported by Schulze, 2021; qualified by the absence of Ambon-specific outcome evidence). These five propositions are the basis for the model developed in Section 5.3 and the research agenda set out in Section 6.3.

Conceptual Approach and Study Design

This article uses a conceptual research approach, which aims to develop a new theoretical framework through the synthesis and integration of concepts from different disciplines. This approach was chosen because the research does not aim to generate empirical findings from primary data, but rather to build a coherent conceptual argument that can be tested through further empirical research (Jaakkola, 2020; MacInnis, 2011). Consistent with this design, every research question, objective, results statement, and conclusion in this article is framed as synthesis and proposition-building; empirical validation of the propositions is treated throughout as future work rather than as already accomplished. A conceptual design fits this question because the relevant literatures have not previously been integrated; the resulting framework is evaluated by its internal coherence, its fit with the reviewed evidence, and the testability of its propositions. More broadly, conceptual research of this kind is a recognised tradition in the social sciences when it identifies gaps in the literature, integrates previously uncombined perspectives, and proposes new models that open a future research agenda.

Methodologically, this article employs a theoretical synthesis design that integrates three major theoretical frameworks, conflict archaeology, collective memory theory, and the community policing paradigm, into a single, unified conceptual model. Ambon City was used as an illustrative context, selected because it is documented in peer-reviewed and official sources directly relevant to the three core constructs defined in Section 2.5, including sources that report complicating or contrary evidence rather than only supportive examples based on the rich academic literature available on the 1999-2002 communal conflict, rather than as an empirical case study site.

The choice to use Ambon as an illustrative context, rather than as an empirical study site, rests on two points. First, Ambon is analytically useful: the synthesis draws on approximately twenty Ambon-specific sources spanning political science, anthropology, conflict studies, and policing studies, a corpus judged adequate for conceptual model-building though not for empirical generalisation, in contrast with other Indonesian post-conflict regions where academic documentation remains more limited. Second, this choice places a clear limit on transferability: the proposed model is not unique to Ambon, but elements of it, particularly the religious-identity segregation pattern described in Section 4.1, are likely specific to Ambon rather than automatically generalisable to other post-conflict settings such as Poso or Aceh.

Data Sources and Literature Synthesis Procedure

The analysis used Scopus- and Web of Science-indexed journal articles, supplemented by Google Scholar, books, international reports, and policy documents across conflict archaeology, collective memory, social space and security perceptions, and community policing in post-conflict settings. A documented search conducted in June 2025 used the string ("conflict archaeology" OR "collective memory" OR "lieux de mémoire") AND ("community polic*" OR "polmas" OR "post-conflict") AND (Ambon OR Maluku OR Indonesia), limited to 2000-2024. It identified 214 records; after 38 duplicates were removed, 176 titles and abstracts were screened, 55 full texts were reviewed, and 47 sources were ultimately cited. Retained sources were coded by construct, proposed mechanism, empirical or theoretical basis, and context. Contradictory evidence was retained rather than discarded, and each proposition was checked against at least two independent sources from different disciplines, while evidence gaps were carried forward as limitations.

Conceptual Analysis Framework

The conceptual analysis framework in this article follows three analytical steps, each producing a distinct output. First, cross-disciplinary conceptual analysis: identifying intersections between conflict archaeology (materiality, conflict landscapes), collective memory theory (social frameworks, memory sites, cultural memory), and community policing (partnerships, problem-solving, social trust), which produced the three core constructs and their linking mechanisms set out in Section 2.5. Second, conceptual proposition elaboration: developing the five numbered propositions (P1-P5) that explain the mechanisms of the relationship between material remains of conflict, collective memory formation, security perceptions, and community policing effectiveness. Third, model construction: developing a proposed implementation sequence, presented in five stages, followed by identifying propositions to be verified in subsequent fieldwork (MacInnis, 2011; Jaakkola, 2020).

DISCUSSION

Typology of Conflict Material Remains: Literature-Based Analysis

The synthesis identifies four recurring types of conflict-related material remains in Ambon: areas of social segregation, historical conflict sites, peace monuments or memorials, and post-conflict public spaces. These categories should not be treated as direct measures of present-day hostility or reconciliation. Rather, they are material contexts through which social meanings and memories may be reproduced, contested, or transformed. Conflict archaeology shows that material traces can remain active in social landscapes after violence ends (Schofield, 2005; Gonzalez-Ruibal, 2018), while spatial theory explains how the use and representation of space contribute to the production of social relations (Lefebvre, 1991). In Ambon, scholarship documents the persistence of post-conflict segregation alongside peace-building practices and shared institutions (Adam, 2010; Al Qurtuby, 2016; Schulze, 2021). Read together, these sources support the argument that material remains are useful as contextual knowledge for community policing because they can help officers identify locations where historical meaning may influence trust, communication, and escalation risk. They do not, by themselves, prove how every resident interprets a site.

Dynamics of Collective Memory and Perceptions of Security Post-Conflict

Collective memory in Ambon is complex and dynamic rather than a uniform inheritance. Direct survivors may connect particular sites with trauma or displacement, while younger generations may encounter the conflict through family narratives, schools, media, commemorations, and everyday spatial practices. Memory studies therefore caution against assuming that material traces produce the same meaning for all groups (Assmann, 2011; Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2020). Ambon research also shows that local peace values and institutions, including Pela Gandong, Baku Bae, and the broader language of Orang Basudara, can mediate how conflict memories are interpreted and used in intergroup relations (Braithwaite et al., 2010; Al Qurtuby, 2016; Schulze, 2021). For policing, the relevant implication is conditional: historical memory may shape security perceptions, willingness to engage with officers, or sensitivity to particular locations, but those effects cannot be inferred mechanically from the presence of a memorial, segregated neighbourhood, or former conflict site. Community-policing strategies should therefore combine knowledge of conflict landscapes with current community consultation and locally validated risk assessment.

Transformation of Conflict Spaces into Peaceful Spaces

Changes in the meaning of post-conflict space create opportunities for community policing. Markets located near community boundaries can become recurring sites of cross-group economic interaction, while shared cultural activities, public events, and peace-oriented commemorations can modify the symbolic meaning of locations formerly associated with conflict. Such changes do not demonstrate that reconciliation is complete, but they show that social space is continually produced through present practices as well as historical memory (Lefebvre, 1991; Nora, 1989). Studies of Ambon describe the gradual rebuilding of intercommunity interaction and local peace infrastructures after the conflict (Al Qurtuby, 2016; Schulze, 2021). Police can use this contextual knowledge to select meeting places, design joint patrol or dialogue activities, anticipate symbolic sensitivities, and identify community actors able to support de-escalation. The proposed model therefore treats post-conflict sites as potential entry points for engagement, not as deterministic indicators of either danger or harmony. Any operational use should be validated through contemporary community input and reviewed as local conditions change.

Intersection of Conflict Archaeology and Community Policing: A Conceptual Synthesis

A synthesis of the literature on community policing in post-conflict Southeast Asia suggests that conflict archaeology has the potential to strengthen community-based policing practices. Setiawan and Darmawan (2023) documented that Bhabinkamtibmas officers in post-conflict Indonesia intuitively developed a sensitivity to local history, but without a systematic methodological framework. Denney and Domingo (2021) demonstrated a similar pattern in Timor-Leste and the Southern Philippines, where the effectiveness of community policing depended heavily on officers' understanding of the historical context and trauma of the communities they served.

Conceptually, police officers working in post-conflict areas require a systematic mechanism to identify areas of high historical sensitivity. Prior experiences with violence and security institutions may shape how police-community communication unfolds in post-conflict contexts: every interaction occurs within a mnemonic landscape shaped by past experiences of violence and ongoing reconciliation processes (Halbwachs, 1992; Vinitzky-Seroussi & Teeger, 2020).

A conceptual gap identified in the literature is the absence of systematic mechanisms that allow knowledge of the conflict landscape to be integrated into the planning and implementation of formal security strategies. This absence creates conditions in which policing effectiveness relies too heavily on the personal knowledge of officers and is vulnerable to fragmentation during personnel rotations (Setiawan & Darmawan, 2023; Denney & Domingo, 2021). This is the practical gap that motivates the model developed in Section 5.3, which specifies how such knowledge could be stored, transferred, and used.

In this context, conflict archaeology provides a crucial source of knowledge for the police to identify sensitive spaces, understand local social dynamics, and strengthen community-based conflict prevention strategies. This knowledge transfer mechanism into the community policing system should be formalised by Polri's training command (Lemdiklat Polri) as a documented knowledge base, entered into pre-deployment briefings and local risk-assessment planning for officers posted to post-conflict areas.

One important implication of this conceptual synthesis is the need to reformulate the training of police officers serving in post-conflict areas. In the existing police education and training system, attention to the historical and material dimensions of conflict remains very limited. In the specific post-conflict cases documented by Setiawan and Darmawan (2023), Bhabinkamtibmas training emphasised technical policing skills and regulatory mastery, while knowledge of local conflict history, collective memory, and the dynamics of post-conflict social spaces was reported as not systematically developed in the cases studied (Setiawan & Darmawan, 2023). This suggests a possible gap between what is required by the post-conflict regional context and the capacities of officers serving in the field, though confirming this at a national level would require broader documentation such as curriculum records or official training standards.

Historical memories of police conduct during the conflict may affect present institutional trust. In areas that have experienced communal conflict, police institutions are often burdened by negative public perceptions related to their role and position during the conflict. Some communities may have memories of security forces' failures or lack of impartiality during the conflict, which in turn has shaped historical distrust of the police institution. By understanding these historical dimensions in depth, including the specific events that have left their mark on the community's collective memory, police can develop a more proactive approach to rebuilding public trust. This process requires institutional political will together with specific capacities: source evaluation, trauma-sensitive interviewing, participatory mapping, and local-language knowledge to understand and respond to the complex landscape of community memory.

Conflict Remnants as a Source of Security Knowledge

The conceptual synthesis indicates that the material remnants of the conflict in Ambon City cannot be understood solely as historical relics that record past events. Various forms of conflict materiality, social segregation zones, peace monuments, victim memorial sites, and places of worship that were once targets of violence, are part of the social landscape that continues to interact with communities today. This finding aligns with the archaeological perspective of conflict, which positions the materiality of conflict as part of ongoing social processes.

Material remains can preserve evidence and meanings that are often not fully documented in official archives. This concept of "material archives" resonates with Nora's notion of memory sites as compensation for the loss of living memory: when communities can no longer rely on direct interpersonal transmission of memories, physical materiality takes over the function of storing and recalling those memories (Erll, 2020). This resembles the broader pattern of "dark heritage" informing transitional justice described by Badcock (2022) in Northern Ireland and South Africa. Therefore, conflict remains can be viewed as a security knowledge resource that provides information about sensitive spaces, patterns of social segregation, collective community memory, and potential conflict vulnerabilities.

When police officers understand that an area has a history of conflict and that the memory of that history remains alive in the community's consciousness, they can develop more sensitive and effective approaches. In situations where social tensions appear to be triggered by seemingly minor issues, understanding the historical background of the area can help officers understand why these tensions may escalate quickly; the specific intervention practices best suited to each situation remain to be developed and evaluated rather than already established.

From a practical policing perspective, understanding the material remains of conflict also has important implications for planning personnel deployment and determining policing priorities. Areas with a history of conflict and a strong collective memory tend to require a different policing approach than areas relatively free from the burden of historical violence. Personnel assigned to these areas need to have a sufficient understanding of local social dynamics, including knowledge of key figures trusted by each community, how patterns of intercommunity relations develop after conflict, and which spaces hold special symbolic meaning for the community. Some competencies, such as legal procedure and communication protocols, are well suited to formal training at educational centres, while contextual interpretation of local narratives requires direct field engagement; the two are proposed to be combined through mentored postings and later assessed jointly through supervisor review and community feedback.

Conflict Archaeology as an Instrument for Community Policing

Community policing is fundamentally built on the assumption that community security cannot be achieved solely through repressive measures. Security requires community engagement, trust-building, and a deep understanding of local social and cultural characteristics. As a conceptual inference drawn from adjacent fields, Schofield (2005) and Gonzalez-Ruibal (2018) on conflict materiality, Setiawan and Darmawan (2023) and Denney and Domingo (2021) on community policing in post-conflict settings, a conflict archaeology approach appears to have strong relevance to community policing principles through its ability to generate information about locations with high social sensitivity, symbols with special meaning for specific groups, and historical narratives that continue to influence inter-community relations.

The use of conflict archaeology as a community policing instrument can also strengthen institutional legitimacy and public trust in the police institution. From Halbwachs' perspective, social trust between residents and institutions is a product of the alignment of the "social frameworks" held by both parties. When police officers demonstrate an understanding of the community's memory framework, including who they trust, what they fear, and which spaces they consider historically significant, they move toward sharing the same social framework as residents, although trust also depends on impartiality, officer conduct, the representativeness of the police force, and the community's own historical experience with police, enabling more authentic communication and partnerships (Denney & Domingo, 2021).

A conflict archaeology approach can also strengthen early warning mechanisms for conflict, a crucial component of community policing. By understanding historically sensitive spaces and the collective memory still alive within a community, police officers can be more sensitive to early signs of emerging social tensions. As proposition P3 states, an incident occurring in a location with a history of conflict is hypothesised to carry a much greater potential for escalation than a similar incident in a location without such historical baggage, though no comparative incident studies were identified in the reviewed literature to confirm this. Sensitivity to these dimensions can help officers take appropriate preventive measures before a situation escalates into open conflict.

Based on the conceptual synthesis, conflict archaeology can function as a community policing instrument through three main mechanisms, each specified below by its input information, responsible actor, activity, output, and a proposed indicator for future evaluation. (1) Sensitive-space identification: input is documented conflict sites and segregation patterns from literature and local records; the responsible actor is the Bhabinkamtibmas officer together with local government; the activity is compiling and periodically updating a sensitive-space list; the output is a documented, access-restricted list; the proposed indicator is the proportion of high-sensitivity locations with a documented risk note. (2) Collective-memory mapping: input is community narratives gathered through interviews and documentation; the responsible actor is trained community-policing personnel working with community representatives; the activity is structured narrative collection with informed consent; the output is a narrative summary linked to specific locations; the proposed indicator is the number of distinct community perspectives represented per site. (3) Early conflict detection: input is the combination of (1) and (2) together with recent incident reports; the responsible actor is the police intelligence and community-relations function; the activity is periodic review of sensitive-space and memory data against current events; the output is a risk flag with a recommended response; the proposed indicator is the time between a triggering event and the corresponding risk flag being issued. These three mechanisms are proposed for operationalisation as concrete programs within a community policing framework, such as training officers on local conflict history and developing specific protocols for handling situations in conflict-sensitive spaces.

Community Policing Model Based on Conflict Archaeology

Based on the conceptual synthesis and the propositions in Section 2.5, this study proposes a Conflict Archaeology-Based Community Policing Model. This model draws on three theoretical frameworks that play distinct, not automatically complementary, analytical roles: Lefebvre's (1991) model contributes the idea that space is a social product formed through the dialectical interaction between spatial practices, spatial representations, and lived space; Halbwachs' (1992) model contributes the claim that memory is social and spatial, so effective security management must understand the social and spatial framework of community memory; and Nora's (1989) model contributes the idea that material sites of conflict function as media for storing and transmitting collective memory that may shape perceptions of security and contemporary social relations. These roles carry some tension: Nora's original framework treats memory sites as relatively static repositories set apart from everyday life, whereas Lefebvre treats space as continuously produced through ongoing practice; this article follows Section 4.1 in reading Ambon's sites through Lefebvre's dynamic triad while retaining Nora's vocabulary of material, functional, and symbolic dimensions.

Separately from the theoretical model of constructs and relationships set out in Section 2.5, this section presents a proposed implementation sequence in five stages, intended as a protocol for future piloting and empirical testing rather than as a description of work already carried out:

Stage 1: Identification and Mapping of Material Remains of Conflict. As a proposed protocol, an inventory of various spaces and objects related to the history of the conflict would be conducted using a field archaeological approach. At this stage, a survey would be conducted to document various forms of conflict remains, including buildings that were targets of violence, peace monuments, segregation areas, and spaces of historical value to the community.

Stage 2: Mapping Community Collective Memory. This stage would involve collecting and analysing community memory narratives through interviews, historical documentation, and social narrative analysis, with informed community consent, to understand how communities interpret the remnants of the conflict. This stage is intended to provide an understanding of how the memory of the conflict persists within the community and how this memory influences perceptions of space, other groups, and security institutions.

Stage 3: Identification of Sensitive Spaces and Social Vulnerabilities. This stage would integrate material data and collective memory to identify spaces with high social sensitivity and the potential to become conflict triggers. The result would be a social vulnerability map usable as a basis for decision-making in regional security management. Because mapping sensitive spaces is not ethically neutral, it can stigmatise neighbourhoods, expose vulnerable groups, or generate information later used for surveillance, this stage would be governed by explicit rules: informed community consent before any site is mapped; community co-ownership and control over access to the resulting data; a defined process for updating or correcting entries; a restriction limiting use of the map to community-policing purposes only; and a harm-review step before any sensitive-space information is shared beyond the immediate team.

Stage 4: Implementation of Community Policing Based on Conflict Archaeology Knowledge. This stage would develop a community policing strategy that utilises the results of the identification of conflict remains and collective memory through dialogue, mediation, community partnerships, and early conflict detection, with knowledge gained from conflict archaeology studies integrated into daily community policing practices.

Stage 5: Continuous Evaluation. This stage would involve regular monitoring and evaluation of social dynamics and community security to assess the relevance and effectiveness of implemented strategies. Given that the community memory landscape is dynamic and can change over time, continuous evaluation is necessary to ensure that the security approach remains relevant to community conditions.

The institutional implications of this model also require attention. Effective implementation of the model would require three specific organisational changes: at the operational level, day-to-day policing practice; at the organisational level, personnel training; and at the institutional policy level, formal standard operating procedures. At the organisational level, personnel capacity development is needed through training that integrates knowledge of local conflict history, collective memory analysis, and social mediation skills into the core competencies of police officers serving in post-conflict areas. At the policy level, standard operating procedures (SOPs) are needed to regulate how knowledge of the conflict landscape and collective memory is integrated into security operations planning, from risk assessment to incident response. At the managerial level, documentation and knowledge-sharing systems are needed to ensure that local knowledge acquired by certain personnel is maintained and passed on to replacement personnel during rotations. These three institutional changes are interdependent rather than simultaneous: legal and institutional approval would need to precede personnel capacity development, which in turn would need to precede piloting the SOPs, with a phased rollout following a successful pilot for the model to be implemented effectively and sustainably.

This model treats conflict remains as potential sources of security-relevant knowledge as well as heritage objects that can support the development of community security. The model's specific analytical connection is to link documented material remains, socially framed memory, and partnership-based policing within one framework, a connection that existing community-policing frameworks in Indonesia do not currently make explicit. While conflict archaeology has traditionally been used to understand the past, this model treats the findings of archaeological studies as a potential resource for addressing the security needs of contemporary society.

CONCLUSION

This article has developed a conceptual framework that integrates conflict archaeology, collective memory theory, and the community policing paradigm through a structured theoretical synthesis, using Ambon City as an illustrative context. Building on the five propositions (P1-P5) stated in Section 2.5, the conceptual synthesis supports the following points, each retained here only where it adds to what was already stated in Section 2.5:

First, the 1999-2002 Ambon communal conflict left material traces that continue to form part of the community's social landscape, including residential segregation areas, spaces that were once the arenas of conflict, peace monuments, memorial sites, and various public spaces that underwent functional transformations after the conflict ended.

Second, the material remains of the conflict serve as a medium for storing, reproducing, and transmitting the community's collective memory of the conflict experience. Through community interactions with spaces and objects related to the conflict, various experiences of violence, trauma, reconciliation, and peace continue to live in the community's social consciousness. This lends theoretical support to the relevance of Nora's lieux de mémoire concept and Halbwachs' theory of collective memory in the context of contemporary social conflict in Indonesia.

Third, the memory of the conflict in Ambon City is dynamic and not simply a burden of trauma. Various local values, such as Pela Gandong, Baku Bae, and Orang Basudara, are reported by Schulze (2021) and Al Qurtuby (2016) to help rebuild social relations between communities under conditions of active community leadership and sustained intergroup contact, though these sources note that participation is not always evenly distributed across groups and the meaning of these practices can itself be contested. Various spaces that were previously arenas of conflict have been transformed into spaces for social interaction and reconciliation, a process shaped by planned reconstruction, economic necessity, and deliberate reconciliation initiatives rather than a single organic dynamic.

Fourth, the material remains of the conflict and the community's collective memory are theorised, per propositions P1 and P2, to function jointly as a knowledge resource whose security relevance depends on active interpretation rather than on their mere presence. A conflict archaeology approach has significant potential to support the implementation of community policing through the identification of material remains, mapping collective memory, and analysing social spaces.

Fifth, this article proposes a Community Policing Model Based on Conflict Archaeology, which explains how material remnants of conflict shape a community's collective memory, which in turn influences perceptions of security and social relations. Understanding this relationship can be utilised in the implementation of community policing oriented towards conflict prevention, building social trust, and strengthening sustainable peace. This model provides an original contribution by connecting two fields of study that have previously developed separately, conflict archaeology and police science.

The theoretical contributions of this study lie in three areas. First, it broadens the scope of conflict archaeology from merely the study of historical materiality to an analytical instrument for contemporary security management, opening a dialogue between archaeology as a humanities discipline and police science as an applied discipline. Second, it develops the application of collective memory theory concepts in the context of community security in Indonesian post-conflict settings comparable to Ambon, characterised by communal conflict with a religious-identity dimension, documented material remains, an active community-policing structure, and accessible local memory narratives, enriching theoretical discussions that have so far focused primarily on European and North American contexts. Third, it contributes a new operational model that bridges the gap between academic knowledge on post-conflict and security policy practice in the field. This research also contributes to the Indonesian police science literature by demonstrating the importance of a local historical context-based approach in developing community policing strategies, particularly in areas experiencing communal conflict.

SUGGESTION

For the Indonesian National Police: Police institutions could revise pre-deployment training and local risk-assessment procedures to incorporate the historical, social, and cultural dimensions of the areas where officers serve, while existing legal safeguards and standard operating procedures for the use of force and evidence handling remain unchanged and central. Concretely, this can be achieved through the development of a special training module for Bhabinkamtibmas (Community Police Officers) on the history of local conflict and how to interpret the dynamics of community collective memory. A more systematic local knowledge documentation system also needs to be developed to ensure that knowledge about the conflict landscape is not lost during personnel rotations. Because this documentation would constitute a sensitive archive, it should specify community co-ownership, a defined scope of what is recorded, tiered access rules, a documented consent process for contributors, and a requirement to preserve narrative context so that accounts are not later taken out of context or misused.

For the Regional Government: The regional government could consider a more systematic inventory and documentation of the various material remnants of the conflict still present in Ambon City. This inventory should ideally be conducted collaboratively, involving the community, academics, and cultural institutions, and would need community consent before any site is recorded, a process for recording competing narratives about the same site, defined data ownership, access restrictions, and a formal process by which community members can contest or correct entries in the record. The regional government should also encourage the use of spaces with a history of conflict as a medium for peace education and inter-community dialogue.

For Educational Institutions: Educational institutions in Ambon could strengthen local history education, feeding into the knowledge-transfer mechanism described in Section 5.2 that emphasises the importance of tolerance, reconciliation, and diversity. Experiences of past conflict can be used as a learning tool for the younger generation to understand the social consequences of violence and the importance of maintaining harmonious relations between community groups.

For Further Research: Further research is needed in other regions with experiences of social conflict, such as Poso, Sampit, and Aceh, to test the validity and relevance of the resulting model. Digital mapping technology and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) could support empirical testing of proposition P1 (documenting material remains), while social network analysis could support testing of proposition P3 (memory and security perception). Any such digital mapping of sensitive communities and relationships would need to follow the same consent, access-restriction, and harm-review safeguards specified for Stage 3 of the model in Section 5.3.

Conceptual Recommendation: The Conflict Archaeology-Based Community Policing Model is presented as a candidate framework to be co-designed, piloted, and independently evaluated for managing security in post-conflict areas in Indonesia. This model offers a new perspective that positions the material legacy of conflict as a strategic source of knowledge for understanding society and preventing social conflict. The gradual implementation of this model, starting with a pilot project in Ambon City co-designed with affected communities, religious and customary (adat) leaders, local government, Polri personnel, and an independent ethics reviewer, and accompanied by independent evaluation and a mechanism for monitoring and responding to unintended harm, will provide useful evidence for refining the model before its wider application.

Future Research Agenda

This section identifies the propositions that need testing, appropriate designs for testing them, and the evidence that would support or lead to revision of the model. The proposed Conflict Archaeology-Based Community Policing Model contains several propositions that must be tested through field research before it can be adopted as policy by police agencies or local governments. Key propositions requiring empirical testing include: the relationship between the proximity of material remains of conflict and the intensity of community collective memory, alongside narrative exposure, community affiliation, generational cohort, displacement history, ritual practice, and change in site meaning over time, ideally tested through a mixed-method design combining spatial mapping with interviews or surveys rather than a simple distance correlation; the correlation between the strength of collective memory and perceptions of security in a given space; and the influence of Bhabinkamtibmas personnel's understanding of conflict history on the effectiveness of community policing tasks.

First, the model should be tested in Ambon City, which is the most relevant location given the availability of academic literature and the richness of documented material remains of conflict. Key questions include: Does the proposed typology of material remains reflect actual conditions on the ground? How do community perceptions of security correlate with the proximity of their residences to sites of conflict memory? To what extent have or have not Bhabinkamtibmas utilised knowledge of the conflict landscape in carrying out their daily duties?

Second, comparative testing in Poso and Aceh. Poso offers a variety of communal conflicts with distinct reconciliation dynamics, while Aceh offers a distinct armed conflict context with a formal peace agreement (the 2005 Helsinki MoU) and a documented Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) process.

Comparative research across the three locations, selected as most-different cases across conflict types (communal religious conflict, communal ethnic conflict, and armed separatist conflict), could identify recurring and context-dependent patterns rather than establish universal elements of the model.

Third, the development of standardised measurement instruments for mapping material remnants of conflict using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), measuring the intensity and character of collective memory related to specific spaces, and evaluating the level of historical sensitivity of Bhabinkamtibmas officers as an indicator of readiness for model implementation.

Fourth, a study of generational changes in conflict memory, longitudinal research on how intergenerational memory transmission occurs, could help clarify when and how community policing strategies might need to be adapted over time, by measuring change over time in the strength of collective memory narratives, community trust in police, and reported security perceptions in relation to the model's proposed mechanisms.

Three concrete priorities follow from this agenda: first, the model should be piloted in Ambon before any comparative testing in Poso or Aceh; second, the ethical safeguards specified in Section 5.3 (community consent, data ownership, access restriction, and harm review) are a precondition for any pilot, not an optional addition; and third, convergent qualitative and quantitative evidence on the mechanisms in propositions P1-P5 would count as support for the model, while disconfirming evidence should prompt its revision. This research agenda is open to cross-institutional collaboration involving universities, police research institutions (Lemdiklat Polri, STIK), and international institutions working in the field of peacebuilding.

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