



Legal Analysis of the Police Intelligence Function in Early Detection of Inter-Village Brawls: A Socio-Legal Approach to the Effectiveness of Social Conflict Prevention

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Abstract

Background. The phenomenon of inter-village brawls shows that social conflicts at the local level no longer arise spontaneously, but develop through more complex and unpredictable processes. In this context, early detection is becoming increasingly important as an effort to read potential conflicts before they develop into open violence.

Aims. This research aims to examine how the police intelligence function is carried out in detecting potential conflicts between villages, how the basis of its authority is constructed within the applicable legal framework, and the extent of its effectiveness in preventing the escalation of social conflicts.

Methods. This study uses a socio-legal approach, combining normative analysis of laws and regulations with empirical data obtained through interviews in the Cirebon Regency area.

Result. The results show that, in practice, early detection occurs more through informal social mechanisms, such as interaction with the community and readings of local dynamics, than through structured systems. However, this role often stops at the identification stage because there is no clarity on the limits of authority for carrying out preventive actions and no system to integrate information and policy responses. These findings confirm that early detection cannot be understood solely as a technical mechanism for information collection, but rather as a social process that is interpretive and contextual.

Conclusion. Therefore, its effectiveness is determined not only by the availability of information but also by the system's ability to interpret and follow up on it in a coordinated manner.

Implementation. This research offers a new perspective by placing early detection as a meeting space between social practice, legal construction, and institutional capacity in the prevention of social conflict.

Keywords: early detection, police intelligence, social conflict, authority, socio-legal



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INTRODUCTION

The inter-village conflicts that occurred in several regions of Indonesia, including Cirebon Regency, show that the dynamics of social conflicts at the local level can no longer be understood as sudden or accidental events. In many cases, conflicts develop through more complex processes, such as the accumulation of tension, the dissemination of inaccurate information, and mass mobilization that can last in a relatively short period of time. This change in pattern indicates that social conflict has shifted from previously being reactive to more structured and potentially threatening, though not always directly visible.

In such situations, an approach that focuses solely on post-conflict handling may no longer be sufficient to provide security. Early detection is now a relevant call, especially as an effort to read the cues of an ongoing conflict before it develops into visible violence. Early detection is not only related to data but also to understanding the social undercurrents that are conceptually turbulent in society. This is in line with the view that social conflicts often arise because underlying factors are not always recognized within formal frameworks (Soekanto, 2019).

In some ways, the Police in this context has a key strategic role through the intelligence function. Based on Law Number 2 of 2002, the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia (Polri) is mandated to carry out security and public order functions, which, in practice, also include preventive efforts against potential security disturbances. One of the important tools for the mandate is the Intelligence function, which includes implementing early warning of potential public order conflicts. However, when the regulation is examined further, aspects of this function are generally related, but the basis for local action has not been established in detail.

The functioning of police intelligence in the field practically does not run with a fully complete formal system. The knowledge gained is sometimes not based on formal reporting mechanisms; that knowledge comes from regular interactions with community members, observing how social relationships develop, and informal networks that form over time. Here, early detection is no longer just a technical issue but an interpretive process that relies on officers' experience, intuition, and practical knowledge of the social situation in which they carry out their duties.

A number of studies show that the better the ability to read social contexts, the earlier detection is made. Conflict never starts from a single element; rather, it is from the clash of

several elements, such as group identity, money/ownership, and the perception of what is considered fair (Sewing 1956). In some of those social contexts, even seemingly simple information can have different connotations depending on how it is interpreted. What this shows is that the success of early detection depends not only on the ability to generate information, but also, and perhaps more crucially, on how that information is interpreted.

Nevertheless, intelligence skills at the field level tend to lead to a role as an observer rather than as an actor who takes preventive measures. This does not necessarily mean a lack of capability, but rather that there is still a fog at the boundaries of authority about who can take precautions. As expected, intelligence officers are sometimes more careful not to be judged beyond their authority, as they deal with issues that intersect with the interests of the village government or other social actors.

This is where the gap begins to appear between the normative framework and what develops in real situations. On the one hand, the Law provides a broad mandate in order to maintain public security and order. However, there are no regulations linking early detection functions to clearer preventive measures. In this condition, early detection can stop at the identification phase and is not accompanied by appropriate measures to prevent the progression towards violent conflict.

Referring to this description, the problems that arise are not only related to how the police intelligence function is carried out in detecting potential conflicts, but also concern how the function is understood within the existing framework of authority and the extent to which it can contribute effectively to conflict prevention efforts. In this context, this research is directed to answer three main questions, namely: how the practice of early detection carried out by police intelligence in dealing with potential fights between villages, how the legal basis of this authority is constructed in the applicable legal system, and how effective it is in preventing the escalation of social conflicts.

Furthermore, this study departs from the assumption that early detection cannot be understood solely as a technical mechanism in information collection, but as a social process that is interpretive and contextual. Within this framework, the main contribution of the research lies in the effort to reconstruct the understanding of the function of police intelligence not only as an observational security instrument but also as part of the social dynamics that help determine the direction of conflict prevention. Thus, this study offers a different perspective by placing early detection as a meeting space between legal constructions, institutional practices, and evolving social realities at the local level.

Current literature has extensively discussed: Social conflict theories and prevention; Community policing and public participation; Intelligence-based security systems; Intelligence technology and early warning systems; Intelligence authority in security contexts. However, studies remain fragmented and tend to examine these aspects separately. No study comprehensively integrates: Police intelligence practices in local conflict prevention, Legal construction of intelligence authority, Socio-legal dynamics of early detection, Institutional effectiveness in preventing inter-village brawls.

This study offers a novel socio-legal perspective by conceptualizing police intelligence early detection not merely as a technical intelligence function but as an interpretive and contextual social process situated at the intersection of legal authority, institutional capacity, and local social dynamics. Unlike previous studies that focus separately on intelligence operations, conflict prevention, or legal authority, this research integrates these dimensions within the context of inter-village conflict prevention, thereby providing a new framework for understanding the effectiveness of police intelligence in mitigating social conflict escalation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social conflicts are inseparable from the dynamics of people's lives as they continue to develop. It does not always present as a sudden event, but is often an accumulation of tension that builds over time. In the classical perspective, conflict is understood as a consequence of conflicts of interest as well as the uneven distribution of resources (Sewing 1956). In a more contextual development, conflict is also influenced by perceptions of injustice and imbalances in social relations at the community level (Soekanto 2019). Thus, social conflict cannot be understood only as incidental events but as social processes with both structural and cultural dimensions.

The development of conflict studies shows a shift from a reactive approach to a more preventive approach. In this approach, conflict is no longer seen merely as something that must be resolved after it has occurred, but as a phenomenon that can be anticipated by reading the early signs in society. The modern security perspective even treats early detection as an integral part of a security system oriented towards prevention, not just handling (Buzan & Hansen, 2021). In this context, early detection is not only concerned with information gathering but also with the ability to understand implicit, contextual social dynamics.

In institutional practice, the early detection function is attached to the role of intelligence, including in police institutions. The normative basis for this function can be traced

in Law Number 2 of 2002, which affirms that the police have the duty to maintain public security and order, including through preventive efforts (Law No. 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia 2002). The intelligence function then becomes an important instrument for detecting potential security disturbances early. Further arrangements regarding this function are also reflected in the Regulation of the Chief of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia Number 22 of 2011 concerning Security Intelligence, which emphasizes the importance of early detection and warning in maintaining the stability of the Kamtibmas (Regulation of the Chief of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia Number 22 of 2011 concerning Security Intelligence 2011).

In addition, the preventive approach is also strengthened through the National Police Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2021 concerning Community Policing, which emphasizes partnerships with the community in maintaining security (Regulation of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2021 concerning Community Policing 2021). In a broader framework, the organizational structure of the police also provides space for the intelligence function as part of the national security system (Government Regulation No. 52 of 2010 concerning the Organizational Structure of the National Police 2010). However, these arrangements still tend to be general and have not yet reached the complexity of local-level practice.

A number of studies have shown that the effectiveness of intelligence functions is highly dependent on their ability to read social dynamics contextually. Social connection-based approaches have proven to be better able to capture changes that are not detected by formal systems (Indarti 2019). The same can also be seen in the study on the role of the apparatus in building public trust as a key factor in conflict prevention (Ismawati et al. 2024). In fact, in a broader context, the effectiveness of risk assessment by the authorities is greatly influenced by subjective factors and individual experience (Myhill et al. 2023).

In practice, the information obtained by the intelligence apparatus does not always come from formal mechanisms, but rather from social networks that develop at the local level. This shows that early detection cannot be separated from the social context in which the apparatus interacts. Other research confirms that a problem-solving-based intelligence approach can reduce the potential for conflict before it escalates into open violence (Widodo & Baharudin, 2022). In fact, the ability to read micro-signs in social interaction is an important factor in the success of conflict prevention (Munif et al., 2026).

In a more specific context, the role of police intelligence in conflict mitigation has also been examined in various studies. Studies on intelligence-based conflict mitigation show that this approach has the potential to reduce the escalation of social conflicts if supported by an integrated system (Hartono et al. 2025). Other research has also shown that intelligence functions in various security contexts, including the handling of ethnic conflicts and migration, are strongly influenced by the ability to adapt to local dynamics (Tinumbang et al. 2023). In the Indonesian context, the optimization of intelligence technology is also one of the important factors in increasing the effectiveness of early detection (Purnomo et al. 2022).

On the other hand, the study of police intelligence authority also reveals significant normative problems. Research on the authority of intelligence in handling ethnic conflicts shows that, despite having a legal basis, its implementation often faces operational limitations (Nooryono and Winjaya 2025). The same can be seen in the study of the role of intelligence in countering terrorism, which shows the need to clarify the limits of authority in preventive measures (Sirait and Abdillah 2025).

In addition to institutional factors, the development of information technology has also significantly changed the pattern of social conflict. The dissemination of information through social media can, in a short period of time, foster collective perceptions that trigger conflicts. Studies on the role of technology even show that artificial intelligence is starting to be used in conflict early warning systems (Hussain 2025). In the local context, this phenomenon can also be seen in various cases of brawls triggered by digital content and the dissemination of unverified information (Haryadi 2024; Tribratanews West Java Police 2025).

Empirical data also show that social conflict is still a significant problem in Indonesia. The report of the national institution shows that social conflicts and human rights violations are still strategic issues in national stability (Komnas HAM 2024; Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs 2025). In fact, in certain contexts, conflicts between communities can develop into violence that causes victims (Wamad 2019). This shows that early detection systems have a very important role in preventing conflict escalation.

In a legal perspective, the relationship between law and social practice is inseparable. Law functions not only as a norm, but also as a social system that is influenced by various external factors (Friedman, 2018). In the Indonesian context, the progressive legal approach also emphasizes the importance of seeing the law as something adaptive to the needs of society (Rahardjo, 2018). Thus, the function of police intelligence cannot be understood solely within a normative framework but also as a practice that develops through social interaction.

Based on these studies, there remains a gap between the normative framework and practice in the field. On the one hand, regulations provide a basis for authority, but on the other hand, practices exhibit much more complex dynamics. In this context, this study takes a position by viewing early detection not only as a formal mechanism but also as an interpretive, contextual social process.

Thus, this research makes a contribution by shifting the perspective on the police intelligence function from what was originally understood as a technical instrument for information collection to a set of social practices that help shape the effectiveness of conflict prevention. This perspective is expected to provide a more complete understanding of the relationship between law, authority, and the dynamics of social conflict at the local level

Previous Research	Main Findings	Limitations
Coser (1956) and Soekanto (2019)	Social conflict arises from competition of interests, social inequality, and perceptions of injustice.	Focuses on conflict theory, not on institutional mechanisms of early detection.
Buzan & Hansen (2021)	Modern security studies emphasize prevention and early warning systems.	Does not specifically discuss police intelligence at the local conflict level.
Indarti (2019)	Community policing strengthens public participation in security maintenance.	Has not linked community policing with intelligence-based conflict detection.
Widodo & Baharudin (2022)	Problem-solving approaches improve preventive policing effectiveness.	Focuses on policing programs, not intelligence authority.
Purnomo et al. (2022)	Intelligence technology can improve detection of social conflict potential.	Emphasizes technological aspects rather than legal and institutional dimensions.
Tinumbang et al. (2023)	Intelligence effectiveness depends on adaptation to local dynamics.	Focuses on migration and refugee issues, not inter-village conflict.
Myhill et al. (2023)	Risk assessment is influenced by officers' subjective interpretation and experience.	Not analyzed in the context of police intelligence authority.
Hartono et al. (2025)	Intelligence-based conflict mitigation can reduce social conflict escalation.	Does not examine legal authority and institutional constraints.

Previous Research	Main Findings	Limitations
Nooryono & Winjaya (2025)	Police intelligence authority in ethnic conflict handling faces operational limitations.	Focuses on conflict handling, not early detection.
Sirait & Abdillah (2025)	Preventive intelligence measures require clear authority boundaries.	Discusses terrorism prevention rather than local social conflict.

Research Gap

Empirical Gap. Most previous studies focus on terrorism, ethnic conflict, migration issues, or national security. Research specifically examining inter-village brawls as a form of local social conflict remains very limited.

Theoretical Gap. Existing studies generally conceptualize early detection as: a technical intelligence activity, information gathering, and technological surveillance. Few studies view early detection as an interpretive social process shaped by local social interactions, community trust, and contextual understanding.

Legal Gap. Although Law No. 2 of 2002 and related regulations provide a general mandate for maintaining public order, there is insufficient analysis regarding: the legal boundaries of intelligence authority, preventive intervention authority, and the relationship between intelligence findings and preventive actions.

Institutional Gap. Previous studies rarely investigate why intelligence findings often stop at the identification stage and fail to transform into coordinated prevention policies. The issue of information-policy integration remains underexplored.

METHODS

This research uses a socio-legal approach, looking at law not only as norms written into laws and regulations, but also as a practice that operates in social life. This approach was chosen because the function of police intelligence in the early detection of conflicts cannot be adequately understood solely from legal texts but must be understood in terms of how the role is carried out in a concrete social context.

This research is descriptive-analytical. On the one hand, this study seeks to describe how police intelligence carries out early detection practices in dealing with potential fights between villages. On the other hand, the practice is then read critically by linking it to the legal

framework that governs police authority, especially in the intelligence function and the prevention of social conflicts.

The data used in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews with police officers, particularly those involved in intelligence functions, as well as with parties involved in social dynamics at the village level, such as village officials and community leaders. Interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner to maintain direction, but are flexible enough to explore the speaker's experience and understanding in more depth. This research is conducted in Cirebon Regency, focusing on villages with a history of inter-village conflicts.

Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained through a literature study of laws and regulations, including Law Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia, as well as other related regulations, such as the National Police Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2021 concerning Community Policing (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia 2002; Regulation of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2021 concerning Community Policing 2021). In addition, various scientific journals and relevant literature are also used to enrich the analysis.

Data analysis is conducted qualitatively by linking empirical findings to the applicable normative framework. The interview data were used to understand how intelligence functions are carried out in practice, while legal materials were used to examine the basis of authority and its limits. The two types of data are then read in an integrated manner to see the extent to which there is a conformity or even a gap between the law as a norm and the law in practice.

DISCUSSION

Early Warning System by Police Intelligence in Inter-Village Conflicts

Based on experience in the field, early detection by police intelligence does not always occur within a formal framework. In fact, the practice is more likely to run through informal mechanisms, such as daily interaction with the community, reading social dynamics, and the use of naturally formed communication networks. In this context, early detection is not simply understood as an intelligence process in a technical intelligence process, but as an effort to understand the social changes taking place.

Empirical experience shows that information about potential conflicts rarely appears in formal reports. On the contrary, these indications are more often seen through subtle signs of

social interaction, such as changes in communication patterns between groups, increased intensity of conversations about certain issues, and anxiety that develops through social media. This is in line with the view that social conflict essentially develops through a latent phase before it comes to the surface (Sewing 1956). Therefore, the ability to read early symptoms is a very decisive factor in the effectiveness of early detection.

In practice, intelligence agencies tend to rely on a social relationship-based approach. The relationships built with community leaders, village officials, and youth groups are an important source of information for understanding the dynamics at play. This pattern reflects a community policing approach that emphasizes partnership between the authorities and the community in maintaining security (Regulation of the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia Number 1 of 2021 concerning Community Policing 2021). In line with that, other research has also shown that community involvement in early detection systems can increase sensitivity to potential conflicts that develop (Indarti 2019).

On the other hand, this informal work pattern also shows limitations in the early detection system itself. The information obtained is often fragmentary and highly dependent on the authorities' ability to interpret it. Under certain conditions, the same information can be interpreted differently, depending on the apparatus's experience and its social closeness to the surrounding environment. This shows that early detection is not only technical but also shaped by the subjective dimension of interpretation.

The development of information technology also adds complexity to the early detection process. Social media is becoming a new space where potential conflicts can arise and spread quickly. In certain situations, unverified information can trigger a collective reaction that leads to mass mobilization. This condition makes the apparatus not only deal with social realities in the field, but also with the flow of digital information that is difficult to control (Widodo and Baharudin 2022).

However, the role of police intelligence in the detection stage is often still limited to observation. Officials tend to be cautious about taking further steps, especially when the potential for conflict has not yet developed into a real nuisance. This attitude is not entirely wrong, given the lack of clarity regarding the limits of authority in carrying out preventive interventions. Law Number 2 of 2002 does give a general mandate to the police to maintain public security and order, but does not specifically regulate the operational limits of intelligence-based preventive measures.

This condition shows a tendency for early detection to stop at the identification stage, without being followed by adequate preventive measures. In many cases, the information obtained is not followed up on systematically. These findings are in line with research showing a gap between the ability to detect potential conflicts and the ability to respond effectively to them (Ismawati et al. 2024).

In addition, the effectiveness of early detection is also influenced by the quality of coordination between the actors involved. Information obtained by intelligence officers cannot always be directly integrated into policies at the village or sub-district level. In fact, conflict prevention requires a collective and coordinated response. Other research confirms that the success of preventive security systems depends heavily on synergy between institutions and the clarity of the roles of each actor (Munif et al. 2026).

From the description, it can be seen that the practice of early detection by police intelligence has been ongoing, but it has not been fully integrated into a system capable of bridging the gap between the identification process and preventive measures. Early detection functions more as a social process that relies on interpretation and relationships than as a formal mechanism with a structured workflow. This suggests that its effectiveness is determined not only by the availability of information but also by how it is understood and acted upon within the existing institutional framework.

Police Intelligence Authority in Legal Construction to Prevent Social Conflict

If, in the previous section, it was seen that the practice of early detection runs in dynamics that are not always formal, then the next problem arises when the practice is read within the legal framework that regulates it. At this point, there is a gap between what is done in the field and what is normatively formulated. The role of police intelligence in identifying potential conflicts is undeniable, but when it comes to the authority to deterrence, the limits cannot always be definitively defined.

Normatively, the authority of the police rests on Law Number 2 of 2002, which provides a mandate to maintain public security and order (Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 2 of 2002 concerning the National Police of the Republic of Indonesia 2002). This formulation is broad and leaves room for various forms of action, including preventive ones. However, precisely because of its general nature, the arrangement does not explain in detail how intelligence functions can be operationalized in a concrete, on-the-ground context. As a result,

the authorities are often in a dilemma when assessing whether an action is still within the limits of authority or has the potential to exceed them.

In practice, intelligence functions often stop at the information gathering and processing stages. Potential conflicts can be detected and identified, but follow-up steps are not always taken decisively. This is not simply because intervention is unnecessary, but because there is not a sufficiently clear basis for doing so. This situation creates what can be understood as a gray space in the construction of authority, where practice outpaces its setting.

The community policing approach regulated in Police Regulation No. 1 of 2021 provides a fairly important direction, especially by emphasizing partnerships and community-based problem-solving (Perpolri No. 1 of 2021). However, this approach emphasizes the social relations between the authorities and the community, not the limits of authority in carrying out intelligence-based preventive actions. In other words, the relational dimension is accommodated, but the action dimension still leaves considerable room for interpretation.

From the perspective of state administrative law, this condition poses a complex problem. In principle, every action of a state official must have a clear basis of authority, either through attribution, delegation, or mandate. When the basis is not firmly formulated, what arises is not always an abuse of authority, but doubts in action. In the context of police intelligence, this doubt often determines how the authorities respond to potential conflicts.

In practice, these doubts often lead to the choice to remain in an observational position. Authorities tend to keep their distance from intervention, especially in situations still considered non-urgent. In fact, in many cases, prevention should be carried out at this early stage. When intervention is delayed until conflict develops into a real distraction, the space for prevention becomes increasingly limited.

This shows that the main problem does not lie in the existence or absence of authority, but in how that authority is constructed and understood in practice. Overly general authority tends to create uncertainty, while on-the-ground needs demand more specific and responsive action. In these conditions, the authorities face a difficult choice: act at the risk of exceeding the limits, or not act at the risk of allowing conflict to develop.

A number of studies have shown that the effectiveness of preventive security systems is highly dependent on the clarity of roles and limits of authority between actors (Munif et al. 2026). Without such clarity, coordination becomes difficult to build, and each party tends to move based on its own interpretation. In the context of inter-village conflicts, this condition can lead to a slow response to potential conflicts that have been detected from the outset.

On the other hand, growing practice suggests that the function of intelligence is no longer merely technical, but has become part of social dynamics itself. Intelligence interacts with various actors and influences how conflicts develop and are prevented. However, this development has not been fully followed by adjustments in the existing legal framework. As a result, there is an imbalance between the roles performed and the normative recognition of those roles.

Thus, it can be understood that the authority of police intelligence in the context of conflict prevention has not been fully constructed in the legal system. It provides a sufficient basis for detection, but has not been able to bridge the need for more concrete preventive measures. Under these conditions, practices in the field tend to evolve adaptively, while laws are slower to respond.

In the end, the question of authority cannot be seen solely as a formal legal issue, but also as a question of how the law interacts with evolving social dynamics. When the law is not fully responsive, the room for interpretation will be more open, and practice will take a more dominant role. The question then is no longer whether the authority exists, but how it is exercised within limits that can still be accounted for legally and socially.

Structural Barriers and the Need for Reconstruction of Early Detection Systems in the Prevention of Social Conflicts

If the previous two sections show how early detection is carried out and how its authority is constructed normatively, then this part makes the problem more complex. The obstacles that arise have to do not only with technical limitations in the field but also with the fact that the system itself has not been fully built to bridge the gap between detection and prevention. In many cases, early detection occurs, but it does not always lead to actions that can prevent the escalation of conflict.

One of the most fundamental obstacles lies in the fragmentation of the system. Information obtained by intelligence agencies often remains at the internal level and is not effectively shared with other actors who have the authority to act. In the context of village government, for example, not all information related to potential conflicts can be integrated into the decision-making process. This condition suggests that early detection still operates as a relatively separate function, rather than as part of a coordinated prevention system. In fact,

various studies show that the effectiveness of conflict prevention is highly dependent on the ability to integrate information and response across actors (Munif et al. 2026).

On the other hand, obstacles also arise from the character of the information itself. The information obtained in the early detection process is often uncertain, partial, and highly dependent on interpretation. In a situation like this, decision-making is not simple. Acting too quickly risks causing misunderstandings or even new conflicts, while delays can open the door to escalation. This shows that the issue of early detection is not only about the availability of information, but also about how the information is interpreted in a particular social context (Soekanto 2019).

The development of information technology further complicates the situation. The very rapid flow of information, especially through social media, often does not allow for an adequate verification process. Inaccurate information can easily shape collective perceptions and trigger social reactions that are difficult to control. In these conditions, early detection is no longer only dealing with a direct social reality, but also with a digital reality that moves faster and often unpredictably (Widodo and Baharudin 2022). This requires new capabilities that are not only technical but also adaptive to changing conflict patterns.

In addition to structural and informational factors, obstacles are also related to the aspects of authority discussed earlier. The unclear limits of authority make the apparatus tend to take a safe position, namely, staying at the observation stage. This attitude, while legally understandable, ultimately has implications for the limited room for intervention in the early stages of the conflict. In this context, the law intended to provide certainty can actually limit the flexibility of action in the field (Law No. 2 of 2002).

Another no less important obstacle is the problem of coordination among actors. Conflict prevention cannot be achieved by a single institution. It requires the involvement of various parties, ranging from the security forces to the village government and the community itself. However, in practice, such coordination often does not work optimally. Each actor moves within the framework of his or her own authority and perception, so the responses that arise tend to be out of sync. In fact, research shows that the success of preventive security systems is highly dependent on synergy and clarity of roles between agencies (Indarti 2019).

If you look further, these various obstacles ultimately lead to one main problem: the lack of an integrated early detection system. Detection is still understood as a stand-alone function, rather than as part of a policy lifecycle that connects identification, analysis, and

action. Under these conditions, the success of early detection depends heavily on the initiative of individual authorities rather than on a collectively designed system.

Within this framework, the need to carry out reconstruction is becoming increasingly relevant. The reconstruction in question does not always have to take the form of large-scale regulatory changes, but can begin with strengthening at the operational level. One step is to establish a clearer coordination mechanism among intelligence officials, village governments, and other local actors. This clarity is important to ensure that the information obtained does not stop at the identification stage, but can be acted upon appropriately.

In addition, there needs to be an effort to integrate the social dimension into the early detection system. So far, the approach used remains technical and administrative, even though social conflicts have a highly contextual character. By including the social dimension in the analysis, early detection becomes not only more sensitive to changes but also more relevant for formulating preventive measures.

Strengthening the apparatus's capacity is also an aspect that cannot be ignored. The ability to read social dynamics, understand local contexts, and manage complex information is key to improving the effectiveness of early detection. In this case, an approach based on experience and social closeness needs to be combined with a more systematic strengthening of analytical capacity (Ismawati et al. 2024).

In the end, the reconstruction of early detection systems is not only related to technical or institutional aspects, but also concerns changes in perspective. Early detection needs to be understood not as a stand-alone initial stage, but as part of an ongoing process in conflict prevention. In this way, the relationship between information and action can be made clearer, so that the detected potential conflicts do not remain mere knowledge but become the basis for effective prevention efforts.

Novelty

Conceptual Novelty. This study reconstructs the concept of **early detection** from being merely an intelligence information-gathering mechanism into: “an interpretive, contextual, and socially embedded process involving interaction between legal norms, institutional actors, and local community dynamics.”

Theoretical Novelty. The research develops a **Socio-Legal Intelligence Framework**, positioning early detection at the intersection of: Legal construction of authority, Social practices and community relations, Institutional capacity for conflict prevention.

Empirical Novelty. Unlike previous studies, this research provides empirical evidence from **Cirebon Regency's inter-village conflict context**, demonstrating that: intelligence effectiveness is strongly influenced by informal social networks, community interaction is more significant than formal intelligence systems, prevention failures often result from institutional fragmentation rather than lack of information.

Practical Novelty. The study proposes a reconstruction of the early detection system through the integration of intelligence information and local governance, clearer authority boundaries, coordinated multi-stakeholder conflict-prevention mechanisms, and the incorporation of digital and social dimensions into intelligence operations.

Research Contribution

Theoretical Contribution. Expands socio-legal studies on intelligence and conflict prevention, and introduces the concept of intelligence as a socially embedded institution.

Practical Contribution. Provides recommendations to strengthen intelligence-based conflict prevention systems and supports policy reform on preventive intelligence authority.

Policy Contribution. Offers a framework for integrating police intelligence, village government, and community actors into conflict-prevention governance.

Overall, the police intelligence function for detecting potential conflicts between villages has been carried out in practice, although it has not been built on a fully structured and systematic framework. Early detection occurs primarily through informal social mechanisms, such as community interaction, reading local dynamics, and the use of naturally developed communication networks. In this context, early detection can no longer be understood solely as a technical procedure for information collection but rather as a social practice that relies heavily on the interpretive capacity of authorities to recognize the symptoms of a latent conflict.

However, when the practice is placed within the applicable legal framework, a problem that is not simple arises. Normatively, police intelligence has a basis of authority through a general mandate to maintain public security and order (Law No. 2 of 2002), but it is not accompanied by clarity regarding operational limits in carrying out preventive measures. As a result, early detection often stops at the identification stage, without adequate follow-up intervention. This condition indicates a gap between the ability to detect potential conflicts and the ability to respond to them effectively.

In addition, the obstacles that arise are not only related to aspects of authority but also to the system's structure that has not been integrated. The information obtained is not always

optimally distributed, coordination between actors has not been carried out consistently, and the development of information technology has actually added complexity to the early detection process. In situations like these, early detection tends to operate as a stand-alone function rather than as part of a complete conflict-prevention system.

Departing from these findings, this study emphasizes that the main problem in early detection does not lie in the absence of practice, but in the lack of a connection between the practice and the legal framework and institutional system that supports it. This is where the main contribution of this research lies: namely, in reconstructing the perspective on early detection from what was originally understood as an information-based technical mechanism to a social process that is interpretive, contextual, and intersects with applicable legal construction. This perspective suggests that the effectiveness of early detection is determined not only by the availability of information but also by how it is interpreted and acted upon within the broader system.

These findings have implications that are both theoretical and practical. From an academic perspective, this research expands understanding of the role of police intelligence not only as a security instrument but also as part of the social dynamics that shape the direction of conflict prevention. Meanwhile, in terms of policy, there is a need to build a more integrated early detection system, especially through better coordination among actors and clearer follow-up flows for the information obtained.

In addition, strengthening the apparatus's capacity to understand social dynamics is an aspect that cannot be ignored. Interpretive skills that have been a strength in practice need to be supported by a more systematic analytical framework to avoid complete dependence on subjectivity. In a broader context, it is also important to begin integrating social and digital dimensions into early detection systems, given the changing patterns of conflict, increasingly influenced by the rapid flow of information that is often unverified.

Ultimately, this study shows that early detection cannot be treated as a stand-alone initial stage but rather as part of an ongoing process for preventing social conflict. By placing early detection within a more integrative framework that connects social practices, legal construction, and institutional capacity, conflict prevention efforts become not only more effective but also more responsive to the dynamics of an ever-evolving society.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the police intelligence function in the early detection of inter-village conflicts plays a strategic role in preventing the escalation of social conflict, yet its implementation remains constrained by legal, institutional, and operational limitations. In practice, early detection is predominantly conducted through informal social mechanisms, including community engagement, local communication networks, and the interpretation of social dynamics, rather than through a fully structured intelligence system. These findings demonstrate that early detection should be understood not merely as a technical process of information gathering, but as an interpretive and contextual social practice that depends heavily on the ability of intelligence personnel to understand local realities. From a legal perspective, although Law No. 2 of 2002 and related regulations provide a general mandate to maintain public security and order, they do not clearly define the operational boundaries of the intelligence authority's powers in carrying out preventive interventions. Consequently, intelligence activities often stop at identifying potential conflicts, without being followed by effective preventive actions. This situation reflects a gap between the normative framework and the practical needs of conflict prevention at the local level. Furthermore, the effectiveness of early detection is hindered by fragmented institutional coordination, limited integration between intelligence information and policy responses, and the increasing complexity of conflict dynamics influenced by digital information and social media. The absence of an integrated early warning and response system limits the ability of intelligence findings to translate into timely preventive measures. Therefore, strengthening conflict prevention requires the reconstruction of the early detection system through clearer legal authority, improved inter-agency coordination, stronger integration between intelligence information and local governance mechanisms, and enhanced analytical capacity of intelligence personnel. The study ultimately argues that effective conflict prevention can only be achieved when early detection is framed as an integrated process that connects social practice, legal construction, institutional capacity, and coordinated policy action. Such an approach will enable police intelligence not only to identify potential conflicts but also to contribute more effectively to sustainable social stability and public security.

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