



Police Anthropology as an Interdisciplinary Framework for Reforming Lemdiklat Polri: Bridging Cultural Gaps in Indonesia's Multicultural Policing Context

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Abstract

Background: Police education in Indonesia is largely based on legalistic and managerial paradigms that almost completely ignore sociocultural aspects. While no single mechanism accounts for this misleading tendency, such bias nonetheless continues to distort supposedly reforming policies that stray far from field realities particularly in multicultural societies where police-community interactions carry cultural dimensions that exceed mere contextual differences.

Objective: This study analyzes the contribution of police anthropology to strengthening the curriculum and learning models that *Lemdiklat Polri* produces toward integrative model implementation.

Methods: A qualitative, interpretive literature review of *Polri* policy documents, semi-structured interviews (8 key informants), and critical discourse analysis were employed in this study. Thematic analysis was performed to identify themes related to curriculum challenges and sociocultural aspects.

Results: The findings showed that the current course content is largely grounded in law and procedure, resulting in officers with technical competence but lacking knowledge of cultural norms, intercultural communication skills, or adequate negotiation techniques. The study subsequently developed an integrative framework MIAP-POLRI to incorporate police anthropology (emic perspectives, participatory ethnography, and culturally grounded learning methods) as a core component of the proposed training model.

Conclusion: Police anthropology has the potential to elevate police education, and therefore professionalism, operational effectiveness, and public trust. A shift from procedural compliance-based policing to a fully community-centered and human-centered practice contributes to theory building while generating pragmatic policy recommendations for redesigning the training program for the Indonesian police.

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INTRODUCTION

The paradigms of legal science and managerial science have historically constituted the basis for police science, while sociocultural dimensions have been neglected. Where the legal approach is concerned, as Glaser & Wilson (1969) asserts: "The police function is primarily a matter of enforcing rules via legal sanctions" (p. 16), which emphasizes compliance and juridical normative aspects this approach is heavily colored by positivism. Nevertheless, humans and social life are not as linear as this positivist viewpoint suggests. Moreover, the traditional view of police science is also more often than not framed through a managerial lens concerned with bureaucratic efficiency and resource allocation (Ostrom et al., 1978): "Efficiency in policing is determined by

resource optimization and response time metrics" (p. 92). Both of these models perpetuate reductionism by overlooking the human complexity of police organizations. Lynch & Manning (1982) criticized this as "the fallacy of reducing policing to a set of quantifiable outputs" (p. 45), which does not reflect the day-to-day actualities of officers (Fassin, 2017).

The theory practice gap the unyielding focus on conventional methods (legal, managerial) and organizational routines represent a global resistance to policy changes. According to Reiner (2010), "Police culture is a latent force in policing [which] serves as an invisible barrier to reform, sustaining levels of cynicism and isolation even when structural change has taken place" (p. 117). This is in line with Indonesia's National Police Commission (2022), which finds that 65% of the estimated number of complaints received by police are related to cases involving human rights violations, as recorded in the Kompolnas Annual Evaluation Report 2022. Only 4% of Polri reform programs were successful because they were incompatible with local culture. The legal approach which in Lemdiklat takes the form of a curriculum where one of the main focuses is legality, comprising roughly 70% of instructional hours, making officers unprepared to respond in culturally complex field situations has also been found to be blind to power relations operating within police-community interactions. Fassin (2013) writes: "Legalistic frameworks obscure the moral economies at work in everyday policing" (p. 23). This attests to the inability of standard forms of scholarly research to capture current anthropological and societal dynamics.

"Police anthropology is more than another perspective; it reflects a particular way of looking at the police institution as a cultural unit, with its own system of meanings, rituals, and power relations. This allows us to analyze informal practices like so-called 'peace money' or corps solidarity that resists the determining factors of successful reform (Hapsin & Nurdin, 2022; Haripin & Siregar, 2018). By understanding the internal logic of the police from the actor's point of view (emic), education and training policies can be designed not only normatively but also contextually and in a grounded manner."

Police anthropology was born as a response to the limitations of rigid macro and traditional approaches. Cavan & Banton (1965) pioneered ethnographic studies by emphasizing: "To understand policing, one must immerse in the lifeworld of officers and the communities they serve" (p. ix). Lynch & Manning (1982) deepened this approach through participant observation, stating: "The symbolic world of police rituals, jargon, and tacit codes reveals more about their behavior than formal protocols" (p. 8). This micro approach uncovers "hidden transcripts" Field & Scott (1994) in police culture, such as mechanisms for forming group solidarity and resistance to external authority. Fielding & Maanen (1989) added: "Ethnography uncovers the dramaturgy of police work where appearance shapes reality" (p. 56).

Added to this is Indonesia's condition as a plural and multicultural society, thus requiring an anthropological approach to understand police-community relations (Belshaw & Furnivall, 1956). Belshaw & Furnivall (1956) described colonial society as "a medley of peoples—mixed but not combined" (p. 304), a legacy that still influences Polri-community relations post-reform. Suparlan (2014) emphasized: "Policing in multicultural societies demands cultural brokerage to navigate plural norms" (p. 15). Post-1998 Reform, demands for transparency clashed with the police institution's "closed" culture. Conflicts such as managing ethnic riots in Papua or Aceh or handling marginal groups demonstrate the need for an anthropology-based approach to build participatory policing, evidence-based policy, and humanism within the Indonesian context.

Although studies on Polri's organizational culture have been conducted, no research has systematically integrated the perspective of police anthropology into the curriculum design and training methods of Lemdiklat. Previous studies have mostly highlighted macro aspects of bureaucratic reform or micro police-community interactions separately. Meanwhile, Polri education policy is still dominated by a legalistic-managerial approach that ignores cultural dimensions. Thus, there is a gap between the need for a holistic approach capable of bridging macro and micro levels and the availability of applicable educational models. This article fills that gap by offering an integrative framework based on contextual police anthropology for Lemdiklat Polri.

Three central research questions drive this study. The first explores the definition, boundaries, and emergence of police anthropology as a new interdisciplinary field. The second explores the gaps in the current Lemdiklat Polri curriculum and training techniques that police

anthropology can fill, especially those related to organizational culture, cross-cultural communication, and local wisdom-based conflict resolution. The third examines the extent to which an integration model of police anthropology can be implemented in the Lemdiklat curriculum, such as the structure of the course, interactive learning processes, developing instructor competencies, and the model of measuring its application.

Based on these research questions, this study aims to accomplish three objectives. The first objective is to examine police anthropology as a contemporary interdisciplinary field of relevance to policing. The second objective is to identify the prospects of police anthropology that can contribute to bolstering the education and training system in Lemdiklat Polri. The third objective is to propose an integrated model to be applied to police education and training, in order to make police officers more adaptable, contextualized, and humane.

Theoretical and Practical Significance of the Study This research is intended to theoretically contribute to the discourse of police anthropology in Indonesia and to enrich police education and training from a sociocultural perspective. Furthermore, the practical implication is to provide applicable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners in Lemdiklat Polri, specifically Pusdik, SPN, and STIK, to enhance the relevant curriculum and training so that Polri can address the diversity of multicultural levels of society.

METHOD

This research used a qualitative study approach with an interpretive paradigm that views social reality as a construction of meaning. Within this framework, knowledge is not found but interpreted through deep understanding of text and context. Operationally, the research proceeded in three stages: (1) systematic literature mapping using keyword searches ("police anthropology," "police ethnography," "police education Indonesia," "Lemdiklat Polri," "multicultural policing") across Scopus, JSTOR, and Google Scholar; (2) semi-structured interviews (45–60 minutes each) with eight purposively selected key informants transcribed verbatim and coded using NVivo 12; and (3) critical discourse analysis Weissenrieder & Fairclough (1997) of Polri policy documents to identify how language and institutional narratives reproduce or challenge the legalistic-managerial paradigm. The approach was qualitative with an analytical literature review design, allowing the researcher to explore, interpret, and critically synthesize academic discourse and policies on police anthropology and Polri education. Data sources included: (a) primary data from interviews with instructors at SPN, training centers, and academics from the Indonesian National Police Service Academy, State Intelligence College, University of Indonesia, and Defense University; and (b) secondary data in the form of academic literature, policy documents, news archives, media reports, ethnographic notes, and previous research.

In order to gain comprehensive insight, this research also conducted semi-structured interviews with eight key informants purposively selected: two SPN Central Java instructors, one STIK lecturer, one State Intelligence College academic, one University of Indonesia academic, and three participants consisting of a first officer who had served in Papua and University of Indonesia anthropologists who had previously conducted research on Polri. These interviews related to the informants' personal experiences from working in the field, curriculum deficits, and cross-cultural challenges and needs. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to confirm or refine findings from the literature review.

Accordingly, the data sources were comprised of three types. The first type encompassed primary academic literature in accredited international and national journals related to police anthropology. The second type consisted of official Polri policy documents relating to Lemdiklat curriculum and training methods. The third type comprised contextual and empirical data from in-depth interview reports, focus group discussions (FGDs), field notes, ethnographic research reports conducted internally within Polri, as well as case studies of police-community interactions in Indonesia. Selection of sources was determined by theoretical relevance and scientific authority, along with the level of empirical data presented.

Interviews were conducted for 45–60 minutes each, concentrating on the informants' empirical experiences of curriculum gaps, cross-cultural communication challenges faced in the field, and recommendations to incorporate anthropological perspectives. Interviews were recorded, verbatim transcribed, and anonymized. Literature data were collected through

snowball sampling from key literature, tracing references from cited sources to identify further relevant materials.

As a researcher with a background in police education and anthropology, the author occupied an "insider-outsider" position in this research. Being an instructor in Lemdiklat offered emic experience, whereas the anthropological lens allowed etic critique. This reflexivity was maintained by continuously questioning personal assumptions and confirming findings through discussions with academic colleagues (peer debriefing).

Data sources consisted of reputable academic literature (Scopus-indexed international journals, monographs, and dissertations) and Polri policy documents. The analysis technique used thematic analysis Braun & Clarke (2006) with stages: data familiarization, open coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining themes. To ensure data validity, source triangulation and peer debriefing with academic colleagues were conducted.

The data analysis technique used critical thematic analysis Braun & Clarke (2006) consisting of six stages: (a) data familiarization by repeatedly reading all interview transcripts and literature and noting initial ideas; (b) initial coding by coding text segments relevant to research questions, such as cultural resistance, cross-cultural communication, uniform symbols, peace money, and "cultural intelligence"; (c) searching for themes by grouping codes into potential themes such as informal organizational culture and curriculum gaps; (d) reviewing themes by checking whether themes functioned coherently; (e) defining and naming themes; and (f) report writing. Critical discourse analysis Weissenrieder & Fairclough (1997) was used to deconstruct power relations in policy documents and academic discourse on policing, particularly how language and symbols reproduce or challenge the dominance of the legalistic-managerial paradigm.

To ensure data trustworthiness, this study incorporated public trust data from the Kompolnas Annual Evaluation Report, Ombudsman RI (2022) complaint data, and Lembaga Survei Indonesia (LSI, 2023) public satisfaction surveys as empirical anchors for the problem analysis. These institutional sources provided verifiable, quantitative baselines against which qualitative interview findings and literature-based arguments were triangulated, strengthening the credibility and transferability of the research conclusions. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing findings from academic literature, policy documents, interview data, and field ethnographic studies; transferability, dependability, and confirmability were subsequently addressed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Concept and Scope of Police Anthropology as an Interdisciplinary Field

Police anthropology is an interdisciplinary branch of study that brings together anthropology, sociology, criminology, and police science. Fassin (2017) defines it as "the ethnographic study of police institutions and practices that examines how state power is embodied and experienced in daily interactions." Unlike normative legal approaches or technocratic managerial ones, police anthropology emphasizes deep understanding of the police's social world and their relations with society through distinctive anthropological methods, especially participatory ethnography (Karpiak & Garriott, 2018). Anthropology, with its distinctive tool of participatory ethnography, engages directly with those being studied.

The historical roots of police anthropology can be traced back to Westley's studies on violence and secrecy in United States policing. More systematic development subsequently emerged during the 1970s–1980s amid the legitimacy crisis of policing in Western countries and increasing anthropological interest in state institutions (Lynch & Manning, 1982). These early groundbreaking texts such as *Policing the Inner City* and *Tales of the Field* served as notable foundation stones of the field. In Indonesia, ethnography as a genre of policing research has been emerging based on the works of Asmin on corps culture within the Central Java Regional Police, post-New Order reform challenges for police, and police-urban community encounters in Jakarta.

Thematically, police anthropology covers five main areas: (1) organizational culture and police subculture, exploring informal values, group solidarity, and resistance to change (Lynch & Manning, 1982); (2) police-community interactions, including discretion practices, stereotypes,

and power dynamics in community policing (Fassin, 2013); (3) rituals and symbols, such as uniforms, specialized language, and ceremonies that reproduce meaning and authority; (4) ethnography of police institutions, from police station level to training academies; and (5) power and bureaucracy, deconstructing discretion practices, accountability, and moral economies such as "peace money" practices, as well as social network analysis approaches. For analytical clarity, these five thematic areas are condensed into three core analytical domains: (a) organizational culture and symbolic practices; (b) police-community interaction and discretion; and (c) power, bureaucracy, and accountability.

The emic (insider) approach is a hallmark of police anthropology. Researchers want to know how police, as cultural actors, make sense of the world, what meanings they attach to it, and how they experience their subjective reality. This allows for revealing hidden transcripts those values and practices not publicly visible in formal documents. Emic comprehension, as Weissenrieder & Fairclough (1997) argues, is essential to ensure that the reform policies being devised align with field realities, and not merely in terms of structural adjustment.

This article argues that integrating police anthropology into Lemdiklat not only enriches cadets' insights but also reorients the police education paradigm from mere procedure transfer toward forming cultural reflexivity. Thus, this study contributes to the development of more humane and contextual police education, while answering the call of Fassin (2017) and Karpiak & Garriott (2018) to expand police ethnography in countries like Indonesia.

When anthropology studies humans (*Anthropos*), and police science studies social problems and their handling, police anthropology is an interdisciplinary field that examines police institutions, culture, and their interaction practices with society through anthropological lenses and methods. For every cultural unit that has cultural guidelines and behaviors, it is important to understand the police as a cultural group, analyzing power, authority, state violence, and social control (Suparlan, 2014).

The development of police anthropology occurred alongside the legitimacy crisis of policing in many Western countries, with more systematic interest developing in the 1970s–1980s, including works such as *Policing the Inner City* by Lynch & Manning (1982) and *Tales of the Field* by Fielding & Maanen (1989). Police anthropology is inherently interdisciplinary, borrowing theories and methods not only from socio-cultural anthropology, but also from sociology (especially symbolic interactionism and organizational studies), criminology, political science (bureaucracy studies, power), and even law. It bridges the gap between macro analysis of the state and law enforcement and micro observation of everyday practices and meanings empirically constructed by actors in the field.

The Education and Training Institute (Lemdiklat) of Polri has a hierarchical structure encompassing PTIK-STIK, SPN, and various education centers (Perkap No. 7 Tahun 2022). A competency-based curriculum, which refers to the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) that integrates hard skills (law, procedures, technology) and soft skills (leadership, ethics, and communication), is used as the pattern in the teaching-learning process (Sloan et al., 2025). But serious structural and cultural weaknesses remain.

The predominance of legal and procedural content in police education has been documented empirically at a national scale. Sloan et al. (2025), analyzing secondary data from 591 U.S. police academies, found that while academies adopted a shared core curriculum, they consistently prioritized certain training areas particularly those tied to crime-fighting and operational functions while allocating significantly fewer hours to others. The study confirmed that basic training remained disproportionately centered on warrior-style instruction, failing to proportionally teach needed human relations and interpersonal communication activities. Cultural diversity, by contrast, was subsumed under community-oriented policing among the least-prioritized curriculum categories. An SPN instructor revealed:

"We know in Papua or Aceh the approach is different, but the training modules are the same all over. What is taught, of course, is only general techniques, and there is no mention of customs or history of conflict there. And so our graduates sometimes find it shocking when they are posted to more vulnerable parts of the country." (Interview, SPN Instructor 2, 2025)

The quote highlights the gap between what specific contexts require and the lack of variation in the national curriculum to address those needs; it bolsters FICCI's (2020) argument about the importance of contextualizing training materials.

Second, training techniques remain dominated by drills and lectures emphasizing compliance rather than critical thinking. Cross-cultural communication training, for example, focuses more on verbal techniques than understanding the social structure of local communities. A STIK lecturer added:

"We don't yet have a specific module on conflict negotiation based on local wisdom. Yet in the field, often the informal approach is the most effective." (Interview, STIK Lecturer, 2025)

Third, the nationally uniform curriculum fails to accommodate cultural diversity. In fact, the challenges for police in Aceh (post-conflict) differ from those in Papua (ethnic conflict and separatism) or in metropolitan cities. An officer who served in Papua recounted:

"There, understanding the customary structure and community leaders is far more important than just memorizing articles. If we go in with a formal style, they actually distance themselves... similarly if we serve in Aceh (before the tsunami) and then admit to being Javanese, oh no, that's it." (Interview, Papua Officer, 2025)

The themes usually relate to, first, police organizational culture and subculture, exploring core values, norms, beliefs, and informal practices that shape shared identity among police including in-depth depictions of the "dramaturgy of control" and policing actions often characterized by strong group solidarity, high suspicion, and situational control (Donahue, 2023). Second, police-community interaction and community policing, where ethnography can examine in detail police relations with citizens and communities in various social contexts (patrol, investigation, security, riots, etc.), covering stereotypes, discrimination, social inclusion and exclusion, bias, power dynamics, and the influence of cooperation, competition, and conflict between social units affecting these interactions. Third, rituals and symbols in policing analyze how meaning is constructed and reinforced through symbolic practices, uniforms, procedures, specialized language and terms, ceremonies or rituals, and the utilization of social space. Fourth, ethnography of police institutions, where an in-depth ethnographic approach is used to understand the internal logic, routines, decision-making, and daily challenges encountered in police organizations from police stations to training academies. Fifth, power and bureaucracy, exploring how state power is operationalized and experienced in policing practices, including analysis of discretion, internal bureaucracy, accountability, and resistance (Fassin, 2017).

Theoretical and analytical frameworks applicable to the five themes above include Social Network Ethnography, symbolic interpretive theory, organizational theory, power theory, density theory, clustering, and so forth (Bertelsen, 2017; Lynch & Manning, 1982; Sollu & Anggiani, 2024).

The Education and Training Institute (Lemdiklat) of the Republic of Indonesia National Police (Polri) is the backbone of police human resource development. Its structure is hierarchical and functional, designed to meet the needs of foundational education, general development, specialized development, and advanced development (Peraturan Kapolri No. 7 Tahun 2022 tentang Organisasi dan Tata Kerja Lembaga Pendidikan dan Pelatihan Polri). Main units include the Police Science College (PTIK)–National Police Service Academy (STIK), State Police Schools (SPN), and Education Centers such as Propam, Brimob, Lantas, Reskrim, and Intelkam (Belur et al., 2019; Fikri et al., 2025).

Broadly, Lemdiklat functions to: (1) produce professional and character-driven Polri personnel; (2) develop competencies according to career paths and specializations; (3) shape attitudes and behaviors based on police values; (4) prepare future police leaders; and (5) develop police science and technology.

The current Lemdiklat Polri curriculum is based on the Competency-Based Polri Education Curriculum designed to meet the Indonesian National Work Competency Standards (SKKNI) in the police field. This curriculum integrates aspects of hard skills (legal knowledge, operational procedures, investigation techniques, technology use) and soft skills (leadership, communication, and ethics) (Heri, 2019). Methods used typically include lectures, demonstrations and exercises, case studies, simulations, and role-playing, which cultivate reflective skills, creative problem-solving, cultural sensitivity, and critical understanding of the social dynamics of a pluralistic society. The Paradox of Policing: a critical question rarely addressed in Indonesian police education is how an officer can remain humane when confronted with an anarchic or violent situation. This paradox what Klockars calls "the Dirty Harry problem" reflects the tension between rule-following and situational moral judgment. Police anthropology addresses this

through the concept of "practical wisdom" (phronesis), equipping officers to apply ethical reasoning contextually rather than procedurally. Training that incorporates moral dilemma simulations, de-escalation ethnography, and case studies of successful non-coercive conflict resolution in Papua and Aceh can operationalize this approach. This dimension is highly valued in international policing.

Discussion

Broadly speaking, the task and function of the police is to maintain and preserve social regularity and social order, encompassing community service, community protection, and law enforcement. With the social diversity present in Indonesia, a curriculum that addresses socio-cultural diversity and is responsive to the communities where police serve is necessary. Interactive and dialogic methods can also enrich cross-cultural negotiation strategies, community-based conflict management, and understanding of implicit bias (Heri, 2019). It is important to clarify that a strong hierarchical organizational culture, such as Polri's militaristic structure, does NOT inherently promote critical thinking or open dialogue on the contrary, it tends to suppress these through mechanisms of esprit de corps, a culture of silence, and deference to rank (Mills & Scott, 1983). However, these same hierarchical structures can be strategically engaged by embedding police anthropology training within formal chain-of-command authority (e.g., mandatory modules endorsed by Kapolri), thereby using the hierarchy as a vehicle for reform rather than an obstacle to it. The integrative need for social sciences such as deep understanding of anthropology, sociology, social psychology, peace studies, and policing is still not met, yet it is crucial for effective police-community interaction in a plural country to increase participation. This is especially pertinent given Indonesia's high social diversity and the considerable variation in inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic group relations.

This model is based on three pillars: (a) police anthropology as the main perspective, (b) an emic approach to understanding internal police culture, and (c) social network ethnography, to analyze patterns of micro-interaction between police and community as well as among police members. This approach enables identification of key actors, network cohesion, and social resources that influence policing practices.

Research Gaps: Although Suparlan's foundational study establishes police anthropology in Indonesia, it predates digital policing and does not address digital transformation implications for humanistic public services in the 4.0 era. Similarly, Agusyanto's social network ethnography (2007) has not yet been applied to digital social networks or algorithmic policing contexts. No reviewed study empirically measures the effectiveness of anthropologically informed police training on crime rates or community trust a critical gap that future quantitative studies must address.

The benefits include: first, increased legitimacy for personnel who understand and appreciate diversity, creating better relationships with the community and thereby building public trust (Tyler, 2021). Second, operational effectiveness through effective communication, peaceful conflict management, and understanding of the social roots of problems, leading to greater success in case handling and crime prevention. Third, enhanced professionalism through the integration of ethics and human rights values, producing wiser and more accountable decisions (Haberfeld, 2013). Fourth, organizational resilience through producing adaptive and reflective graduates capable of responding to social changes and future complex challenges.

Many countries implement social science-based and multicultural approaches. Scandinavia (Norway and Sweden), for example, applies problem-based learning, ethics, human rights, non-violent communication, and real situation-based training. Canada includes modules on the history and culture of Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit). The UK develops an evidence-based policing curriculum encompassing psychology, criminology, and sociology through the Police Education Qualification Framework (PEQF) (College of Policing, 2023). Australia incorporates cross-cultural communication training and cultural awareness of Indigenous peoples (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) as a mandatory component. Comparative studies show that deep integration of social sciences and humanities and contextual learning methods correlates positively with increased professionalism and police-community relations (Haberfeld, 2013).

Police anthropology offers a unique approach to understanding police institutions

through analysis of culture, symbols, and interactions between actors different from legal or management approaches. An anthropological perspective enables deep understanding of police daily life and their relationship with society (Fassin, 2017). First, it enables understanding of organizational culture by uncovering the values, norms, and informal practices that shape police identity, as illustrated by Lynch & Manning (1982) work on the "dramaturgy of control" in police social interactions. Second, symbolic analysis reads various cultural artifacts such as uniforms, rituals, and language—as cultural texts that reproduce meaning and power (Fielding & Maanen, 1989). Third, social network ethnography and micro-interaction analysis can examine police-police or police-community interactions as arenas for negotiating meaning, power, and policy, thereby operationalizing abstract concepts (Fassin, 2013).

Feilzer & Loftus (2024) explains that police culture refers to a set of shared attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that characterize the police as an institution where informal values and assumptions shape how officers perceive and act within their work environment, which often operates beneath the surface of the police organization's official facade. Wiley Online Library Charman (2024), through a longitudinal study of new recruits, found that the formal socialization process actually exacerbates the pressure on officers to conform to existing cultural norms, so that the organization's official values are often overshadowed by cultural conformity at the field level. Third, urban ethnography reveals that social group dynamics can influence both police-citizen and police-police interactions. Studies on "peace money" reveal a system related to resolving minor cases (Haripin & Siregar, 2018; Saraswati et al., 2023).

Problems in integrating socio-cultural and police anthropology approaches include: first, the dominance of technical-procedural aspects, as the curriculum is dominated by law courses (70%) and operational skills (Heri, 2019), while cultural aspects appear as inserts without conceptual deepening. Second, drill-based training methods emphasize compliance over critical thinking—cross-cultural communication training at SPN, for example, focuses more on verbal techniques than understanding social structure (Belur et al., 2019; Fikri et al., 2025). Third, the nationally uniform curriculum fails to accommodate local cultural diversity; for example, modules for police in Aceh and Papua need to be clearly differentiated. Aceh should preferably address historical vertical conflict, and Papua should preferably incorporate more indigenous cultural content.

The potential contribution of police anthropology to police education ideally includes teaching basic concepts of culture, ethnocentrism, holism, and cultural relativism; ethnography of Indonesian society mapping local cultural diversity and patterns of interaction with authority; social network ethnography mapping actors interconnected through social relationships while maintaining resources (as fulfillment of human needs); and ethnography of organizational culture in the police through critical reflection on subcultures, unwritten values, and internal reform.

Training methods could include culturally sensitive role-play scenarios such as customary conflict in Papua or urban community resistance (College of Policing, 2023), structured participatory observation with field practice in traditional markets or marginal communities to train empathy, analysis of real cases such as the handling of land conflicts based on local culture, and social network mapping of strategic resources in the police.

Competency formation also relates to cultural intelligence specifically, reading non-verbal cultural codes in interactions critical ethical reflection through reflective journals to analyze moral dilemmas in assignments, and cultural-based conflict analysis, meaning understanding the socio-cultural roots of communal riots (Haberfeld, 2013).

In the interdisciplinary integration model, proposed elements include a 20-hour module for cross-cultural communication basics with multi-ethnic simulations and structured observation in traditional markets; mandatory police anthropology courses; integration of cultural perspectives in investigative procedure courses; and advanced courses such as analysis of police organizational culture and mini-ethnography methods (Karpiak & Garriott, 2018). Collaborative training with anthropology faculties at UI, UGM, and UNPAD for facilitator training is also recommended (Haberfeld, 2013), as are contextual training modules such as materials specific to regions (cultural approach to border patrols in Papua and Kalimantan) and peace strategies in Manado and Palu communities. Furthermore, research projects for police-anthropology lecturers on Polri organizational culture are important.

Participant observation, as conducted in covert research within the Chicago Police (Fielding & Maanen, 1989), is also needed, though it poses security risks and ethical dilemmas regarding researcher neutrality in conflict situations. Strict protocols are equally needed to protect both research subjects and researchers, especially in sensitive studies regarding corruption or violence (Fassin, 2017).

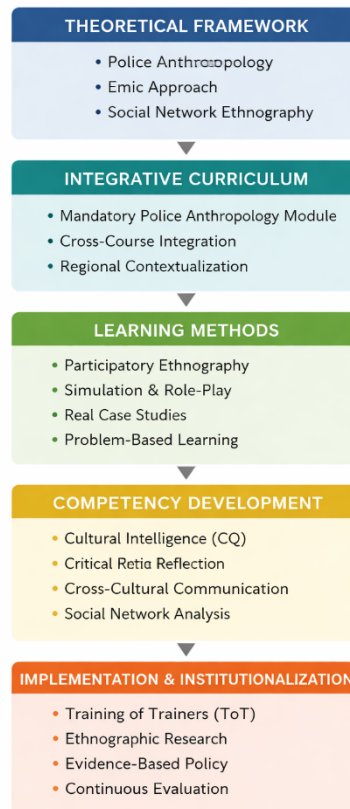


Figure 1. Flowchart Infographic Visually Presents an Integrated Police Education
Source: Author (2025)

In terms of theoretical and epistemological foundations, police anthropology is an interdisciplinary field combining anthropology, sociology, criminology, and police science. It employs an emic approach to understanding police culture from within—that is, from the perspective of the subjects studied themselves—encompassing their values, norms, and informal practices, alongside social network ethnography to analyze micro-interactions between police and community as well as among fellow police officers. Second, it emphasizes an integrative curriculum, such as mandatory police anthropology modules covering concepts of culture, ethnography, cultural relativism, and symbolic analysis, through cross-course integration that embeds cultural perspectives on Indonesia's social diversity into law, investigation, leadership, and communication courses. There is also a need for a contextual curriculum consisting of special modules for regions with unique socio-cultural characteristics and regional contextualization (e.g., Aceh, Papua, urban settings, etc.). Next, the importance of participatory learning methods—specifically participatory ethnography—with structured observation in cultural communities such as traditional markets, correctional facilities, and narcotics networks for the identification of vulnerabilities and conflict potential, is likewise underscored. Simulation and role-play based on cultural conflict and cross-cultural negotiation are also important, complemented by real case studies through analysis of conflict resolution based on local wisdom and problem-based learning using real problems drawn from the field.

Competency development is also important, encompassing cultural intelligence to read non-verbal cultural codes, critical reflection on ethical and cultural dilemmas, dialogic and empathetic cross-cultural communication, and social network analysis to map actors and social relations in the police context. In terms of implementation, the importance of Training of Trainers

through collaboration with various universities, ethnographic research, evidence-based policy, and continuous evaluation to measure the impact of anthropology integration on police-community relations and performance cannot be overstated. Challenges and mitigation strategies to be addressed include resistance to change within the bureaucracy, limited qualified instructional staff, complex ethical dilemmas, and an overcrowded curriculum.

CONCLUSION

This article contributes two core arguments to the scholarship on police education and organizational reform in Indonesia. First, it establishes through systematic conceptual analysis that conventional legalistic-managerial curricula at Lemdiklat Polri are structurally inadequate for producing officers capable of navigating Indonesia's multicultural complexity. The prevailing procedural paradigm—noting that 70% of all training hours consist of legal content leaves meaningful gaps in cultural competence, conflict resolution, and empathetic community engagement. Second, the MIAP-Polri model is proposed as an actionable integrative framework for operationalizing police anthropology's emic approach through curriculum reform, participatory learning methods (PLM), and social network ethnography. Humanist Policing as articulated in this framework is not a branding exercise or superficial institutional fix; it entails an epochal reorientation of policing values from the enforcement of compliance to contextual authority—from an institution that simply imposes rules on communities to one that understands, negotiates, and co-constructs social order with those communities. The merging of Dittipidsiber Bareskrim Polri into Lemdiklat Polri carries the potential to reinforce education and training quality, forming more reflective officers equipped with a cultural mindset, proactive in engaging with the community, as well as supporting the bureaucratic transformation of Polri toward professionalism grounded in culture. Integration should be gradual and comprehensive across all divisions of Lemdiklat. Among the concrete recommendations put forward are: promoting anthropological approaches to assessing police performance, creating opportunities for interdisciplinary research projects between academic institutions and police agencies, and making police anthropology mandatory in education. These recommendations lead to concrete implications such as (a) the implementation of mandatory Police Anthropology modules, each comprising 20 hours in SPN and STIK, covering cultural relativism, ethnographic methods, and cultural fieldwork; (b) localization of training materials for high-conflict regions including Papua, Aceh, and Kalimantan border areas through to Tarakan; (c) Training of Trainers (ToT) programs with anthropology departments at UI, UGM, UNPAD, and other institutions; (d) a commitment to conducting ethnographic research projects at Lemdiklat that function as graduation requirements; and (e) an annual curricular review using Kopolnas' community satisfaction survey. These specific interventions are intended to promote ethnographic research—both network-based and non-network-based—within the police institutional environment and practice.

The study recommends several avenues for future empirical inquiry: (1) longitudinal studies tracking whether anthropologically trained officers consistently achieve higher community trust scores, fewer use-of-force incidents, and better conflict resolution rates compared to conventionally trained peers; (2) comparative studies of police anthropology curriculum integration outcomes between Indonesia, the Philippines, and South Africa—three nations sharing similarly complex multicultural policing and post-colonial challenges; and (3) digital-policing ethnography examining how social media, algorithmic surveillance, and community digital platforms alter micro-police-community interactions in the 4.0 context.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The study was conceptualized by Benyamin Lufpi, he also performed data collection and wrote the paper. Poppy Setiawati Nurisnaeny contributed to theoretical framework, literature review and assisted in interpretation of findings. Both authors contributed equally to the conceptualization, design, and writing of this manuscript, which accurately represents this research. Every author approved the final manuscript and participated in the revisions.

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