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From Law Enforcement to Cultural Security: Integrating Nudge Theory into Collaborative Policing for Intangible Heritage Protection

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Abstract

The safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) faces mounting challenges amid globalization, intergenerational transmission erosion, and declining public participation. Conventional top–down regulatory approaches have proven insufficient to foster sustained community engagement, particularly in cultural practices rooted in symbolic meaning and collective identity. This article examines how Nudge Theory can be integrated into collaborative policing to strengthen ICH safeguarding through non-coercive behavioral change and participatory governance. By usinga qualitative case study conducted at Rumah Singgah Tuan Kadi in Pekanbaru, Indonesia, this research employs participatory observation, in-depth interviews, a limited Delphi process, and policy document analysis. Data were analyzed using thematic coding to identify patterns of interaction between choice architecture mechanisms, collaborative policing practices, and community participation dynamics. The findings reveal four interconnected themes: (1) cultural framing and symbolic activation of public spaces as catalysts for social re-identification; (2) the transformation of police roles from public order enforcers to community facilitators; (3) the effectiveness of nudge mechanisms in cultivating voluntary participation and collective ownership; and (4) a shift in outcomes from conventional public order toward cultural security, reflected in increased trust, strengthened social cohesion, and early conflict prevention. Synthesizing these findings, the article proposes a Cultural-Nudge Policing model that positions police as behavioral catalysts within participatory cultural governance. The primary contribution of this study lies in its original integration of Nudge Theory, collaborative policing, and cultural safeguarding, alongside the conceptualization of cultural security as an expanded policing mandate. By providing empirical evidence from a Global South context, this article advances the literature on behavioral governance and policing studies while offering practical policy implications for culturally grounded policing through program design within the Indonesian National Police, the establishment of cultural units, and the development of behavioral policy laboratories. Overall, the findings underscore the potential of more inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable security governance through the synergy of behavioral change and institutional collaboration.

Keywords: Cultural-Nudge Policing, Nudge Theory, Collaborative Policing, Cultural Security, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Behavioral Governance, Global South

1. Introduction

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) constitutes a living manifestation of culture, encompassing traditions, expressions, skills, knowledge systems, and social practices transmitted across generations by communities, groups, and individuals as part of their collective identity (Benfafa, 2025). The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage recognizes ICH not merely as cultural artifacts but as dynamic networks of social practices sustained through continuous enactment and social meaning-making (UNESCO, 2003). Within contemporary cultural policy, ICH safeguarding is increasingly positioned as a strategic instrument for strengthening social cohesion, shared identity, and community resilience amid globalization and structural societal change (Zabulis et al., 2025). Empirical studies further demonstrate that ICH contributes significantly to sustainable development and cross-cultural social cohesion, while simultaneously generating challenges related to access, representation, and the politics of identity (Zabulis et al., 2025).

At the same time, globalization has accelerated the circulation of external cultural values that often dominate local cultural spaces, thereby threatening the continuity of unique and marginalized cultural practices that function as reservoirs of social knowledge (Benfafa, 2025). Cultural globalization tends to promote value homogenization, which in many contexts results in declining intergenerational transmission of traditional practices. These pressures are compounded by transnational cultural claims over similar heritage forms, intensifying symbolic and representational contestation over what counts as legitimate cultural heritage (Benfafa, 2025). Moreover, ICH transmission is increasingly fragmented by population mobility, urbanization, and transformations in communication technologies, which, without strategic intervention, risk eroding local cultural practices over time (Jiang, 2025).

In response, many states have adopted formal regulatory frameworks aligned with international conventions. However, normative and coercive policy instruments frequently demonstrate limited capacity to generate sustained behavioral change at the community level. Top–down regulatory approaches tend to overlook local social contexts, embedded value systems, and power dynamics that fundamentally shape community participation in cultural safeguarding (Konach, 2025). Public policy scholarship has consistently shown that formal regulation alone does not produce authentic civic engagement, as it often fails to internalize social motivations and cultural values as drivers of collective action (Konach, 2025). This limitation is exacerbated by persistently low levels of public participation in cultural heritage initiatives, where social capital remains fragmented and concentrated among elite or bureaucratic actors rather than broadly distributed within communities.

Against this backdrop, Nudge Theory has emerged within contemporary policy discourse as an innovative approach that leverages choice architecture to influence behavior and decision-making without eliminating individual freedom, a principle commonly described as libertarian paternalism (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008; Victor et al., 2023). A growing body of research demonstrates that nudge-based interventions can predictably shape behavior across policy domains, including public health, energy consumption, and pro-social conduct, by strategically configuring decision environments in context-sensitive ways (Victor et al., 2023). Despite its rapid development within behavioral public policy, the application of Nudge Theory to cultural heritage safeguarding, particularly as a mechanism for fostering community participation in ICH, remains remarkably underexplored. This gap highlights a disconnect between behavioral governance scholarship and the pressing need for inclusive, participatory cultural policy strategies.

Within policing and public security studies, parallel debates have emphasized collaboration between police and communities as a response to the limitations of enforcement-centered approaches. Collaborative governance and co-production policing frameworks reconceptualize citizens and law enforcement institutions as partners in the joint production of public security, with the aim of enhancing legitimacy, trust, and civic engagement (Sorrentino, 2018). Meta-analytic research further suggests that collaborative policing strategies can strengthen police–community relations and generate more holistic security outcomes, despite persistent implementation challenges (Aditya & Kusumastuti, 2023). However, the relationship between behavioral interventions such as nudging and collaborative policing remains conceptually and empirically underdeveloped, particularly with respect to mobilizing community participation in cultural heritage safeguarding.

Addressing this gap is critical given that policing increasingly extends beyond law enforcement to encompass the facilitation of social relations, dialogue, and participatory public spaces (Sorrentino, 2018). Integrating Nudge Theory into collaborative policing opens the possibility of a novel governance strategy that motivates voluntary community engagement in ICH safeguarding while respecting individual autonomy and local cultural dynamics. Such integration reframes policing not as a coercive authority over culture, but as an enabling institution capable of shaping social environments conducive to collective participation.

Accordingly, this article addresses the following central research question: How can Nudge Theory be operationalized within collaborative policing frameworks to foster participatory safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage? This question extends beyond the effectiveness of behavioral interventions per se to examine how their integration transforms the role of policing—from a traditional enforcement function toward the promotion of cultural security, a domain of security that prioritizes the protection of cultural values, institutional legitimacy, and social co-production between police and communities.

This article makes three primary contributions. First, it conceptually develops a Cultural-Nudge Policing model that integrates Nudge Theory with collaborative policing principles to design choice architectures that encourage pro-cultural behavior in ICH safeguarding. Second, it advances policing scholarship by foregrounding cultural security as a strategic extension of the policing mandate within contemporary public governance. Third, by presenting empirical evidence from Indonesia, the study contributes a Global South perspective to international debates on behavioral governance and culturally grounded security practices, enriching existing literature that remains predominantly Global North–centric.

2. Conceptual Framework: From Behavioral Governance to Cultural Security

The conceptual framework of this article is built upon three interrelated theoretical foundations: Nudge Theory within behavioral public policy, collaborative policing as co-production of security, and UNESCO's safeguarding paradigm for intangible cultural heritage. The integration of these perspectives informs the development of a novel model, Cultural-Nudge Policing, which repositions policing beyond conventional law enforcement toward facilitating collective behavioral change in support of cultural security.

This approach departs from critiques of conventional governance models that rely heavily on coercive regulation and administrative control, which have proven limited in fostering sustained social participation, particularly in cultural domains characterized by symbolic meaning, affective attachment, and identity-based practices. By synthesizing behavioral governance, collaborative policing, and participatory safeguarding, the framework advances an alternative mode of public governance centered on voluntary engagement, community agency, and relational institutional practices.

2.1. Nudge Theory and Choice Architecture in Cultural Contexts

Nudge Theory was systematically articulated by Thaler and Sunstein (2008) as a policy approach aimed at influencing individual decision-making through the design of choice environments, commonly referred to as choice architecture, without restricting options or substantially altering economic incentives. Within this framework, a *nudge* is defined as any aspect of choice architecture that predictably alters behavior while preserving freedom of choice, a principle often described as *libertarian paternalism*.

In contemporary public policy, nudging is increasingly conceptualized as a core element of *behavioral governance*: a mode of governance that draws on insights from cognitive psychology and behavioral economics to shape social action through subtle, non-coercive mechanisms (*soft behavioral change*), rather than legal compulsion (John, 2018; Oliver, 2013). Empirical research demonstrates that nudging is effective across diverse domains, including public health, environmental sustainability, and pro-social behavior, particularly when interventions combine framing, default options, social norms, and salient cues (Sunstein, 2014; Benartzi et al.,

2017). In cultural contexts, nudging holds particular relevance because cultural practices cannot be sustained through formal instruction alone. Cultural transmission is inherently relational, symbolic, and grounded in collective affect. Coercive interventions, therefore, risk producing resistance or superficial compliance. By contrast, nudging enables the activation of intrinsic motivation through the reinforcement of symbolic meaning and social identity.

Four choice architecture mechanisms are especially salient for cultural safeguarding. *First*, framing, which presents cultural participation as a source of collective pride rather than an administrative obligation. *Second*, default options, whereby engagement in cultural activities becomes the standard pathway within public spaces and community routines. *Third*, symbolic cues, including the placement of cultural symbols, artifacts, and representations in everyday environments, strengthen emotional attachment. *Fourth*, collective identity narratives, which situate cultural practices within shared understandings of *"who we are"* as a community (Akerlof & Kranton, 2010; Sunstein, 2016). Accordingly, nudging in cultural settings functions not merely as an instrument of individual behavioral modification but as a mechanism of social identity activation that fosters voluntary participation and the sustainability of cultural practices.

2.2. Collaborative Policing as Co-Production of Security

Parallel shifts in public governance have reconceptualized modern policing not solely as a state function but as a socially embedded process involving multiple actors. Policing scholarship emphasizes that public security cannot be produced unilaterally by law enforcement agencies; rather, it emerges through co-production among police, communities, local governments, and civil society organizations (Loader & Walker, 2007; Terpstra, 2018).

Within this perspective, collaborative policing represents a transformation from state-centric models toward co-production of security, where communities are no longer treated as passive recipients of protection but as active agents in shaping social order. This approach foregrounds partnership, dialogue, and joint problem-solving as foundational sources of policing legitimacy. A central dimension of collaborative policing is *procedural justice*, defined as public perceptions that policing processes are fair, transparent, and respectful of citizens' dignity. Tyler (2006) demonstrates that police legitimacy is shaped more by procedural fairness than by coercive effectiveness. When individuals experience fair treatment and meaningful participation in decision-making, they are more likely to engage in voluntary compliance and civic cooperation.

Within this framework, police roles shift from law enforcers to social facilitators. Police act as mediators of conflict, connectors among stakeholders, and community partners in addressing social challenges. Beyond maintaining order, they facilitate dialogue, strengthen social networks, and create deliberative spaces for collective problem-solving (Skogan, 2006; Fleming & Rhodes, 2018). This evolution expands the policing mandate from crime control toward harm reduction and community well-being, conceptualizing security as a collectively produced social condition rather than the outcome of coercive intervention.

2.3. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: From Protection to Participation

Under the 2003 UNESCO Convention, safeguarding is defined as a set of measures aimed at ensuring the viability of ICH, including identification, documentation, protection, promotion, transmission, and revitalization. Crucially, this definition explicitly positions communities as primary actors in heritage preservation rather than passive policy beneficiaries (UNESCO, 2003).

Safeguarding thus marks a paradigmatic shift from passive protection toward active participation. The principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) underscores that interventions must be grounded in informed community agreement, free from coercion, and respectful of cultural autonomy. Safeguarding, therefore, cannot be reduced to technocratic state projects; it must be understood as a socially embedded process rooted in *community agency*. Heritage studies further emphasize that cultural sustainability depends on communities' capacity to continually reproduce meaning and practice in everyday life (Smith & Akagawa, 2009; Harrison,

2013). Effective safeguarding does not merely preserve artifacts or traditions but ensures that culture remains a living, socially relevant practice.

Nevertheless, many cultural policies continue to operate within administrative logics emphasizing inventorying and formal certification, while underemphasizing participation and behavioral change. This disconnect underscores the importance of integrating behavioral approaches and institutional collaboration to bridge policy intentions with social practice.

2.4. Integrative Model: Cultural-Nudge Policing

Synthesizing these three frameworks, this article advances Cultural-Nudge Policing as an integrative model that combines Nudge Theory, collaborative policing, and UNESCO safeguarding principles within a participatory governance approach.

NUDGE THEORY/CHOICE ARCHITECTURE
- Framing of Cultural Meaning
- Default Participation Pathways
- Symbolic Public Cues
- Collective Identity Narratives

COLLABORATIVE POLICING
- Police as Facilitator
- Police as Mediator
- Police as Community Partner
- Procedural Justice
- Dialogue & Trust
- Co-Production of Security

SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL
- Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
- Community Agency
- Intergenerational Transmission
- Cultural Sustainability

CULTURAL-NUDGE POLICING
- Participatory Governance
- Social Cohesion
- Institutional Legitimacy
- Living Heritage Sustainability

Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Cultural-Nudge Policing

As illustrated in Figure 1, the model positions police as *behavioral catalysts*—institutional actors who facilitate collective behavioral change through the design of social environments that encourage cultural participation. Rather than relying on directives or sanctions, police mobilize symbol-based choice architectures, identity narratives, and community activities to stimulate voluntary engagement.

Within this framework, security is reconceptualized as cultural security, a condition in which cultural values, practices, and identities are protected through active social participation. Cultural security extends conventional notions of security by incorporating social cohesion, institutional legitimacy, and the sustainability of collective identity.

Operationally, Cultural-Nudge Policing functions through participatory governance, whereby decisions, activities, and safeguarding responsibilities are collaboratively distributed among police, cultural communities, local governments, and civil society actors. The model offers a novel conceptual bridge between behavioral public policy and policing studies, expanding the analytical horizon of police science toward the domain of cultural security. Conceptually, the model integrates nudge mechanisms (framing, default options, symbolic cues), collaborative policing functions (facilitation, mediation, partnership), and safeguarding objectives (community agency and cultural sustainability), collectively producing cultural security as the primary outcome.

3. Research Methods

This study adopts a qualitative case study design to examine in depth how Nudge Theory can be operationalized within collaborative policing frameworks to foster community participation in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. A qualitative approach was selected because it enables contextualized understanding of social processes, symbolic meanings, and relational dynamics between policing institutions and cultural communities—dimensions that cannot be adequately reduced to quantitative variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). Drawing on interpretive policy analysis, this design treats policy practices as socially constructed processes shaped by actor interactions, collective narratives, and localized institutional arrangements (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014).

Specifically, the study employs a single embedded case study strategy, allowing for intensive analysis of one primary site with multiple internal units of analysis, including police actors, cultural communities, local government representatives, and civil society organizations. This design is particularly suited to examining the integrative mechanisms linking behavioral interventions (nudging), collaborative policing practices, and cultural safeguarding dynamics within a specific empirical context (Yin, 2018).

The research is grounded in an interpretive qualitative paradigm that views social reality as co-constructed through practices, symbols, and power relations. A case study approach was selected to enable process-oriented exploration of contemporary phenomena in real-life contexts, especially where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly delineated (Yin, 2018). This design aligns with the study's objective to understand how collective behavioral change is mediated by socially embedded choice architectures and collaborative policing practices. The framework facilitates analytical integration between behavioral governance and collaborative policing perspectives, focusing on mechanisms of implementation at the community level. Accordingly, the methodological orientation extends beyond descriptive documentation to interpret how meanings of security, culture, and participation are socially negotiated.

3.1. Case Selection

The empirical focus centers on *"Rumah Singgah Tuan Kadi"* in Pekanbaru, Riau Province, Indonesia, selected through purposeful sampling as an exemplar of police–community collaborative cultural revitalization. The site constitutes a historic Malay cultural space that had previously experienced declining socio-cultural function but was subsequently reactivated through a collaborative initiative involving regional police, municipal authorities, cultural communities, micro-enterprise actors, and youth arts groups.

Case selection was guided by three principal criteria. First, the site represents a concrete context of intangible heritage safeguarding challenged by urbanization and limited public engagement. Second, it demonstrates active police involvement not merely as security providers but as facilitators of cultural activities and community mobilization. Third, the case offers a rich empirical setting to observe nudge mechanisms in practice, including symbolic activation of cultural spaces, collective narrative framing, and the creation of default participation pathways within collaborative policing. This selection strategy aligns with Patton's (2015) principle of information-rich cases, which prioritizes analytical depth over statistical representativeness.

3.2. Data Collection

Data collection employed four complementary techniques to ensure methodological triangulation. *First*, participatory observation was conducted during cultural events and police–community interactions at the research site. This method enabled direct documentation of social dynamics, symbolic practices, and patterns of citizen engagement in cultural public spaces, while also capturing how police enacted facilitative roles (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011).

Second, semi-structured in-depth interviews were carried out with key actors, including police personnel, cultural community leaders, local government representatives, and community members. Interviews explored perceptions of policing roles, experiences of cultural participation, and the social meanings attributed to revitalization

activities. This approach facilitated both subjective accounts and critical reflection on collaborative practices (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015).

Third, a limited Delphi process was employed to elicit cross-sector expert perspectives on cultural safeguarding strategies and the potential scalability of the Cultural-Nudge Policing model. The Delphi technique supported reflective consensus-building through iterative, structured feedback rounds among stakeholders (Hsu & Sandford, 2007).

Fourth, policy document analysis encompassed regulatory texts, program reports, public communication materials, and archival records related to cultural revitalization initiatives. These documents were examined to contextualize field practices within broader institutional narratives and policy frameworks (Bowen, 2009).

3.3. Data Analysis

All qualitative data were analyzed using thematic coding through an inductive–deductive process. Initial open coding identified emergent patterns across empirical materials, followed by axial coding to organize core themes related to nudge mechanisms, collaborative policing roles, and community participation dynamics. The final stage involved selective coding, integrating these themes into the overarching Cultural-Nudge Policing conceptual framework.

Thematic analysis was chosen for its flexibility in capturing complex social experiences while enabling systematic linkage between empirical data and theoretical constructs (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2021). Analytical rigor was enhanced through data source triangulation, limited member checking with key informants, and peer debriefing during interpretation to strengthen credibility and reflexivity.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to established ethical principles of social research, including informed consent, participant confidentiality, and respect for local cultural values. All participants received clear explanations regarding research objectives, their right to withdraw at any stage, and the academic use of collected data. Given the sensitivity of cultural contexts, the research also followed the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) as recommended in intangible heritage safeguarding, positioning communities as active subjects rather than objects of inquiry. Researcher reflexivity was maintained throughout the study to minimize interpretive bias and ensure that representations of cultural practices and policing roles remained proportional and contextually grounded (Tracy, 2020).

4. Results: Operationalizing Nudge within Collaborative Policing

This section presents the core empirical findings on how nudge mechanisms were operationalized within collaborative policing practices to foster community participation in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Thematic analysis identified four interrelated patterns that collectively constituted Cultural-Nudge Policing at the research site: (1) cultural framing and symbolic activation, (2) the transformation of police roles into community facilitation, (3) nudge mechanisms in cultivating voluntary participation, and (4) a shift in outcomes from conventional public order toward cultural security.

Together, these themes demonstrate that behavioral interventions and collaborative policing did not function as discrete strategies but as mutually reinforcing social processes, integrating symbolic environmental design, institutional relationships, and citizen participation dynamics.

4.1. Cultural Framing and Symbolic Activation

The first theme reveals that cultural safeguarding at *"Rumah Singgah Tuan Kadi"* did not originate from formal directives but emerged through cultural framing and symbolic activation of public space. Revitalization efforts

repositioned Malay cultural elements such as traditional performances, pantun recitations, visual ornaments, and local historical narratives as focal points of weekly social activities. Previously passive spaces were reconfigured into vibrant arenas of cultural expression, enabling residents to move beyond spectatorship and re-engage with the site as part of their collective identity.

This cultural framing operated as a symbolic cue that strengthened emotional attachment to traditional practices. Rather than presenting activities as government programs or policing initiatives, events were framed as celebrations of togetherness and local pride. The narrative positioned culture as shared heritage rather than administrative responsibility. In this sense, nudging functioned through meaning reconstruction: cultural participation was not communicated as an obligation but as an identity expression.

Empirically, symbolic activation triggered processes of social re-identification. Residents who had previously remained disengaged began attending regularly, while younger generations exhibited renewed interest in traditional arts. These patterns indicate that cultural framing served as an initial catalyst for collective behavioral change by expanding affective spaces in which communities renegotiated their relationship with heritage. Within the Cultural-Nudge Policing framework, this mechanism underscores the centrality of symbol-based choice architecture in cultivating intrinsic motivation rather than external compliance.

4.2. Police as Community Facilitator

The second theme highlights a transformation in policing roles from public order guardians to community facilitators. In field practice, police presence was not marked by authoritative surveillance but by social orchestration, connecting cultural communities, municipal authorities, micro-enterprise actors, and youth arts groups. This facilitative role materialized through citizen dialogues, support for artistic activities, and the promotion of local cultural economies.

Informal exchanges between police and residents became key platforms for trust-building and participatory engagement. These interactions extended beyond conventional security concerns to encompass cultural aspirations and community needs. Traditional art performances and cultural micro-enterprise exhibitions were actively facilitated as integral components of policing strategy, integrating creative economy initiatives into broader ecosystems of social security.

This transformation reflects a shift from command-and-control policing toward relational policing, where legitimacy is constructed through social proximity and participatory presence. Police functioned as mediators among stakeholders and as community partners, reducing psychological distance between state institutions and citizens. Within Cultural-Nudge Policing, this facilitative role constitutes an institutional precondition for nudge effectiveness: behavioral interventions gain traction only when embedded in trust-based relationships and procedural fairness.

4.3. Nudge Mechanisms and Voluntary Participation

The third theme illustrates how nudge mechanisms generated behavioral change without coercion. Community participation was not driven by formal obligations or direct material incentives but by socially designed environments that rendered attendance a "natural" choice. Cultural activities were scheduled regularly, framed as open-access events, and disseminated through local social networks, effectively establishing participation as a default pathway within community life.

Over time, attendance increased substantially, including among groups previously uninvolved in cultural activities. More importantly, engagement evolved from passive presence to active contribution, encompassing idea generation, logistical support, and resident-initiated programming. This trajectory reflects the emergence of collective ownership over cultural spaces, as communities increasingly perceived activities as their own rather than externally imposed. These findings indicate that nudging operated as an initial behavioral catalyst, followed by deeper processes of value internalization. Once participation became socially institutionalized, reliance on

behavioral interventions diminished. Within Cultural-Nudge Policing, this pattern signifies a transition from behavioral activation to community self-organization, an essential indicator of sustainable cultural safeguarding.

4.4. From Public Order to Cultural Security

The fourth theme captures the broader social impacts of integrating nudging with collaborative policing. Cultural space activation and increased citizen participation contributed to strengthened trust between communities and police, alongside enhanced social cohesion across diverse groups. Previously sporadic interactions evolved into more stable and dialogical relationships.

Routine community presence in cultural public spaces also generated mechanisms of early conflict prevention. Potential social tensions were identified through informal communication channels, while cross-group engagement reduced fragmentation. Consequently, security was no longer defined merely by the absence of disturbance but emerged as a socially produced condition sustained through collective relationships and cultural continuity. This transformation marks a paradigmatic shift from public order policing toward cultural security. Security was reconceptualized as a community's capacity to sustain identity, reinforce solidarity, and manage difference through dialogue. In this context, Cultural-Nudge Policing produced outcomes extending beyond order maintenance, establishing social foundations for the sustainability of living heritage practices.

5. Discussion

This discussion situates the empirical findings within broader debates on policing transformation, behavioral governance, and the expanding meaning of security beyond conventional law enforcement paradigms. The results demonstrate that integrating Nudge Theory into collaborative policing practices enables the emergence of a novel governance mode that combines non-coercive behavioral interventions with social co-production, producing what this article conceptualizes as Cultural-Nudge Policing. This model marks a conceptual shift from policing as a mechanism of control toward policing as facilitation of social change grounded in cultural identity and community participation.

5.1. Redefining Policing: From Enforcement to Facilitation

The findings reinforce arguments in critical policing literature that police effectiveness in democratic societies increasingly depends on the capacity to cultivate social relationships rather than relying primarily on coercive state power. The roles of police as community facilitators, social mediators, and cultural partners observed in the Pekanbaru case provide empirical grounding for this transformation. Rather than positioning citizens as objects of protection, collaborative policing reframes communities as active subjects in the production of security.

This transformation aligns with the concept of co-production of security, which emphasizes that security emerges through sustained interaction between formal institutions and social actors (Loader & Walker, 2007; Terpstra, 2018). The principal contribution of this study lies in extending this framework by incorporating behavioral and symbolic dimensions. Collaboration, as demonstrated here, is not established solely through formal partnership structures but also through socially designed environments that facilitate emotional engagement and collective identification.

Through nudge mechanisms, police operate less as rule enforcers and more as social orchestrators who create conditions for voluntary participation. This approach expands understandings of procedural justice from fairness in legal encounters toward recognition of cultural identity. Police legitimacy, in this context, is constructed through participatory presence and cultural dialogue rather than institutional dominance. These findings enrich existing literature that locates legitimacy primarily in legal compliance, demonstrating that legitimacy can also be produced through everyday cultural engagement.

5.2. Nudge as a Democratic Governance Instrument

The integration of Nudge Theory into collaborative policing reveals nudging's potential as an instrument of democratic governance. Unlike traditional policy approaches reliant on regulation and sanctions, nudging operates through choice architecture that encourages pro-social behavior while preserving freedom of choice. In this study, nudging was enacted through cultural framing, symbolic activation of public spaces, and the creation of default participation pathways that normalized cultural engagement as a routine social practice.

Behavioral policy scholarship has long emphasized that nudge-based interventions are most effective when aligned with individuals' values and social identities (Sunstein, 2016; Benartzi et al., 2017). This article extends that argument by demonstrating that nudging becomes substantially more effective when embedded within trust-based collaborative structures. In other words, the success of nudging depends not only on choice design but also on the quality of institutional relationships between state actors and communities.

Within this framework, nudging functions as an initial behavioral trigger that opens space for value internalization. Once participation becomes socially institutionalized, it transitions into processes of community self-organization. This trajectory suggests that nudging can operate as a bridge between public policy and collective action, particularly in culturally sensitive domains.

Moreover, these findings challenge normative critiques of nudging as subtle manipulation. In Cultural-Nudge Policing, nudging expands communities' deliberative capacities by creating spaces for cultural expression and social dialogue. Rather than serving as a technocratic tool, nudging functions as a facilitative instrument that strengthens community agency.

5.3. Cultural Security as an Expansion of the Policing Mandate

One of the article's central theoretical contributions is the introduction of cultural security as an expansion of the policing mandate. Traditionally, security in policing studies has been framed in terms of public order, crime prevention, and social stability. The findings demonstrate that cultural practices constitute a strategic arena for security production, as collective identity, social cohesion, and conflict resolution mechanisms are forged within cultural engagement.

Cultural security refers to conditions in which cultural values and practices are protected through active social participation, generating more inclusive and resilient social relations. In Pekanbaru, cultural space activation not only increased citizen engagement but also facilitated early conflict prevention through informal communication and cross-group interaction. Consequently, security was produced through the continuity of cultural practices rather than through patrol or enforcement alone.

This conceptualization expands the analytical horizon of policing studies by positioning culture as an integral component of public security. Within this framework, Cultural-Nudge Policing offers an operational model in which police act as catalysts of collective behavioral change oriented toward sustaining identity and social solidarity. The approach complements community policing by introducing behavioral and symbolic dimensions, while bridging policing scholarship with heritage studies.

5.4. Implications for Global South Governance

Empirical insights from Indonesia provide critical perspectives for Global South governance, where states frequently confront institutional capacity constraints, cultural plurality, and social fragmentation simultaneously. In many Global South contexts, security strategies centered on state control tend to widen the gap between institutions and communities. The findings indicate that integrating nudging with collaborative policing offers a more adaptive, community-rooted governance alternative.

Cultural-Nudge Policing is particularly relevant for culturally diverse societies, as it enables local identity preservation while strengthening institutional legitimacy. By positioning police as facilitators of social change, this approach opens new possibilities for public policy that integrates security, culture, and social development. In

resource-constrained settings, behavioral strategies combined with community participation also offer relative efficiency compared to large-scale structural interventions.

Theoretically, this article extends behavioral governance and collaborative policing literature by providing empirical evidence beyond Western contexts that have dominated nudge and policing research. Accordingly, the study contributes not merely geographic diversity but a deeper conceptual understanding of how behavioral interventions interact with cultural and institutional dynamics in plural societies.

Overall, this article advances three core contributions: (1) the formulation of Cultural-Nudge Policing as an original integration of Nudge Theory, collaborative policing, and cultural safeguarding; (2) the conceptualization of cultural security as an expanded policing mandate; and (3) empirical evidence from a Global South context demonstrating how behavioral governance can be operationalized in policing practice. Collectively, these contributions extend police science beyond law enforcement paradigms toward participatory governance oriented to socio-cultural sustainability.

6. Conclusion

This article has examined how Nudge Theory can be integrated into collaborative policing frameworks to strengthen community participation in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Drawing on a qualitative case study at Rumah Singgah Tuan Kadi in Pekanbaru, Indonesia, the findings demonstrate that choice architecture–based behavioral interventions, when combined with relational and participatory policing practices, can catalyze collective behavioral change without coercion. Symbolic cultural activation, cultural framing, and the creation of default participation pathways were shown to increase citizen engagement, foster collective ownership of cultural spaces, and strengthen social cohesion.

Conceptually, these findings indicate that policing can no longer be understood solely as an instrument of law enforcement, but rather as a mechanism for facilitating social change rooted in cultural identity and everyday practices. The integration of nudging and collaborative policing gives rise to the Cultural-Nudge Policing model, which positions police as *behavioral catalysts* within participatory governance. This model simultaneously introduces cultural security as an expanded policing mandate, wherein security is produced through the continuity of cultural practices, institutional trust, and inclusive social relations.

The primary theoretical contribution of this article lies in integrating three domains that have largely evolved separately, behavioral public policy, collaborative policing, and intangible heritage safeguarding, into a unified analytical framework. By providing empirical evidence from Indonesia, the study also advances Global South scholarship on culturally sensitive security governance, challenging the predominance of Western-centric perspectives in nudging and policing literature. The findings demonstrate that behavioral approaches can be operationalized contextually in plural societies, provided they are supported by trust-based institutional relationships and meaningful community participation.

6.1. Policy Implications

The policy implications of this study point toward the need to reorient policing strategies toward more integrative approaches that connect security, culture, and social behavioral change.

First, the Indonesian National Police may develop culturally grounded policing programs that systematically embed nudge mechanisms within community engagement initiatives. Such programs should extend beyond conventional public order objectives to include the activation of cultural public spaces as platforms for strengthening social cohesion. This orientation enables policing to function as a catalyst for citizen participation rather than merely as a provider of security services.

Second, establishing or strengthening cultural units within police organizations represents a strategic pathway for institutionalizing collaboration with arts communities, customary leaders, and creative economy actors. These

units can serve as cross-sector coordination hubs, facilitating cultural dialogue, supporting traditional arts activities, and integrating heritage safeguarding into local security agendas.

Third, the development of behavioral policy laboratories within policing institutions, or in partnership with universities and research organizations, could enhance capacity for designing context-sensitive behavioral interventions. Such laboratories would enable pilot testing of choice architecture strategies, systematic evaluation of their impact on community participation, and the generation of empirical evidence to inform data-driven policy refinement.

More broadly, these implications underscore the importance of viewing policing as part of a socio-cultural governance ecosystem rather than as a sector isolated from community development. Integrating security, culture, and behavioral policy innovation opens pathways toward more adaptive, inclusive, and sustainable governance models.

6.2. Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that warrant consideration. First, the single-case design constrains the generalizability of findings across different geographical and cultural contexts. While the approach offers analytical depth, replication in diverse settings is necessary to test the robustness of the Cultural-Nudge Policing model. Second, the study primarily examines qualitative dimensions of behavioral change and social relations, without longitudinal quantitative measurement of impacts on security indicators or cultural sustainability.

Future research could adopt mixed-methods designs to integrate qualitative insights with quantitative measures of citizen participation, public trust, and social cohesion. Comparative studies across regions or countries would further illuminate variations in Cultural-Nudge Policing implementation across cultural contexts. Additionally, subsequent research may explore the role of digital technologies in expanding cultural choice architectures and assess how interactions between offline and online nudging influence community participation dynamics.

By integrating Nudge Theory into collaborative policing, this article offers a new framework for understanding security as a participatory socio-cultural process. Cultural-Nudge Policing extends policing scholarship beyond enforcement paradigms toward behavioral governance oriented to identity sustainability and social cohesion. In Global South contexts characterized by cultural diversity and resource constraints, this approach provides a strategic alternative that not only strengthens institutional legitimacy but also empowers communities as central actors in sustaining living cultural heritage.

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