

## Virtual Police in the Indonesian Constitutional System: A Restorative Justice Approach to Cybercrime Prevention (An Empirical Study in Sambas Regency)

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### Abstract

The Virtual Police Approach as Restorative Justice Prioritizes Preventive Efforts. Indeed, there is a close relationship between preventive policing and crime prevention. Preventive policing is part of crime prevention; however, crime prevention encompasses a broader scope than preventive policing alone. This study aims to analyze the implementation of virtual police within the Indonesian constitutional system as part of cybercrime prevention efforts, as regulated in the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE), and to describe the effectiveness of virtual police in this context. This research employs a qualitative method and is classified as empirical legal research, utilizing both normative legal and descriptive-analytical approaches. Data were obtained through interviews and observations, using purposive sampling techniques. The results of the study reveal that the implementation of virtual police is a manifestation of the enforcement of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (executive function) as a legal effort to prevent cybercrime. The presence of virtual police as law enforcers has made cybercrime prevention more effective, supported by a strong legal framework. However, challenges remain in the form of societal legal culture, particularly the public's lack of awareness and compliance in the digital space.

**Keywords: Virtual Police, Constitutional System, Restorative Approach.**



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### INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement in information technology has led to a substantial transformation in patterns of social interaction within Indonesian society (Amelia & Balqis, 2023; Huzaimah, 2019). However, this progress has also brought new challenges in the form of increasing cybercrimes, such as the spread of hoaxes, hate speech, and defamation on social media platforms (Ratulangi et al., 2021). Data from the Indonesian National Police indicate a rising trend in cases of violations of Law No. 11/2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE Law) and its amendments, most recently amended by Law No. 1/2024 (Pusiknas Bareskrim Polri, 2023). According to Cyber Patrol data, the highest number of cases reported involved online fraud, with 14,495 reports, followed by cases of threats of violence (online extortion) with 8,614 reports, and defamation with 6,556 reports. Meanwhile, the least reported cases included illegal narcotics (sales via internet/social media) with 42 reports, human

trafficking with 36 reports, and online trade in protected wildlife with 6 reports (*Patroli Siber | Statistik*, 2025).

In the legal jurisdiction of Sambas Regency, data from the Sambas Police Resort (Polres Sambas) recorded the number of police reports related to the ITE Law as follows: 1 case in 2019, 5 cases in 2020, 2 cases in 2021, 2 cases in 2022, 2 cases in 2023, and 1 case in 2024 that reached permanent legal force, namely Case No. 591/Pid.Sus/2024/PN Ptk. Although the number of reported cases related to the ITE Law tends to fluctuate and remains relatively low in quantitative terms with an average of 1–5 cases per year over the past five years this actually indicates a hidden issue in the form of social symptoms, such as low public legal awareness in digital spaces and a lack of understanding about freedom of expression in cyberspace. In this context, there is growing concern over over-criminalization and the chilling effect, which discourages the public from expressing their opinions on social media for fear of being reported or prosecuted.

As a response to the phenomenon previously described, the Indonesian National Police initiated the Virtual Police program, which aims to implement a preventive approach through educational warnings to social media users who are potentially in violation of the ITE Law. This approach aligns with the principles of restorative justice, which emphasize the restoration of social relations and education rather than mere punishment (Baihaky & Isnawati, 2024). This is reflected in the Chief of Police Circular Letter Number SE/2/II/2021 concerning Awareness of Ethical Culture to Create a Clean, Healthy, and Productive Indonesian Digital Space (SE Kapolri No. SE/2/II/2021). Nevertheless, the implementation of this restorative approach in practice faces major challenges, especially in regions such as Sambas Regency. To date, there has been no visible mechanism for involving local communities, no system for monitoring implementation, and no success indicators for the Virtual Police that could ensure its effectiveness as a preventive instrument (Hanum et al., 2024).

Until now, previous research has discussed police enforcement against hoax-related crimes by the virtual police from a restorative justice perspective (Irmawan & Sugama, 2023). In addition, there is an analysis that highlights how the policies and working mechanisms of the virtual police are directly related to the right to freedom of expression as guaranteed in Article 28E paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution (Pamungkas & Simangunsong, 2024). Furthermore, studies on law enforcement policies carried out by virtual police in Indonesia in dealing with cybercrime indicate that their implementation has not been effective (Suarno Nur et al., 2023). Another study highlights efforts made by the Criminal Investigation Department (Bareskrim) in preventing hate speech crimes in digital spaces (Chaniago et al., 2023), and the urgency of restorative justice regulation for hate speech (Bawono & Glaser, 2023). These studies have enriched the discourse from various perspectives, but in the context of the study of virtual police within the constitutional system through a restorative justice approach, it remains rarely explored. The main focus of this research is formulated into two research questions. The first question is: how is the implementation of Virtual Police within the framework of the constitutional system as a preventive effort against cybercrime in Sambas Regency? And second, how effective is the presence of the virtual police? This focus is important, considering the mismatch between the ideal objectives of restorative justice and its practice in the field may

lead to broader legal and social issues, including violations of constitutional rights to freedom of expression as guaranteed in Article 28E paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution (Miswanto et al., 2024). Thus, this study attempts to answer the extent to which the Virtual Police program can be effectively implemented within the framework of Indonesia's constitutional system, particularly in the Sambas Regency area, as well as the effectiveness of the restorative justice approach in preventive efforts against cybercrime.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative method with the aim of gaining a deep understanding of the implementation of the Virtual Police within the constitutional system, particularly through a restorative justice approach in addressing cybercrime in Sambas Regency. The qualitative method was chosen because it is suitable for exploring meaning, perception, and social dynamics that cannot be quantitatively measured. The type of research used is empirical legal research, which examines applicable legal provisions while observing the reality of legal practice in society. In this context, the main focus is on the implementation of the Virtual Police within the legal jurisdiction of Sambas Regency. This regency was selected because it is a region with unique social characteristics, where the legal culture of the community still shows a high dependence on repressive legal approaches. The approaches used in this study consist of two: the normative approach (Soekanto, 2006) and the descriptive-analytical approach (Soemitro, 2000). The normative approach is used to analyze relevant legal provisions, such as the ITE Law, Chief of Police Circular No. SE/2/II/2021, and the principles of restorative justice. Meanwhile, the descriptive-analytical approach is used to describe the reality of legal enforcement practices by the Virtual Police in Sambas Regency. This approach is important to reveal the extent to which the Virtual Police policy operates effectively in practice. The primary data in this research are the main sources of information obtained directly through field observations and interviews with relevant parties. The primary data, namely the informants interviewed, consisted of 2 members of the National Police, obtained directly from the Sambas Police Resort, more specifically from the Criminal Investigation Unit (Satreskrim), particularly the sub-unit handling IT-related cases (Unit Tipiter), as the main source in this study obtained through fieldwork, especially by gathering direct statements from relevant parties through interviews. To achieve results in line with the research objectives, the researcher used purposive sampling technique (Sugiyono, 2014), because they have authority and direct experience in the implementation of the Virtual Police policy in the area. The purpose of the interviews is to obtain information about the working patterns of the Virtual Police, obstacles encountered in the field, and the officers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the educational approach in tackling cybercrime. Meanwhile, observations were conducted by following the initial case-handling process related to ITE Law violations, especially during the educational warning phase. Observation was carried out on the working process of Unit Tipiter in following up public reports and handling social media content considered to violate the law. The researcher also directly observed how the community responded to such warnings, both through indirect interviews and case studies. In addition, the researcher examined documents such as minutes of meetings, police reports, and archives of Virtual Police warning letters available at the local police station. These documents are important as administrative evidence as well as materials

to examine the extent to which restorative procedures are carried out in practice. Data collection was conducted over one month, namely in February 2023, with additional data tracing in 2024. The data obtained from the field were analyzed qualitatively, using an inductive reasoning pattern. This means the researcher began the analysis from empirical facts found in the field, then connected them to legal theories, the concept of restorative justice, and relevant statutory provisions. The analysis process was carried out continuously and reflectively until conclusions were drawn to answer the research questions of this study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Review of the Implementation of Virtual Police as a Law Enforcement Instrument within the Constitutional System to Prevent Cybercrime in Sambas Regency**

The Virtual Police approach is an implementation of the principle of restorative justice, which emphasizes preventive efforts over criminalization or penalization (Syauket & Sriwidodo, 2024). This preventive action is part of the main function of the police in carrying out their preventive role (April et al., 2023). There is a strong correlation between preventive policing and efforts to prevent criminal acts. Although preventive policing is one form of crime prevention, the general scope of crime prevention is much broader than merely preventive actions by the police institution. The concept of restorative justice is also known as case resolution through penal mediation (Fatonah & Kusworo, 2023), which essentially aims to resolve criminal cases fairly and constructively within society (Amarini et al., 2024). In the context of law enforcement against cybercrime in Indonesia, there are five main factors that significantly affect its effectiveness, namely: legislation, the integrity and mentality of law enforcement officers, public behavior, the availability of facilities and infrastructure, and the prevailing legal culture (Soekanto, 2013). Law cannot be enforced in isolation; its implementation always involves human elements and behavior. Therefore, the existence of law enforcement officers becomes a crucial element in upholding the law. Law enforcers are not only required to possess professionalism and competence in implementing legal norms but are also confronted with interactions with individuals or groups in society suspected of committing criminal acts (Sari, 2018).

At the level of the constitutional system, the position of the police in Law No. 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police is defined as "a state instrument that plays a role in maintaining public order and security, enforcing the law, and providing protection, guidance, and services to the public in order to maintain domestic security" (Undang-Undang RI Nomor 2 Tahun 2002 Tentang Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia, 2002, p. Pasal 5 ayat (1)). According to Article 1 paragraph (3) of the 1945 Constitution, Indonesia is recognized as a state based on law. In the context of a rule-of-law state, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) serves as one of the state's instruments responsible for law enforcement (Saliro et al., 2024). Based on the theory of Trias Politica introduced by Montesquieu, government power is divided into three separate branches, namely the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, each of which has distinct roles and functions but operates in a system of checks and balances (Surbakti & Abdilah, 2021). In general, executive power can be interpreted as the authority responsible for implementing or executing the provisions contained in laws and regulations.

Article 8 paragraph (1) explicitly affirms that the police institution referred to in this study is the institution that performs police functions as regulated in the 1945 Constitution and Law No. 2 of 2002 concerning the Indonesian National Police. Based on the prevailing legal provisions, "The Indonesian National Police (Polri) is a state institution under executive authority that is directly responsible to the President." In a rule-of-law state, Polri serves as a state apparatus for enforcing the law and maintaining public order.

The existence of the Law on Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE Law) holds high urgency in society, particularly in the context of technological and communication developments in the modern era. This law provides a significant legal foundation for law enforcement officers in addressing various legal issues arising from the use of electronic devices. In response to these dynamics, on February 19, 2021, the Chief of the Indonesian National Police issued Chief of Police Circular No. SE/2/II/2021. This circular relates to the implementation of Law No. 19/2016, which amends Law No. 11/2008, whose enforcement is often considered to conflict with the principle of freedom of expression in digital spaces. Therefore, all members of the Indonesian National Police are expected to demonstrate a commitment to enforcing the law while upholding justice and human rights.

In order to realize law enforcement based on the principles of justice, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) consistently prioritizes educational and persuasive approaches (Yudono et al., 2021). This approach is expected to minimize the potential for criminalizing individuals who are reported, while ensuring the creation of a clean, healthy, ethical, and productive national digital space. To support this objective, the police refer to several guidelines as outlined in the aforementioned Circular Letter, including: a) Adapting to the evolving dynamics of digital space utilization and its increasingly complex issues; b) Understanding and identifying ethical digital culture through an inventory of problems and their social impact; c) Implementing preemptive and preventive approaches through programs such as Virtual Police and Virtual Alert, which function to monitor online activity, provide education, issue warnings, and anticipate potential cybercrimes; d) In handling public reports, investigators must be able to objectively distinguish between criticism, suggestions, false information (hoaxes), and defamation that may be classified as criminal acts, in order to determine the appropriate legal action; e) From the initial stage of receiving a report, investigators are required to establish direct communication with the involved parties, especially the victim (without intermediaries), and facilitate broad opportunities for dispute resolution through mediation mechanisms. In addition to these points, the Circular Letter also contains other provisions that support the realization of a just law enforcement system that is responsive to technological advances and the evolving social dynamics of the digital space.

Based on interviews conducted by the researcher, cybercrime refers to unlawful acts committed using computer technology and internet networks to illegally access, damage, or disrupt another party's information system. Meanwhile, the Virtual Police is a team established by the Indonesian National Police (Polri) tasked with providing education and supervision to the public to prevent potential criminal violations under the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (ITE Law) (Wawancara, Mardi Baon, SH sebagai BA Satreskrim Polres Sambas). The presence of the Virtual Police is expected to contribute to curbing the spread of

false information (hoaxes) and the phenomenon of post-truth in digital spaces. Through mechanisms of warnings and education, it is hoped that the public can engage in self-correction when disseminating texts or images that may offend others. Consequently, this effort also aims to reduce the likelihood of mutual reporting among social media users due to miscommunication in cyberspace. Regarding the implementation of the Virtual Police in preventing violations of Articles 27 and 28 through restorative justice, several applied cases will be described as follows (Interview, Reby Murdani, as Criminal Investigation Unit Officer at Sambas Police Department): First, the principle of restorative justice was applied in a suspected case of spreading false news that claimed eight people had died and two were missing due to a ferry accident involving KMP. BILI at Perigi Piyai Port, Tekarang District. The false news was disseminated via a Facebook account named "Ikhsan Saarin," identified as: Ikhsan, S.Pd, born in Sambas on March 11, 1967, male, Indonesian/Malay, civil servant (Principal of SMAN 1 Tekarang), residing in Dusun Mawar RT 002 RW 001, Mekar Sekuntum Village, Tebas District, Sambas Regency. Chronology: The case began with a cyber patrol conducted by members of the Criminal Investigation Unit of Sambas Police, who identified a Facebook post by the account "Ikhsan Saarin" on February 20, 2021. The post contained the following content: "Reportedly 8 people died and 2 are missing, earlier at 2:35. Oh Allah, I was on that ferry, thankfully still alive, and fortunately today it didn't dock at the pier where I usually board." Following this, officers conducted profiling on the account. After identifying the owner, on Tuesday, February 23, 2021, at around 12:15 PM WIB, the individual was summoned to Sambas Police Headquarters to clarify the content he had uploaded.

Second, restorative justice was applied in a case involving an alleged violation of the ITE Law committed via the social media platform Facebook, using an account under the name Aisyah Su Azrul Sani. The individual suspected of operating the account was identified as Azrul a.k.a. USU a.k.a. Aisyah, son of the late SONI, born in Tebas on June 3, 1973, Muslim, Indonesian, Malay ethnicity, self-employed, unmarried, residing at Dusun Kenanga, RT 028 RW 014, Tebas Sungai Village, Tebas District, Sambas Regency. Chronology: On Saturday, June 5, 2021, officers discovered a Facebook status posted by the account "Daeng Kurdi" which reported an alleged robbery in the Seminis area, Sebawi District, Sambas Regency. The post quickly went viral and received a comment from an account named Aisyah Su Azrul SANI, stating: "Iye Jak Pasti Urg Dekat Sie Di Be Bang Ee... Cuman Polisi Kurang Sogokan Nye Mangke Nye D'n B Tindak" (roughly implying that the police were inactive due to bribery issues). The officers then conducted a profiling of the account and identified the owner as Azrul. On June 8, 2021, the individual was brought to the Sambas Police Headquarters to provide clarification regarding the comment he had posted.

Third, the principle of restorative justice was applied in a suspected violation of the ITE Law committed through the social media platform Facebook by an account under the name MELATI. The account was allegedly operated by Melati a.k.a. MELA, daughter of MUSTARI, born in Sambas on June 26, 1986, a Muslim, self-employed, residing in Dusun Jawa, RT 003 RW 002, Jagur Village, Sambas District, Sambas Regency / phone number: 0857-5436-0896. Chronology: On Friday, October 22, 2021, around 11:00 AM, officers discovered a status posted by the Facebook account MELATI that stated: "Once gathered, planning to get Sinovac,

ended up just getting a queue number... couldn't stand it, had to leave early. If not face to face, I would've gone home with Dad... Me... too lazy to queue, even the blank forms were taken... still had to get jabbed... Hmmmm." The post was accompanied by a photo of the Covid-19 Vaccination Consent Form and a vaccination queue number card (No. 390) bearing the official stamp of the Sambas Police Department. Officers then conducted a profiling of the account and found that the individual was in the process of receiving vaccination at the Sambas Police vaccination center. The vaccination officers, along with the duty officers from the Criminal Investigation Unit of Sambas Police, summoned the account owner to provide clarification regarding the content of the post.

Virtual Police was introduced as a proactive initiative aimed at preventing the misuse of social media before it escalates into legal issues such as criminalization or prosecution. The mechanism implemented in this program involves issuing a series of warnings to account users deemed potentially in violation of the law. These warnings are delivered up to three times via direct messages. If there is no response or good faith shown by the account holder following the warnings, the Indonesian National Police (Polri) may summon the individual for further clarification. Should the clarification process reveal any violation of provisions under the Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE) Law, legal action may be taken. This process is conducted with a strong emphasis on coordination with expert teams, including specialists in criminal law, linguistics, and information and electronic transactions, to ensure that enforcement remains proportional, objective, and grounded in academic expertise (Mandala Putra et al., 2021).

The operational mechanisms and working procedures of the Virtual Police Unit are grounded in the principles of caution and professionalism, implemented through several stages. a). The initial stage begins with issuing a warning to a social media account suspected of committing a violation, where the assessment is not based on subjective judgment but on the evaluation of an independent and competent panel of experts in their respective fields. This process avoids relying on the investigator's personal opinion, instead using expert analysis; b). If a post whether textual or visual is found to potentially contain criminal elements, officers will document the content and refer it to the expert team, which includes criminal law specialists, language experts, and experts in Information and Electronic Transactions (ITE); c). If the expert team concludes that the content fulfills the criteria of a criminal offense, such as defamation or other forms of legal breach, the next step involves submitting a recommendation to the Director of Cyber Crime or an authorized official for approval of further action; d). Upon receiving approval, an official warning in the form of a Virtual Police Alert is sent directly to the account in question; e). This warning is delivered via direct message, with the aim of maintaining confidentiality and upholding ethical standards in law enforcement, ensuring that the notification remains discreet and does not publicly harm the reputation of the account holder (Furqon, 2021).

The steps taken by the cyber team in handling suspected violations of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (UU ITE) involve a series of systematic actions, including conducting cyber patrols to monitor content uploaded on social media, profiling and analyzing the relevant accounts, and deepening the investigation through interrogation of the account

owner. Subsequently, the individual concerned is requested to submit a written statement declaring that they will not repeat such actions in the future. As a form of public clarification, the individual is also directed to create a clarification video, which is then reposted on social media platforms particularly the same platform that was previously used to disseminate the allegedly unlawful content (Interview, Mardi Baon, SH, as Criminal Investigation Unit Officer at Sambas Police Department).

### **Analysis of the Effectiveness of Virtual Police Implementation within the Constitutional System Framework to Prevent Cybercrime in Sambas Regency**

The effectiveness of law enforcement efforts in preventing cybercrime can be measured through the legal system theory. The three elements within this system must function synergistically and continuously. If one of these components fails to operate properly, dysfunction will occur within the entire legal system, ultimately hindering the effectiveness of law enforcement, including in the context of cybercrime prevention (Akmal, 2021). The practical effectiveness of a legal measure whether it can be deemed successful or not largely depends on the three pillars of the legal system as proposed by Lawrence M. Friedman: the legal structure, legal substance, and the prevailing legal culture within society. The legal system as a process of law enforcement involves these three key elements, which form the foundation of a functioning legal framework:

First, let us examine the structural component, which refers to the institutional elements within the legal system that are interconnected through an operational mechanism. This component includes legislative bodies responsible for enacting laws, as well as institutions mandated to enforce and implement those laws. Generally, the relationships and jurisdictional boundaries between these institutions are explicitly regulated within a nation's constitution or fundamental legal framework. Second, the substantive component encompasses the actual outputs produced by the legal system, consisting of law in concreto (legal norms that are specific and individual in nature) and law in abstracto (general legal norms not directed at any particular party). General legal norms apply to all individuals subject to the law, whereas individual legal norms are directed only toward specific individuals or groups. Third, the cultural component pertains to the attitudes and societal values that influence the legal system. The utilization of the judiciary in disputes, for instance, is closely related to legal culture that is, the values and perceptions held by members of society toward the law, as well as how they interact with the existing legal structures (Yudho & Tjandrasari, 1987).

These three components of the legal system play a crucial role in determining the smooth operation and overall effectiveness of any legal framework. Therefore, any discussion concerning the effectiveness of law enforcement cannot be separated from a thorough consideration of these three components. Addressing these elements goes beyond merely discussing the basic rules and definitions of the law. Moreover, the three elements are interrelated and closely interact with one another in order to support the implementation of effective law enforcement (Suatmiati, 2016).

The effectiveness of Virtual Police implementation in preventing cybercrime in Sambas Regency, particularly in relation to Articles 27 and 28 of the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (ITE Law), can be analyzed from several aspects. First, the structural



component of the legal system signifies that any regulation must be supported by institutions or authorities responsible for its enforcement. In terms of this structural component, there is already a dedicated division for handling and preventing crimes in the digital space. One such effort is the law enforcement initiative known as the Virtual Police. Its duties include educating the public about the ITE Law, monitoring digital spaces to issue warnings to social media users when indications of potential legal violations are found, and countering negative content and hoaxes. The implementation of Virtual Police law enforcement duties is based on the legal foundation of the National Police Chief Circular Letter No. SE/2/II/2021, aimed at creating a clean, healthy, and productive digital environment in Indonesia.

Second, from the perspective of legal substance, this refers to the content and material of laws and regulations that govern efforts to prevent cybercrime. In the enforcement of Articles 27 and 28 of Law No. 19 of 2016, which amends Law No. 11 of 2008 concerning Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE Law), the legal substance of these provisions often gives rise to multiple interpretations and public controversy. As a result, the government issued Implementation Guidelines for the ITE Law through Joint Decree No. 229 of 2021 by the Minister of Communication and Informatics, the Attorney General, and the Chief of the Indonesian National Police. This decree specifically provides implementation guidelines for Article 27 paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4), Article 28 paragraphs (1) and (2), Article 29, and Article 36 of Law No. 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions. According to these guidelines, the phrase “content that violates decency” is narrowly interpreted to mean pornographic content as defined in Law No. 44 of 2008 on Pornography. Furthermore, the guidelines clarify that not all forms of content containing elements of pornography or nudity can automatically be categorized as violations of moral norms (Saliro, 2020). The assessment of such content must take into account the social and cultural context, as well as the intent behind its dissemination. For example, in the context of medical education, the sharing of anatomical images depicting nudity by a lecturer to students as part of the learning materials cannot be considered a violation of decency. Therefore, it is crucial to evaluate content based on its purpose and usage context in a comprehensive manner.

Furthermore, referring to the provisions of Article 27 paragraph (3) of the ITE Law, its implementation guidelines clarify that an alleged act of defamation is not automatically considered a criminal offense if the content is disseminated within a closed or limited communication space such as family groups, close circles of friends, academic forums, or similar communities. The private nature of the dissemination context becomes a key consideration in determining the criminal element. Meanwhile, Article 28 paragraph (1) is understood in its implementation context as not regulating the dissemination of false information (hoaxes) in general, but rather specifically targeting the spread of false information in the context of electronic transactions, such as in digital commerce (e-commerce) activities. Therefore, in terms of legal substance, the issuance of the ITE Law implementation guidelines provides clarity and legal certainty in law enforcement actions undertaken by the Virtual Police.

Third, in terms of societal legal culture, there remains a noticeable tendency among the public to disregard or show indifference when warned or notified that their actions on social media may be inappropriate. However, based on interviews with investigators handling Virtual

Police cases, it was revealed that individuals tend to comply and feel deterred from repeating such actions once they receive an official summons from the Sambas Police Department (Polres Sambas). Therefore, the educational and law enforcement stages are carried out at the police station, while still prioritizing restorative justice. This illustrates that although, normatively, the Virtual Police policy is considered progressive, the reality in the field reveals a gap between policy design and public acceptance. Legal compliance has not yet emerged from legal awareness, but rather from fear of formal sanctions. In other words, the restorative justice-based educational approach has not been fully understood or accepted as a legitimate and effective conflict resolution mechanism from the perspective of the public's legal culture.

The researcher's analysis, based on Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory, indicates that the presence of the Virtual Police as a state institution operating within the executive function of the constitutional system and specifically emphasizing restorative justice in law enforcement has proven to be effective. This is evident in the establishment of the Virtual Police as a law enforcement mechanism for cybercrime prevention, as explicitly regulated in the Chief of Police Circular Letter No. SE/2/II/2021. Furthermore, in terms of legal substance, the approach prioritizes legal certainty. The interpretation of phrases or clauses in specific articles of the ITE Law is clarified through its implementation guidelines, thus minimizing ambiguity or multiple interpretations in statutory provisions. In regard to legal culture, the public generally demonstrates compliance, and the practice has shown a deterrent effect particularly when offenders are summoned by the police to issue a clarification regarding their statements on social media that potentially violate the ITE Law.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the previously presented findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the core of this research reveals the following: first, the implementation of the Virtual Police represents the execution of the ITE Law (executive function) as a form of law enforcement aimed at preventing cybercrime. This preventive effort emphasizes restorative justice and provides public education to encourage more ethical and responsible behavior among social media users in digital spaces. Second, the existence of the Virtual Police as a law enforcement mechanism for cybercrime prevention as explicitly regulated under the Chief of Police Circular Letter No. SE/2/II/2021 enhances the effectiveness of cybercrime prevention due to the strong legal structure supporting it, the clear and firm legal substance outlined in the implementation guidelines, and the legal culture of the community, which generally tends to comply. The intervention by police officers through summons, counseling, and education at the Sambas Police Department has a deterrent effect on offenders. However, warnings delivered virtually by the Virtual Police are still frequently ignored by the public.

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