

Toward Digital Community Policing: Opportunities and Barriers for Social Media Engagement in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study explores the readiness and challenges of integrating social media into community policing in Indonesia. It aims to identify both opportunities and barriers faced by law enforcement, focusing on how digital platforms can improve trust, accessibility, and responsiveness. Through a structured literature review, it examines practical, legal, and institutional factors affecting effective digital engagement. This study uses a qualitative literature review method, analyzing academic articles, official regulations, and policy reports related to community policing and social media. The approach focuses on identifying recurring themes, theoretical insights, and practical challenges to understand how digital tools can support or hinder community policing efforts in the Indonesian context. The study finds that social media presents key opportunities for community policing, such as increased reach, real-time interaction, and enhanced public trust. However, barriers such as digital illiteracy, misinformation, legal uncertainty, and a lack of officer training remain significant. Successful implementation requires institutional support, clear guidelines, and ethical, consistent engagement across digital platforms. The study concludes that while social media can enhance community policing in Indonesia, its success depends on proper training, legal clarity, and ethical use. Digital engagement should be seen as a core policing function, not an add-on. With the right support and strategy, it can build stronger public trust and more responsive police-community relationships.

Keywords: Community Policing, Digital Policing, Social Media Engagement

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Introduction

Changing needs for law enforcement that come with the digital age require reforming traditional methods of policing. With societies ever more connected through digital technologies, police forces everywhere are being called upon to reform not only operationally but also how they interact with the publics they are sworn to protect. Among the numerous new technological instruments that are now emerging, social media is arguably one of the most transformative. From sharing information at the time that it occurs to crowd interaction and the procurement of intelligence, social media has altered the contours of modern policing. Ruddell and Jones (2013) highlight the importance of understanding how police departments utilize social media for enhanced communication strategies. Social media platforms facilitate direct communication between police and the community, enabling real-time updates and crowdsourced intelligence.

Indonesia's demographic scenario and rapid digitization present a unique and urgent setting for such transformation. As of January 2025, Indonesia recorded approximately 143 million active social media user identities, representing 50.2% of the total national population. The demographic

breakdown reveals that 126 million users were aged 18 and above, accounting for 62.7% of the adult population. Social media use continues to grow, with an increase of 4 million users compared to the previous year, and 67.3% of internet users in Indonesia actively engaging on at least one platform (Kemp, 2025). These statistics underscore the strategic importance of social media as a vital channel for public engagement and highlight its relevance in shaping modern community policing efforts in the country. Paralleling this, Indonesia has been working towards community-oriented policing methods to fill the yawning gap between institutions of law enforcement and citizens. Bhabinkamtibmas and Polisi RW are such initiatives that strive to create closer, neighborhood-level, and trusting relationships between the police and society. But mass online participation by citizens has introduced new dimensions of complications and potentiality to such time-tested community outreach methods.

Policing in Indonesia is going through a quiet but important shift. Community policing has always been rooted in principles like accountability, shared responsibility, and putting citizens at the center of public safety. But the way people communicate today has changed. With so much of public life now happening online, it is no longer enough for law enforcement to rely only on face-to-face outreach or traditional media. People expect to interact with their institutions online, having genuine interactions and demonstrating transparency in real time. Social media has emerged as a platform for building or breaking public trust, as well as questioning or earning legitimacy. The use of digital platforms in Indonesian police should not be considered as a side project, it should become an essential part of developing an honest, respectful relationship with the communities.

Police departments in Indonesia are making progress toward this goal. Community engagement is shared through activities on instagram and traffic updates are shared through twitter. While these initiatives show promises, they are often sporadic and lack substantial planning. Most of it appears as a separate attempt instead of part of a wider framework. In many cases, the focus of these appearances is more about the management of police image rather than genuinely addressing the public's needs and concerns. The police department is not yet connected with the more profound goals of community policing, such as providing opportunities for citizens' voices to be heard, addressing local challenges, and fostering long-term trust. The frameworks of incorporating social media have a risk of becoming shallow unless there is a clear commitment to use digital platforms as genuine avenues for connection.

In addition, the adoption of digital technologies by Indonesian police agencies is ad hoc due to structural and organizational barriers. These barriers include low digital literacy among police personnel, inadequate digital communication skills, ambiguity about appropriate online etiquette, and fear of cyber threats or reputational risks. At community level, distrust toward the police specifically among the poor rural and urbanized groups, amplifies the challenges of initiating interaction via digital platforms. In many cases, citizens are reluctant to interact with police online considering such efforts as futile. This two way suspicion has produced a digital barrier that undermines the principle of community policing. The Indonesian National Police attempts to add a broader literature on police modernization by examining the integration of social media with the Indonesian community policing model. This paper aims to outline the strategic potential that net participation provides, such as real-time response, increase in citizens trust, and greater accessibility of police services. In doing so, this paper examines the barriers that hinders

its successful realizations, such as gaps in policy, organizational culture, the risk of misinformation, and varying technological bases.

The importance of this question arises from a current social trend in Indonesia, where complaints about the police are increasingly being recorded on social media. From viral clips of potential abuses to hashtag campaigns calling for police reform, the online realm has become a place where the legitimacy of the police itself is fiercely contested. Social media interaction is not just communication; it is institutional persistence and prominence within fluctuating societal expectations. It is the principal research question guiding this study that is addressed: What are the opportunities and challenges involved in adopting social media-based community policing in Indonesia? In the format of a structured literature review, this article synthesizes findings from both international and Indonesian scholarship to outline how digital technologies might be mobilized to facilitate community-oriented policing goals. It identifies the organizational changes that are required to render such digital engagement effective, ethical, and enduring.

Learning how to use social media professionally and intentionally as an asset for the police community holds the keys to shaping the future role of police officers in Indonesia. In this respect, then, the article serves at once to fill a gap within scholarly discourse and extend an invitation for organizational leaders, learning institutions, and line officers alike to put digital readiness at the center of new-age policing. Indonesian community policing stands at the threshold of digital transformation. Social media's potential for communication facilitation, transparency enhancement, and co-production of security is enormous. That potential, however, can only be realized by deliberate efforts at overcoming ingrained organizational barriers, getting personnel accustomed to new digital skills, and creating public trust online. The integration of digital tools with community policing should neither purely be viewed as simply a technical amendment nor purely as part of the movement toward more accountable, accessible, and people-oriented policing, but should instead form part of the larger movement toward accountable, accessible, and people-oriented policing that the digital age permits.

METHODS

This research is based on a qualitative desk study, aimed at examining how social media might serve as a meaningful tool in the future of community policing in Indonesia. Rather than collecting primary data from the field, this study relies on reviewing existing academic literature, regulatory documents, policy papers, and case studies. The approach is well-suited to an emerging topic like digital policing, where practical implementations remain limited, and theoretical foundations are still being shaped. This study employs a desk research method, which enables a broad yet focused exploration of how digital engagement is shaping community policing in Indonesia. These sources include scholarly journal articles, books on policing and communication theory, international policing organization reports and Polri's internal documents regarding organizational communication frameworks and public relations strategies. Of particular interest is how the sources illustrate the values and assumptions that underpin the relationship between the police and the public in digital spaces.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) along with Procedural Justice Theory serve as foundational guides for analysis. The former, introduced by Davis in 1989, seeks to explain individuals' reactions to technological change. In this case, TAM sheds light on both police officers' and citizens' perceptions of social media platforms as tools—for their engagement or professional duties—as resources in their line of work. Platforms that are deemed effective provide valuable social returns will be adopted. On the other hand, if deemed irrelevant or overly complex, minimal motivation towards engagement shall be observed. Tyler's Procedures Justice Theory from 2006 adds a social and ethical dimension which highlights that institutional trust is impacted not only by the outcome but also the treatment given. Relationship legitimacy in law enforcement is achieved when officers openly communicate, show respect, and act consistently in their decisions. These are values that social media provides spaces for demonstrating. Thoughtful use of such platforms may aid police humanization, restoration of transparency, and rebuilding trust in communities where public institution confidence has eroded.

The two theories provide complementary insights which are differences and Procedural Justice Theory emphasizes the broad behavioral and technical causes behind adoption while TAM focuses on trust-building digital relations engagements. Social media as a functional extension of community policing in Indonesia becomes plausible analysis with strong conceptual support given by both theories. By using this combined theoretical lens, the study critically reviews existing literature to identify the main opportunities and barriers associated with digital community engagement. Rather than measuring outcomes or collecting field data, the method focuses on connecting ideas, highlighting tensions, and mapping future directions for a policing model that is not only modern but also meaningful to the people it aims to serve.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The integration of social media into community policing frameworks offers a wide range of strategic benefits, particularly in a context like Indonesia, where digital engagement has become a daily norm for the majority of the population. This section discusses five core opportunities that social media presents for strengthening police-community relations, improving communication, and enhancing public safety outcomes.

Increased Accessibility and Reach to Citizens

One of the most transformative opportunities provided by digital platforms in community policing is the increased accessibility and reach to citizens. In a country as archipelagic and demographically diverse as Indonesia, conventional face-to-face engagement has often been constrained by geography, cost, and time. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter (now X), and Facebook allow the police to communicate across vast distances almost instantly, reaching citizens in both urban centers and remote areas (Aisyah & Suherman, 2022). The ability to disseminate public safety information, crime alerts, and preventive education materials through digital means helps bridge longstanding communication gaps. These platforms also enable the police to monitor public sentiment and respond to concerns in real time, a capability that would be impossible with traditional methods.

This increased accessibility aligns closely with TAM, which suggests that users' willingness to adopt technology is influenced by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989). From the perspective of the police institution, social media is perceived as a useful tool for building rapport and trust with the public due to its broad and inclusive reach. Citizens, particularly younger generations who are digital natives, perceive official police social media accounts as a more accessible avenue to voice concerns or report incidents (Puspitasari & Nugraha, 2022). The sense that digital engagement is easier and more immediate than visiting a physical police station enhances public willingness to interact with law enforcement online. In this way, the TAM helps explain how accessibility and convenience are critical enablers of digital community policing in Indonesia.

Increased digital reach also presents an opportunity to operationalize principles from Procedural Justice Theory, which emphasizes fairness, voice, and transparency in police-citizen interactions (Tyler, 2004). Social media allows the police to communicate not only directives but also explanations and justifications for actions taken, which contributes to perceptions of legitimacy. For example, the Instagram Live session held by Kasi Humas Polsek Kemayoran in September 2024. The police engaged in a live Q&A to educate citizens on community security (kamtibmas) matters. Participants could directly ask questions via comments, and were guided to formal reporting channels like hotlines and QR-enabled complaint systems. The live session lasted about 30 minutes and included collaboration with local media and social media influencers (Lampu Merah News, 2024). This initiative enhanced procedural fairness by providing a transparent, interactive forum where police explained their procedures and responded immediately. By publicly addressing concerns and guiding official complaint mechanisms, they demonstrated respect for citizen voice and accountability.

Critically, the opportunity to expand reach via social media also introduces a shift in police roles, from being reactive enforcers to proactive communicators. This strategy is in line with the larger objectives of community policing, which emphasize relationship-building and prevention over enforcement alone (Bayley, 2006). Through online channels, the police can work with local community leaders, run campaigns addressing drug abuse and youth violence, and provide updates on public safety initiatives. All these strategies demonstrate a move towards more holistic and responsive policing. They assist in building a friendly and gentle image of the police which matters for Indonesia. Public confidence remains vulnerable because of trust fractures due to system-wide high-profile misconduct and pervasive police malpractice. In this situation, the interaction is not purely unidirectional dissemination of information; it becomes a means for restoring concealed public trust along with clearing misconceptions propagated around the organization which is now granted an opportunity to narrate its own story in its own words.

Real-Time Interaction for Early Warning

Social media is starting to play a more active role in how the Indonesian National Police identify and respond to problems as they emerge. In a country as dynamic and disaster-prone as Indonesia, having the ability to spot potential risks early, whether it's unrest, hoaxes, or growing tensions—can make a real difference. By monitoring platforms like Facebook, Twitter (now X), and WhatsApp, Polri combines human oversight and automated tools to identify content that may

incite hate speech, spread hoaxes, or trigger violence. This proactive approach represents a paradigm shift—from traditional, reactive policing to anticipatory and preventative community safety management (Chaniago et al., 2021). This shift reflects the TAM, which posits that technology adoption depends heavily on perceived usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989). Polri's "Virtual Police" initiative, launched by Bareskrim in February 2021, exemplifies this. Virtual Police monitor content potentially violating the ITE Law and issue direct warnings via private messages on social media platforms. The system involves consultation with legal, linguistic, and cyber experts to minimize subjectivity, and offenders are typically asked to remove content within 24 hours (CNN Indonesia, 2021). By automating alerts while retaining human oversight, Polri ensures these tools are useful, lawful, and trustworthy key factors driving officer acceptance and institutionalization.

Through the lens of Procedural Justice Theory, Virtual Police embodies fairness and transparency. Instead of immediate sanctions, the process begins with private, educational warnings, reserving formal enforcement as a last resort (Tyler, 2004). The intervention is structured, consultative, and preserves dignity by avoiding public shaming or punitive action. Moreover, anchoring Virtual Police in the Polri chief's directives such as Surat Edaran SE/2/11/2021 adds legitimacy by codifying the approach as a preventive model of policing (Kompas.com, 2021). A real-world example of effective early-warning engagement occurred during the 2023 child-abduction rumor waves. Viral hoaxes circulated across WhatsApp, TikTok, and Facebook, leading to panic, vigilante violence, and several tragic deaths. Including a burned victim in Sorong and mob attacks in Wamena (Nugroho, 2023). Polri responded swiftly via social media channels, issuing clarifications and public warnings to disrupt rumor spread. This rapid digital response helped de-escalate tensions and likely prevented further violence (Kompas.com, 2023).

In the end, real-time digital engagement gives Polri important early-warning tools. Virtual Police and rapid rumor-handling are examples of how technology can meet security needs while also being fair and open. They are based on TAM and procedural justice. These systems need to be constantly improved by adding more automation, making sure there is oversight, closing gaps in digital literacy, and keeping public trust in all of Indonesia's different communities in order to reach their full potential.

Building Transparency and Trust

In the digital era, the ability of the police to communicate transparently is no longer optional; it has become a public expectation. Citizens increasingly rely on social media not just for news, but also to assess the integrity of public institutions. For the Indonesian National Police (Polri), platforms such as Instagram and YouTube function not only as tools for information delivery, but also as spaces where institutional legitimacy is shaped in real time (Tyler, 2004). Transparency in a digital context can take various forms, including real-time updates during public events, documentation of procedures, and publication of internal initiatives. One example occurred during the 2022 Jakarta protests, when Divisi Humas Polri used Instagram Stories and short videos to share operational updates, traffic arrangements, and interactions between officers and demonstrators (Kompas.com, 2022). These updates provided citizens with firsthand insights and

allowed them to evaluate the situation independently rather than relying solely on media interpretations.

This type of visibility supports the principles of Procedural Justice Theory, which suggests that legitimacy grows when the public feels treated fairly, respectfully, and with clear explanation of decisions (Hermawan & Rizqi, 2021). When law enforcement communicates openly during tense or complex situations, it helps create a sense of fairness, even if citizens disagree with the outcome of police actions. Institutionally, adopting digital tools for transparency also reflects the core idea of the TAM. According to this model, police personnel are more likely to use digital platforms when they perceive them as beneficial for improving community relations and easy to manage (Davis, 1989). Polda Jawa Barat, for instance, routinely shares posts showing daily police work, humanitarian efforts, and public education programs. These posts present the police in more approachable and human terms, which contrasts with the often rigid perception seen in traditional media (TribunJabar, 2023).

Transparency, however, is not the same as marketing. Overly curated content can appear insincere and may backfire if audiences perceive it as propaganda. In contrast, content that acknowledges challenges, explains policy decisions, or admits institutional shortcomings tends to generate more public empathy and trust (Widianto, 2023). One notable practice involves officers participating in digital storytelling formats, where they speak directly to audiences about difficult choices or internal dilemmas. These narratives often receive positive engagement, particularly when delivered in a personal and reflective manner (Nugroho, 2023). In conclusion, building trust through transparency in digital spaces requires more than frequent posting. It calls for honest, consistent, and engaging communication that reflects the values of fairness and accountability. Polri's evolving presence on social media shows that transparency, when done sincerely, can strengthen public legitimacy. As digital literacy among citizens grows, the police must continue to meet these expectations with openness and willingness to engage meaningfully.

Lack of Officer Training in Social Media Engagement

One major challenge in implementing social media-based community policing is that many police officers are not fully prepared to use these platforms effectively. Access to technology is one part of the problem, but just as important is the lack of proper training in how to engage the public online (Ismail & Abdullahi, 2023). In practice, many officers either don't have the tools or have never received instruction on how to use them in a strategic and professional way. This is especially true for frontline officers like Bhabinkamtibmas and Polisi RW. Most of them have not been formally trained in digital communication, online crisis handling, or how to use social media as a tool for public trust-building. As a result, their activity online tends to be irregular, often limited to simple announcements instead of fostering genuine two-way interaction with the community. The gap between growing technological demands and officers' readiness to meet them has been noted internally. A 2021 study published in *Jurnal Litbang Polri* found that although Information and Communication Technology use is increasing in the police force, formal and sustained training in digital communication remains lacking. This has real consequences. Bhabinkamtibmas officers, who are expected to be present both in the field and online, are often

left trying to navigate these platforms without the skills or confidence needed to do it well (Aziz, 2021).

Without clear training and support, digital engagement can also backfire. Officers may unintentionally share personal opinions, respond emotionally to criticism, or post content that doesn't reflect institutional values. Public trust in law enforcement, as a functioning institution, can be deeply damaged by such errors. Often strategy and evaluation processes lack management frameworks that govern tone, audience analysis, engagement protocols which lead to inconsistent public narratives resulting in discomfort rather than eliciting the desired détente between police services and communities. Untrained officers are more likely to face unanticipated online risks—trolling, harassment, or organized disinformation campaigns—that are becoming increasingly common these days due to shifts toward digital spaces. Kusworo (2021) underscores the gap internal studies have previously identified: absence of comprehensive social communication policies alongside robust ethical frameworks specially tailored for institutional change on social media exposes institutions—intentionally or not—to substantial reputational wounds and fallouts.

To solve this problem, digital literacy must be included in the police training institution's curriculum. Police officers' access to ordinary technologies is inadequate; they need more ethical training to connect with communities easily. Officers should receive training on how to interact critically and speak ethically in a variety of contexts, in line with modern law enforcement procedures. Study findings have supported this. According to Ndlela (2024), effective digital engagement transcends having internet availability; it needs infrastructure and professionals who understand storytelling, ethics, and public dialogue. This means for policing institutions that officers need training focused on active listening and responsive online communication that is respectful and presents clarity about their work processes, which builds trust with the communities served (Ndlela, 2024).

Risk of Misinformation and Misinterpretation

Social media allows for enhanced engagement with the public; however, it poses greater risks. Users have easy access to superficial information, but there is just as much prevalence of false narratives, omissive interpretation, and purposeful untruths. In the case of delicate scenarios such as protests, emergencies, or active cases, the results of posting something vague or ambiguous either too late or too early could be terribly far-reaching. Jumping to conclusions may stoke public unrest and unfounded suspicions while tarnishing reputation not only for individuals but also for the police institution. This becomes a greater challenge as disinformation tactics become more sophisticated targeting police departments. Claiming to show reality through doctored videos and images along with misleading statements spreads unchecked on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and similar platforms. The public's perception can rapidly change towards hostility and rage which greatly erodes trust in the police due to these materials going viral. As Albrecht (2025) notes, misinformation in digital spaces plays a central role in weakening public confidence in law enforcement. He stresses the urgent need for police institutions to establish well-defined communication strategies and adopt real-time monitoring tools to keep up with the speed at which false narratives spread (Albrecht, 2025).

Through the lens of social media, Indonesia's complex regional diversity poses particular challenges. The age and regional demographics have their unique sets of manners and mores. An informal TikTok video posted by a local government official may be popular among youth but viewed as highly unprofessional and out of place by conservative older cohorts. Many officers do not have clear institutional parameters on tone and audience segmentation, which leaves many trying to find balance in this space independently. Thus, the efforts made to appear friendly online are at odds with eroding institutional authority. Meanwhile, offensive information tactics are constantly improving. Photos, videos, or other digital products generated from AI are often easily disseminated through various social media channels, making it difficult for officers to keep up with their monitoring abilities. Once digital footprints are widely circulated on the Internet, they are very difficult to remove. The lack of a proper proactive framework makes it difficult for police officers to conduct comprehensive surveillance.

Nugroho and Fahmi (2021) emphasized the effects of digital posts on social media on shaping public perceptions of law enforcement in Indonesia. The study illustrates the erosion of public trust due to narratives spread online. The author suggests a comprehensive strategy related to training officers on crisis management in the digital space to deal with issues of misinterpretation and misinformation. Without concrete measures, even accurate statements can be ignored due to the diversity of backgrounds and emotions that underlie public perceptions. The police must be proactive in monitoring discussions in digital public spaces while still conveying messages about security and order based on the ethics prevailing in society. Mobilizing local community leaders or even influencers can also increase exposure, which can help the police disseminate information when needed in critical circumstances. These steps are not just organizational management, but strategic steps needed by Polri to maintain public trust in the digitalization of community policing.

Legal and Privacy Constraints

In establishing community policing, both legal and regulatory frameworks are crucial to ensure that digital community policing is both successful and respectful of human rights. In the Indonesian context however, legal inconsistencies and institutional gaps pose significant barriers to the safety and confidence of using social media by police officers. Although Peraturan Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia (Perpol) No. 1 Tahun 2021 on community policing have specified the principle of participation and responsiveness, it does not provide explicit operation advice for implementing these values in the digital environment. As a result, officers are lacking clear institutional guidelines for managing interactions with citizens on various digital platforms, especially when sensitive information or real time reports are involved.

Undang-Undang No. 11 Tahun 2008 concerning Electronic Information And Transaction Law also includes provisions for telecommunications and cybersecurity. But this law still lacks the precision in addressing the needs and risk of police officers who engage in community interactions via the internet. Currently, there are no specific guidelines pertaining to how law enforcement officials should safeguard digital submissions from citizens, including grievances,

multimedia files, or documentation. There are still questions concerning how long such data must be stored, who may grant permission to access it, what safety measures are available for those submitting confidential data, especially sensitive whistleblowers and vulnerable individuals. Both sides appear to be stuck due to a lack of legal clarification. Police may avoid engaging in online policing because they might unknowingly commit an offense that infringes on the law or violates the digital rights of citizens. On the other hand, citizens might hesitate to report incidents online due to fear of privacy infringement or abuse of their personal information. In this regard, systems designed for transparency and collaboration can inversely become systems associated with ambiguity and distrust. Addressing these barriers requires a more sophisticated legal approach, which is currently lacking.

This approach would necessitate integrating the *Perpol No 1 Tahun 2021* community-oriented provisions with *UU No 11 Tahun 2008* best protection of privacy and data rights guarantees. It should specify detailed operational guidelines regarding informed consent, data protection and security, safeguarding digital evidence, cross-border social media engagements, snapshots and retweets post-interviews. Greater legality certainty would enhance community-police relationships while legally protecting officers strengthen trust between police and communities during online engagements. Syahputra and Hadibrata (2021) have observed that the absence of a designated legal regulation for social media interactions by governmental organizations leads to discrepancies in the management of digital engagement. These gaps are often problematic for the law enforcement as far as accountability gaps and protection for users is concerned. In the absence of set protocols, both police and civilians become susceptible to problems like exploitation of data or abuse concerning the handling of digital evidence (Syahputra & Hadibrata, 2021). The argument put forth by Rahmat and Farida (2022) also supports this case whereby they claim that public sector modernization requires an equivalent transformation to be made in administrative law. There should be reforms that define clearly ownership over data, online consent, and rights protection under the governance systems concerned (Rahmat & Farida, 2022). All these together highlight inadequate legal frameworks which call for innovation while maintaining human rights at the core.

The adoption of social media in community policing in Indonesia presents challenges not only from an operational and technological perspective but also important sociocultural and structural ones. The implementation of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as well as Procedural Justice Theory within this context helps to understand the motivation, barriers, and social implications surrounding digital policing practices. These views illuminate some of the reasons why community residents and police officers may resist using social media for policing purposes, as well as how legitimacy is fostered or undermined through online interactions.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

TAM states that an individual's willingness to adopt new technology is heavily influenced by two perceptions, which is perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU). In the context of community policing in Indonesia, TAM helps to explain why law enforcement officers and community members use social media platforms inconsistently and often reluctantly. For some officers at the grassroots level such as Polisi RW or Bhabinkamtibmas, social media

engagement does not directly foster security and safety issues pertinent to their duties. Community policing is still largely perceived as physically present within neighborhoods, leading some officers to consider social media optional or even counterproductive. Police practitioners need practical strategies or success stories demonstrating how these platforms facilitate policing outcomes; otherwise, their daily routines will overshadow the platforms' potential utility.

The previously discussed issues are not considered the only ones within the digital divide. The ease-of-use is another one which suggests that while younger officers might be able to utilize social media tools more easily, older or less tech-savvy professionals often struggle with using such platforms in a professional context. Additionally, concerns about public blunders, receiving negative attention online, or breaking unwritten rules of informal online etiquette further contribute to the problem. Lack of organized training and institutional encouragement does not empower personnel who are dealing with work-related fatigue to have easier access to technology in their professional lives. From the perspectives of the communities, interaction via social media may appear to be nonfunctional because police based verbal engagement could be seen lacking in authenticity, this result in low perceived usefulness. Among diverse community groups convenience also differs, for example older people and residents from underrepresented communities may have some trouble or feel uncomfortable seeking police assistance online due to the limited digital infrastructure.

According to TAM, there's a gap on how the police employ digital tools and what the communities require. One way communication, where information flows from law enforcement to the public and not the other way around continues to fall short. To close that gap, law enforcement agencies should invest in not just improving access to digital platforms, but also ensuring that those platforms are user friendly and truly functional. Encouraging the participation of citizens means building a digital system where the public doesn't just receive information but also actively engage. While there have been some efforts, such as offering incentives or holding events to boost the public knowledge, these efforts could feel artificial if it doesn't lead to a genuine involvement. When the public trust is already low, superficial events that lack genuine dialogue don't rebuild confidence. In contrast, efforts that's honest and allow for open discussion are more effective. In addition to availability, acceptability also considers clarity of purpose, perceived value, and willingness from public officials and the public.

Procedural Justice Theory

Procedural Justice Theory offers a more thorough viewpoint by examining how interactions (both online and offline) establish or preserve trust in a system, even though Technology Acceptance Models (TAM) can explain individual decisions regarding technology use. According to the theory, when people believe they have been treated fairly by an institution—for instance, by being respected and included in a participatory framework—they are more likely to accept and obey its authority. According to social media surveillance, digital social interactions offer chances to either strengthen or weaken public trust rather than just being technical transactions.

Different social groups in Indonesia and its different regions have different opinions about the legitimacy of the police. More emphasis is usually placed on how police community relations balances responsiveness and empathy in areas with better access to technology. Other research on online interactions across different organizational types has found that when virtual interactions—especially on sensitive social issues—are governed by rigid schedules or impersonal, unresponsive protocols, they foster skepticism and withdrawal instead of confidence and trust. This is especially important for Indonesian law enforcement agencies that operate in pluralistic settings where dominant institutional frameworks face serious legitimacy challenges. Think about the state of most informal settlements in Indonesia's major cities or tiny, remote villages. Citizens often lack access to formal legal services, even when they are needed. When given the opportunity to do so through inquiries and clarifications via interactive social media platforms, social interactions can occur outside of the officially defined roles between citizens and state officials and reduce the emotional distance from official representatives of state institutions like the police.

However, many opportunities are lost when those in charge of disseminating information either don't receive pertinent information or only receive it to establish regulations rather than to meet public expectations in emergency situations. The significance of perceived neutrality in trust messaging is emphasized by the Procedural Justice Theory. Depending on the public's perception of the automation of service delivery, officers' digital communication workflows have the potential to either boost or undermine trust. Constituents are more inclined to believe shared messaging when they believe that officers treat everyone fairly and equally. Conversely, officers' and agencies' credibility is damaged by selective attention or perceived unfairness in online interactions. This calls for police participation through institutional norms for the hierarchy and tone of interactions, responsive systems that respond favorably to public feedback, and an ethical framework that governs participation in digital activities. By doing these things, the police use social media communication and community-based projects to increase their legitimacy.

CONCLUSION

The introduction of social media into Indonesian community policing is an opportune and indispensable innovation of modern-day law enforcement practice. As digital media increasingly become the epicenter of public conversation, engagement, and accountability, the capacity of police institutions to operate effectively within them is of utmost importance. The use of social media in community policing has great potential. Among them is enhancing accessibility, responsiveness, and public trust. It allows immediate people-oriented interaction between the police and the citizens. The advantages realized—in varying degrees from expanded public access to individualized interaction—are based on a transition away from ad-hoc or isolated usage and toward policy-informed, organized approaches. This research has found that digital community policing offers a significant potential, but it also shows some obstacles that would limit the effectiveness. It includes inadequate police training, legal frameworks that are ambiguous, and the spread of misinformation. Without regular training, clearly articulated communication procedures, and ethical standards, social media use can be unstructured, wasteful, or even destructive. These problems reflect the technological limitation and structural-cultural factors that determine the police-community relations. Using the TAM has been helpful in analyzing how technological adoption is more likely when digital spaces are seen as useful and easy to navigate. On the other

hand, Procedural Justice Theory has a relational perspective that emphasizes that engagement in social media must exhibit transparency, fairness, responsiveness, and consistency in order to have legitimacy.

It can be concluded that social media offers a helpful extension of Indonesian community policing practice, but the success of it depends on the institutionalization of digital readiness, and the process of creating public trust through open communication. Digital technologies, used strategically and ethically, can increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of law enforcement in meeting community needs. Future policy and training measures must prioritize these factors so that the future of the police in Indonesia is technologically progressive and responsive to democracy.

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