Perception Patterns Among Actors in Institutional Networks: The Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in Preventing Potential Conflicts in Central Java Province

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Abstract. *The multi-actor interaction process in government activities, involving both governmental and non-governmental elements, inevitably involves differences in perception among actors to achieve a common agreement. This interaction is crucial in conflict prevention processes involving various cross-sector government elements. The potential for conflict within society necessitates the early role of intelligence in identifying potential conflicts. Thus, the government has established the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) at both provincial and regency/city levels, including in Central Java Province. This study aims to analyze the perception patterns of the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in preventing potential conflicts in Central Java Province. This study employs a qualitative research method. Data collection methods include observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and document studies. Data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Data analysis utilizes an interactive data analysis method. Informants in this study are actors directly involved in the interaction processes of the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in preventing potential conflicts in Central Java Province. The study results indicate that differences in opinion within the Regional Intelligence Community Forum are infrequent due to the forum's nature of information sharing and coordination. Institutional actors in the forum share the same working principles and goals and have established emotional relationships, reducing sectoral ego. Each issue discussed in the forum consistently finds common ground and solutions through coordination. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance relationships and trust among actors involved in the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) and to increase the intensity of both formal and incidental coordination and communication to maximize intelligence findings, making conflict prevention efforts in Central Java Province more effective.*

Keywords: Perception Patterns, Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda), Conflict Prevention

INTRODUCTION

The involvement of multiple actors in development is marked by a paradigm shift in governance from a state-centric model to one emphasizing empowerment and community engagement in addressing public issues. Governance processes are viewed as the operationalization of networks involving complex actors and organizations interacting with each other, characterized by interrelations among various actors with different goals but mutual

dependencies and resource exchanges (Rhodes, 1997; Klijn, 1997). Interactions among actors are often embedded in the concept of governance networks. The governance network approach focuses on interaction and negotiation to resolve conflicts and governmental strategies to bridge differences among actors in public policy, programs, and service delivery. Governance networks are deemed successful when the interaction processes among actors adapt and develop strategies leading to joint solutions that meet theoretical game conditions as a win-win situation. Such solutions are expected to be improvements over previous situations.

The institutional network theory proposed by Klijn & Koppenjan (2016) combines institutional theory and network theory. Institutional network theory is a novel study within governance networks deemed capable of addressing complex issues. This theory combines institutional and network theories, featuring three main dimensions: interaction patterns, perception patterns, and network rules. Interactions among actors or institutions in making joint decisions to solve problems naturally face various differences in perceptions, ideas, and opinions from the involved actors. These differences in perception patterns pose a challenge in multi-actor interactions to achieve a common agreement. Multi-actor interactions in governmental activities are often conducted intensively among governmental and non-governmental elements across various sectors to reach a consensus in addressing public issues. This is also true in conflict prevention processes involving cross-sector elements. The potential for conflict within society requires prior monitoring, where the role of intelligence is crucial in early identification of potential conflicts.

Therefore, the government has issued a policy on the establishment of the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) at both provincial and regency/city levels throughout Indonesia. Kominda's formation aims to serve as an early detection provider for national stability threats in the regions. Kominda's duties include planning, seeking, collecting, coordinating, and communicating information and intelligence from various sources about potential, symptoms, or events that pose threats to national stability in the regions (Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No. 67 of 2013). Kominda is established in all provinces in Indonesia, including in Central Java Province through Central Java Governor Regulation No. 16 of 2007. Kominda's membership comprises government elements, including the governor and deputy governor, and regional intelligence elements.

Kominda's existence in Central Java Province as a coalition of various intelligence institutions serves as a combined institution for conflict prevention in Central Java Province. However, in Kominda's activities in handling potential conflicts, there are still several shortcomings, such as the need for perception alignment among involved actors and the need for more intensive interactions to address issues specifically related to regional stability. The phenomenon emerging as a homework for the Central Java Kominda Forum is the high sectoral ego among actors representing their respective institutions, necessitating institutional strengthening based on networks to observe interactions among actors involved in the regional intelligence community forum, especially in potential conflict mitigation.

Social conflicts, including those related to intolerance and religious harmony, frequently occur in Central Java Province. According to data from Central Java Kesbangpol in 2018, there were 14 terrorism cases, 9 horizontal conflict potential cases, and 7 religion-related cases requiring special attention for resolution. According to the Databoks survey (Katadata Media Network) in 2023, Central Java Province is among the top 10 provinces with the most land conflict cases in Indonesia, ranking 9th. Additionally, Central Java Province is one of the provinces prone to social conflicts due to the diverse population in terms of ethnicity, religion, and race, necessitating increased early vigilance by the regional government.

Social conflicts in Central Java Province require both preventive and mitigation actions involving the Regional Intelligence Community Forum of Central Java Province. Interactions among actors in this forum are crucial in achieving a common agreement in preventing and mitigating potential conflicts. Therefore, in the interaction processes within the Regional

Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda), differences in perceptions and ideas among actors involved in preventing potential conflicts in Central Java Province are inevitable. As Crozier and Friedberg (1980) in Klijn (1963) suggest, the strength of each actor largely depends on the resources they possess and the importance of those resources in policy. To achieve common goals, goal negotiations, a characteristic of network approaches, are necessary because actors have autonomy. In goal negotiations, the principle should be based on interests rather than positions, as position-based negotiations lead to polarization and fail to achieve common goals (Gedeona, 2013).

Perceptions built within Kominda activities are oriented towards how to create perceptions of handling and resolving threats, challenges, obstacles, and disturbances (ATHG) through early detection (LID, PAM, GAL) and resolutions across institutions having their styles or techniques according to the functions of involved stakeholders. However, in reality, the detection of these problems has not been comprehensive due to the diverse perceptions built from actors from different institutional backgrounds with their perspectives.

Based on the explanation above, this study aims to analyze the perception patterns among actors in the institutional network: the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in preventing potential conflicts in Central Java Province.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach. In this qualitative study, theory may emerge at the beginning and be modified or adjusted based on participants' views (Creswell, 2010). The research location is in Central Java Province, chosen purposively because Central Java is one of several provinces in Indonesia with diverse communities and large populations in its regencies/cities, making conflicts possible and requiring special attention for resolution. Furthermore, there is a need for network-based institutional strengthening to observe interactions among actors involved in the regional intelligence community forum, particularly in conflict mitigation in Central Java Province. Informants in this study are actors involved in the interaction processes of the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in conflict prevention in Central Java Province, where key informants are determined based on information obtained from directly involved stakeholders. Data obtained includes primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected directly from original sources without intermediaries, such as individual or group opinions, observations of objects, events, or activities, and test results. Secondary data is obtained in the form of published data. Primary data in this study consists of interviews and focus group discussion (FGD) results with informants and observations related to institutions or actors involved in Kominda's conflict prevention efforts. Secondary data includes data related to potential conflicts in Central Java Province from the internet, books, journals, and previous research. The main data collection techniques used in this study are observation, in-depth interviews, FGD, and document study. Data analysis techniques used in this study are based on the interactive model by Miles et al. (2014), which includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification.

RESULTS AND DICUSSION

One of the dimensions in institutional network theory proposed by Klijn & Koppenjan (2016) is the perception pattern dimension. Actors act based on their perceptions, which contain different understandings about content (nature of problems, desired solutions, etc.) and other actors (e.g., actors' strengths and competencies). These understandings are created through actors' experiences and interactions. As a result of intensive interactions, actors come to share certain perceptions or their perceptions converge. Various theories emphasize shared and convergent perception phenomena (Termeer, 1993; Termeer & Koppenjan, 1997; Koppenjan, 2007). Sabatier (1988) speaks of policy belief systems. Networks can thus be distinguished from one another in terms of the degree to which actors share certain perceptions. Convergence of perceptions in actor networks has advantages and disadvantages.

One of the most important patterns in actor perceptions is the trust that actors have in other actors in the network. Trust is considered a stable perception of other actors' intentions. An actor's trust means the expectation that other actors will refrain from opportunistic behavior despite having the opportunity to do so. When trust is mutual, the actor network will function well, and strong or weak trust relationships may emerge. Trust usually does not just exist but develops over time through continuous interaction.

The perception pattern dimension relates to actors acting based on their perceptions, containing content understandings that often differ from other actors, where shared understanding can be created through experiences and interactions among actors in Kominda in efforts to prevent potential conflicts in Central Java Province. This study analyzes the perception pattern dimension by examining how actors or institutions act based on their perceptions, containing content understandings that often differ from other actors. Shared perception understandings can be created through experiences and interactions among actors in the Regional Intelligence Community Forum in efforts to prevent potential conflicts in Central Java Province.

Research findings indicate that perception differences among institutions in Kominda's efforts to prevent potential conflicts in Central Java Province are not very dominant and rarely occur because Kominda's nature is to share information only. Increased convergence of actor perceptions can lead to groupthink (Janis, 1982), where a lack of dissenting opinions results in too few opposing viewpoints, and only a few options are considered to find solutions. This occurs in Kominda, where institutions share similar working principles and goals, complement each other, help each other, and cover each other's shortcomings, thus rarely causing perception differences or debates.

Each institution in Kominda presents problems and provides information that is then coordinated to produce conclusions for action plans on the discussed issues. When perception differences occur in Kominda, they are directly addressed and resolved together by considering various perspectives from the involved institutions, thus finding common ground from the coordination results. Shared perceptions can be achieved through coordination and mutual understanding among institutions, always finding common ground and solutions. The lack of perception differences among actors in the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) is influenced by the shared background of actors in Kominda, namely intelligence roles and common goals in preventing potential conflicts in Central Java Province. The lack of perception pattern differences facilitates joint decision-making, impacting the achievement of more optimal and effective conflict prevention goals in Central Java Province. Data from the RKPD in 2023 shows a 15% decrease in SARA conflicts. The number of SARA conflict cases in Central Java Province decreased from 17 cases in 2016 to 7 cases in 2021. Similarly, the handling of criminal cases in Central Java Province increased from 74.33% in 2017 to 86.23% in 2021.

Furthermore, there is almost no sectoral ego in Kominda's efforts to prevent potential conflicts in Central Java due to the established emotional relationships among institutions in Kominda. As Klijn & Koppenjan (2016) state, one of the most important perception patterns in actors is the trust that actors have in other actors in the network. Trust is considered a stable perception of other actors' intentions. Trust in institutions within the network means the expectation that other institutions will refrain from opportunistic behavior despite having the opportunity to do so. When trust is mutual, the actor network in Kominda will function well. Trust and emotional relationships not only exist but develop over time through continuous interaction.

Based on the research findings and explanations, the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in preventing potential conflicts in Central Java Province needs to enhance relationships and trust built among involved actors to increase shared values and minimize perception differences to achieve common agreements. As stated by Costabile in Bastian (2014), the main characteristic of trust formation is a positive perception, meaning that trust formation factors also include perception. Furthermore, increasing the intensity of both formal and

incidental coordination and communication should be done more routinely to maximize intelligence information findings, making conflict prevention efforts in Central Java Province more effective.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussions above, it can be concluded that the perception patterns among actors in the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) in preventing potential conflicts rarely experience perception differences due to Kominda's nature of sharing information and coordination. Institutional actors in Kominda have the same working principles and goals and have established emotional relationships that reduce sectoral ego. Every issue discussed in Kominda always finds common ground and solutions from coordination results. Therefore, enhancing relationships and trust built among involved actors in the Regional Intelligence Community Forum (Kominda) and increasing the intensity of both formal and incidental coordination and communication more routinely is necessary to maximize intelligence information findings, making conflict prevention efforts in Central Java Province more effective.

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