

INDEXING PAPUA SEPARATISM VULNERABILITY TO DETERMINE PRIORITY SCALES FOR PUBLIC POLICY AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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Abstract

Background: The government and relevant stakeholders have implemented various policies to address separatist movements in Papua, Indonesia; however, separatist political maneuvers persist.

Objective: This study aims to develop a separatism vulnerability indexing model to support accurate and informed decision making.

Method: This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data sources derived from interviews, observations, and literature review. Data analysis was conducted using Creswell analytical model with the assistance of NVivo 12 software.

Findings: The results reveal that separatism vulnerability is shaped by entrenched development gaps, structural inequalities, governance failures, Melanesian identity politics, digital disinformation, and the intergenerational reproduction of separatist ideology. Limited healthcare access, weak local food security, and inadequate dissemination of the *uti possidetis juris* principle further deepen public distrust toward the state. These structural, social, ideological, and institutional factors collectively generate a high level of vulnerability affecting *Papua* stability.

Conclusion: This study emphasizes that a quantitatively constructed indexing of Papua's separatism vulnerability is necessary to translate complex structural, social, ideological, and institutional factors into measurable indicators, enabling policymakers to objectively assess risk levels, compare vulnerabilities across regions and social groups, and determine priority scales for public policy and state security in a rational, accountable, and evidence-based manner to prevent conflict escalation in an early and sustainable way.

Keywords: Early Warning, National Security, Papua, Public Policy, Separatism Index.

Introduction

Although the government and relevant stakeholders have implemented various security, development, and governance policies to address separatist movements in Papua, Indonesia, separatist political maneuvers continue to persist and demonstrate a high degree of adaptability. This condition reflects a structural gap between policy formulation and on-the-ground realities, where development disparities, limited public service provision, governance weaknesses, and identity-based narratives continue to generate and sustain perceptions of injustice that are subsequently exploited by separatist actors. Existing policy responses tend to be sectoral, reactive, and event-driven, lacking a systematic analytical mechanism to map varying levels of separatism vulnerability across regions and social groups. As a result, decision-making processes often lack a strong evidentiary basis for determining intervention priorities and

allocating resources effectively (Alam et al., 2022; Ayuningtyas et al., 2021; Sulistyarningsih et al., 2021).

The dynamics of separatism in *Indonesia*, particularly in *Papua*, demonstrate that threats to national integrity are no longer singular nor purely military in nature, but multidimensional (Falk & Hagsten, 2023). Social, political, economic, cultural, and identity based vulnerabilities coupled with foreign intervention have increasingly intensified the risk of organized separatist movements (Muldoon et al., 2021). Manifestations such as escalating violence, resistance to government policies, ethnic identity manipulation, social inequality, and the proliferation of digital hoaxes underscore the urgent need for the Indonesian Government to develop an objective, integrated, and data driven risk measurement instrument capable of accurately mapping separatism vulnerability in *Papua* (Koga et al., 2023). However, *Indonesia* currently lacks a standardized Separatism Vulnerability Index as a foundation for strategic decision making, despite evidence from various countries indicating the effectiveness of such indexes in supporting Early Warning Systems that prevent the escalation of separatist movements (Sufri et al., 2020). In the absence of such an index, policy responses tend to be reactive, non evidence based, and delayed in anticipating emerging tensions (Lele, 2024).

This study is expected to produce a comprehensive and empirically grounded Separatism Vulnerability Index applicable across *Indonesia*, particularly in *Papua*. Such an index will serve as a mitigation and predictive instrument, enabling the government to detect early indications of separatist maneuvers swiftly and accurately (Lele, 2024). The ideal condition envisioned includes a national security policy framework that is proactive rather than reactive, supported by strengthened interagency coordination as a cohesive team committed to public interest and national security (Steingartner et al., 2021).

Empirical observations indicate that *Indonesia* has yet to develop an official index to measure separatism vulnerability (Ge & Lu, 2021). Current security policies remain fragmented and are not embedded within an integrated early warning architecture. Violent incidents persist including armed separatist attacks, resistance to development initiatives, and the dissemination of digital disinformation (Trocin et al., 2023). Rising Melanesian identity sentiment continues to serve as a vehicle for social and political mobilization. Foreign involvement often concealed through sophisticated narratives reinforces anti government sentiment in specific Papuan regions. Meanwhile, persistent social and economic disparities, and limited access to education, healthcare, and food security deepen perceptions of injustice among local communities. Coordination between security institutions and local governments remains suboptimal, resulting in slow and insufficient early detection (Al Banna, 2024).

The theoretical framework of this study adopts a multidisciplinary approach to comprehensively understand separatism vulnerability. Conflict Theory as developed by Karl Marx (1848), Lewis Coser (1956), and Ralf Dahrendorf (1957) highlights the structural injustices that fuel separatist sentiment. Social Movement Theory from Tilly (1978), McAdam (1982), and Tarrow (1998) provides insight into the mobilization of separatist groups through narratives of injustice, ethnic identity, and international networks.

Security Dilemma Theory by Herz (1950) and Jervis (1978) explains local resistance to state security policies. National Security Theory from Buzan (1991) and Baldwin (1997) affirms that separatist threats are multidimensional rather than purely military. The Faonaso Harefa Theory (2025) emphasizes addressing separatist ideology through the dissemination of the *uti possidetis juris* principle. Ideological Reproduction Theory by Louis Althusser (1971) explains how separatist ideology persists through familial, social, customary, and cultural structures.

The research problem arises from the complex dynamics of separatism in *Papua*, shaped by interacting multidimensional factors. The central questions addressed include: (1) what

factors constitute separatism vulnerability in Papua; (2) how social, political, economic, cultural, health, food security, and geopolitical elements interact in reinforcing such vulnerability; (3) how the determinants of the Separatism Vulnerability Index can be formulated as an empirical instrument to guide strategic decision making; and (4) how the vulnerability index can serve as the foundation for developing a predictive, responsive, and evidence based Early Warning System to anticipate separatism escalation(Clapp et al., 2022).

Accordingly, this study aims to identify and analyze the principal determinants of separatism vulnerability in Papua-Indonesia; elucidate the interactions among variables influencing vulnerability levels; construct an empirically and theoretically grounded Separatism Vulnerability Index; develop a comprehensive National Security Early Warning System model; and provide strategic policy recommendations enabling the government to design more targeted, humanistic, and effective interventions to strengthen social stability and national security(Suchkov, 2021).

The novelty of this study lies in the development of a comprehensive Separatism Vulnerability Index that synthesizes social, political, health, food security, and security determinants into a single predictive framework not previously formulated in the literature. This contribution fills a clear gap in the state of the art by providing a specific, measurable analytical instrument for early warning and strategic decision making in national security.

Methods

Method: This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach(Mezmir, 2020).

Data source: From the primary data were collected through in depth interviews with 9 (nine) informants. Of these, five were key figures representing diverse social structures in Papua namely traditional leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders, and local government officials. The remaining four informants were community members selected to capture grassroots perspectives on the dynamics of separatism, the circulation of hoaxes, and public perceptions of government policies(Mega Jaya et al., 2024). The diversity of informants was intentionally designed to ensure broader representativeness so that the findings reflect the plurality of social experiences and interpretations observed in the field. In addition to interviews, primary data were also obtained through direct field observations to document actual social conditions, community interactions, infrastructural access, and local dynamics relevant to the research problem(Mezmir, 2020). Next data source by the literature review draws on Law No. 3 of 2002 on State Defense, which mandates that national defense must be organized comprehensively to address both military and non-military threats through early detection and coordinated national preparedness. In addition, this study refers to the conceptual framework developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2002) through its Early Warning and Response Handbook, which outlines four fundamental components of an effective early warning system: risk assessment, monitoring, analysis and communication, and response capability. These frameworks collectively provide the normative and methodological foundation for constructing a systematic and anticipatory security early warning mechanism.

Data analysis technique: The data analysis technique employed Creswell (2014) analytical method with the assistance of NVivo 12 software. The NVivo based analysis began with data input, followed by systematic coding, categorization, thematic extraction, and interpretation to develop the analytical narrative presented in the findings and discussion sections(Dhakai, 2022).

Data validity: In this study is ensured through source and methodological triangulation, by cross checking interview results, field observations, and literature review to enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings.

Proposition: “Theoretically, indexing separatism vulnerability in Papua can assist the government and relevant stakeholders in making strategic decisions to address separatist escalation that affects national security.”

Time and Place: This research was conducted from January to 11 November 2025 in Jayapura City, Papua Province, and Manokwari City, West Papua Province, Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

In the Results and Discussion section of this study, the researcher will present the findings from interviews, field observations, and literature reviews, which are visualized through an NVivo 12 word cloud to analyze key themes emerging from the in depth interviews and reinforced by observational and documentary evidence(Chawla et al., 2023).

Map of Indonesian Papua Vulnerable to Separatist Ideologies



Data Source: Website, 2025.

Figure 1. Map of Indonesian Papua Vulnerable to Separatist Ideologies

The map illustrates that the areas highlighted in red, particularly within the Central Highlands of *Papua*, represent zones with a high level of separatism vulnerability, reflecting severe limitations in essential public services such as healthcare, education, food security, safety, and infrastructure(Sibbing et al., 2021). These structural deficiencies are frequently exploited by separatist groups as instruments of propoganda to discredit the government and to advance separatist narratives that contradict national development efforts aimed at promoting progress and strengthening social resilience across *Indonesia*, especially in *Papua*(Enthoven & Van den Broeck, 2021). Consequently, the red marked regions function as ideological “hotspots,” where separatist ideas tend to proliferate more rapidly and intensively compared with other areas in Papua(Tear & Reader, 2023).

Interview excerpt

The empirical findings further highlight the complex interplay between central government policies, local governance practices, and separatist propaganda strategies. Special Autonomy originally designed as an affirmative measure to improve the welfare of Papuans is generally acknowledged as providing broader fiscal and political space for the region. Nevertheless, its implementation is widely perceived as suboptimal due to mismanagement and lack of transparency among segments of the local elite. This situation produces a dual frustration: communities perceive that governmental development efforts have not materialized concretely, while local elites who should articulate and defend community aspirations are seen as prioritizing personal and group interests. Such conditions create fertile ground for separatist actors and their sympathizers to reinforce the narrative that the state and governance structures do not genuinely serve the interests of the Papuan (Sjamsoeddin et al., 2022).

Identity based propaganda rooted in Melanesian consciousness further amplifies the resonance of these narratives. Melanesian identity is deployed not only as a symbol of cultural distinctiveness but also as a political instrument for building regional solidarity with member states of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), thereby strengthening international legitimacy for separatist claims (PACIFIC, 2020). This phenomenon underscores that the Papua conflict is no longer a purely domestic issue of *Indonesia* but increasingly intertwined with the broader geopolitical configuration of the Pacific region (Siekiera, 2025).

In addition, the interviews emphasize the urgent need for a more inclusive dialogical approach that substantively involves customary leaders, religious figures, women's groups, youth leaders, and local communities as subjects rather than objects of conflict resolution. Participants consistently argue that addressing the varied social, political, and developmental issues in Papua requires structured, honest, and continuous dialogue between the government and the people. The government's limited dissemination of the *uti possidetis juris* principle which forms the legal foundation of Papua's integration into the Republic of Indonesia reflects a significant communication gap that separatist groups readily exploit to cultivate doubts regarding *Papua* political status (Liu et al., 2021).

Only a small portion of society understands the meaning, function, and relevance of *uti possidetis juris* within the framework of international law, leaving considerable room for information manipulation and the construction of negative perceptions. Furthermore, regional governments in Papua are widely viewed as having failed to fulfill their mandated role as extensions of the central government. Their lack of initiative in responding to separatism related issues reflects weak institutional capacity and insufficient synergy between central and local authorities in formulating coherent response strategies (Brody et al., 2021).

The findings also highlight the importance of improving health services in remote Papuan regions, enhancing maternal health, and strengthening local food systems particularly through commodities such as cassava, taro, and sago to accelerate community health, nutrition, and food sovereignty. Interviews further indicate that the persistence of separatist groups is strongly influenced by the intergenerational transmission of separatist ideas, intentionally maintained as a strategy to sustain and expand separatist ideology in *Papua* (Monaghan, 2019).

Overall, the convergence of field interviews, direct observations, prior studies, and literature analysis demonstrates that separatism in Papua is the product of layered interactions among structural conditions, governance failures, identity dynamics, digital information flows, and misaligned communication between the state and society. This constellation demands policy approaches that are comprehensive, participatory, and highly sensitive to local socio-cultural contexts in order to manage and gradually de-escalate the conflict in a sustainable and socially legitimate manner (Parry, 2023).

Discussion

In this discussion, the study analyzes its findings by drawing on data obtained from interviews, field observations, and the literature review. These empirical results are then examined in relation to the theoretical frameworks employed in the research, both to provide a solid conceptual foundation and to strengthen the validity and interpretive depth of the research conclusions.

Main of Findings of the Study

The findings reveal that separatism vulnerability in *Papua* is shaped by an interconnected set of multidimensional determinants, encompassing structural underdevelopment, governance failures at both central and local levels, weak public service provision, and the influence of identity based propaganda and digital information flows. Deficiencies in transportation infrastructure, low quality education and healthcare including maternal health services and insufficient local food security constitute critical indicators that heighten social and economic vulnerability. Failures in the implementation of Special Autonomy, limited transparency among local elites, and weak governmental capacity have deepened public distrust, which separatist groups exploit through hoaxes, misinformation, politicization of Melanesian identity, and geopolitical linkages to the Pacific region. Moreover, inadequate dissemination of the *uti possidetis juris* principle has widened the space for delegitimizing the state (Riyanto et al., 2023).

Determinants of Vulnerability through the Lens of Conflict Theory

The study demonstrates that *Papua*'s structural deprivation characterized by limited basic facilities, poor access to healthcare, education, transportation, and persistent development disparities constitutes a foundational source of separatism vulnerability consistent with Marxian analysis. Marx argues that conflict arises from structural inequality and unjust distribution of resources; thus, *Papua* chronic underdevelopment generates material deprivation, fostering alienation and deep mistrust toward the state. Inequalities in public service provision, the mismanagement of Special Autonomy funds, and the state's limited substantive presence exacerbate perceptions that the government has failed to meet fundamental societal needs. These conditions produce structural grievances collective feelings of injustice which become primary determinants within the Separatism Vulnerability Index, amplifying the potential for resistance and support for separatist ideas as expressions of structural dissatisfaction (Orsini, 2024).

Through the perspectives of Lewis Coser and Ralf Dahrendorf both of whom view conflict as emerging from social tensions and power asymmetries the findings indicate that interactions among central government policies, local elite behavior, and separatist identity propaganda create a complex conflict landscape. Dahrendorf posits that conflict arises from misalignment between authority holders and groups excluded from decision making processes; this dynamic is visible in the misuse of Special Autonomy by local elites, who fail to represent public interests (Pathirana et al., 2025).

Coser emphasizes that conflict can be intensified through symbolic identity processes. In the *Papua* context, Melanesian identity functions as a political instrument for mobilization and regional solidarity, thereby deepening societal dissatisfaction vis a vis the state. Digital hoaxes, propaganda, and the dissemination of separatist narratives compounded by weak socialization of the *uti possidetis juris* principle strengthen perceived injustice and social disharmony. These elements form significant determinants within the Separatism Vulnerability Index as they create psychosocial conditions that separatist actors readily exploit, further exacerbating instability and posing serious implications for national security (Miller, 2022).

Determinants of the Vulnerability Index Based on Social Movement Theory

The findings indicate that separatism vulnerability in *Papua* is profoundly shaped by the capacity of separatist groups to mobilize social action through narratives of injustice, ethnic identity, and transnational networks of solidarity. Tilly asserts that social movements evolve through organized collective action anchored in structural grievances perceived as real by affected communities; in the Papuan context, chronic underdevelopment, inadequate basic services, and perceptions of discrimination serve as grievance reservoirs exploited by separatist actors to broaden their support base. McAdam further explains that mass mobilization strengthens when political opportunity structures emerge conditions observable in Papua through weak local governance, the non transparent implementation of Special Autonomy, and its misuse by segments of the local elite, all of which increase societal susceptibility to separatist influence(Scott et al., 2025).

In *Papua* case, Melanesian identity and its political propagation function as a powerful cultural frame that reinforces internal solidarity while generating external legitimacy through Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) support. The unregulated flow of digital information including hoaxes and disinformation intensifies mobilization by producing emotional resonance that makes separatist narratives appear more legitimate and urgent. International networks through diaspora activists, foreign students studying in Indonesia, and individuals affiliated with separatist groups amplify the movement's capacity to frame allegations of human rights violations and structural injustice on a global stage(Witinok-Huber et al., 2021).

Determinants of Vulnerability Based on Security Dilemma Theory

In the Papuan context, the study reveals that state security policies aimed at maintaining stability are often perceived negatively by segments of the local population, particularly in structurally marginalized and remote regions. The presence of large numbers of security personnel, law enforcement operations, and instances of coercive action are viewed not as protective measures but as instruments of control and intimidation. Such perceptions of threat generate a psychological distance between society and the state an opening that separatist actors exploit to construct the narrative that the Indonesian state does not side with the Papuan people. This form of social resistance becomes a critical determinant in the Separatism Vulnerability Index, illustrating that security responses lacking humanistic and dialogical approaches may inadvertently strengthen support for separatist movements and deepen national security instability(Gunneriusson, 2021).

Determinants of Vulnerability Based on National Security Theory

Separatism vulnerability is an accumulation of non-military factors, including structural underdevelopment, weak public service delivery, governance failures, politicized Melanesian identity, and the penetration of digital narratives that erode public trust in the state(Ali & Khamees, 2025). Public health dimensions particularly low access to maternal health, inadequate basic healthcare, and fragile local food security (sago, cassava, taro) further intensify vulnerability by directly affecting community well being and perceptions of state presence(Chastonay & Chastonay, 2022). Buzan and Baldwin argue that such factors constitute integral components of national security threats; thus, they must be incorporated as core determinants within the Separatism Vulnerability Index(Afework, 2025). From this multidimensional perspective, separatism cannot be addressed solely through military means or law enforcement by the police; instead, it requires comprehensive interventions encompassing human development, strengthened public services, improved governance, and

inclusive national identity building as essential components of an effective National Security Early Warning System(Newmann & and Christiansen, 2023)(Mohammadkhani, 2024).

Determinants of Vulnerability Based on the Principle of Uti Possidetis Juris

One major determinant of separatism vulnerability in *Indonesia* is the public's limited understanding of the uti possidetis juris principle an international legal doctrine affirming that postcolonial states inherit territorial boundaries as they existed at the moment of independence. In the *Papua* context, the study shows that the majority of the population is unfamiliar with the legal basis for *Papua* integration into the Republic of Indonesia, creating an informational vacuum exploited by separatist groups to advance narratives delegitimizing the state. The lack of systematic dissemination by central and local governments, as well as the security apparatus, has produced legal ambiguities at the community level and reinforced the perception that *Papua* political status remains contestable. This becomes a significant determinant within the Separatism Vulnerability Index, as gaps in public legal literacy enable manipulation, broaden support for separatist narratives, and weaken state legitimacy in the eyes of local communities(Al Banna, 2024).

The communication gap between the state and society, coupled with limited understanding of international legal principles, intensifies multidimensional separatism vulnerability. Sustained, community-based dissemination of the uti possidetis juris principle is essential for strengthening public comprehension of the legal legitimacy of Papua's integration and for countering separatist propaganda. Within the framework of the National Security Early Warning System, low legal awareness constitutes a critical vulnerability indicator that must be continuously monitored due to its potential to trigger ideological and political escalation if not addressed through effective legal education(Uerpmann-witzack, 2022).

Determinants of Vulnerability Based on the Health Dimension

The study finds that poor health outcomes in remote Papuan regions particularly concerning maternal health, community nutrition, and limited access to medical services constitute an important determinant of separatism vulnerability(Safitra et al., 2023). Weak health service provision and minimal state intervention in remote communities reinforce perceptions that the state is absent or inequitable in fulfilling basic needs(Shiyanbola et al., 2021).

Determinants of Vulnerability Based on Ideological Regeneration

The persistence of separatist ideology in Papua is reinforced through deliberate intergenerational transmission, functioning as a conscious strategy to ensure the longevity of the movement. The strengthening of separatist ideas is achieved through the transfer of narratives of injustice, reproduction of identity symbols, and cultivation of collective memory about conflict systematically targeted at younger generations. This ideological regeneration demonstrates that separatism in Papua is not solely a structural issue but also a cultural and ideological phenomenon deeply rooted within community dynamics(Era, 2023).

The continuation of separatist ideology is thus a critical determinant in constructing the Vulnerability Index, indicating a long term risk influenced not only by material conditions but also by psychological, identity based, and value laden factors at the community level. Within the perspective of the National Security Early Warning System, this phenomenon constitutes a strategic indicator requiring intensive monitoring, as it possesses significant potential to trigger conflict escalation and prolong the cycle of instability in Papua(He et al., 2023).

Analysis of Vulnerability Index Determinants Based on Food Security

This condition is exacerbated by weak food security, particularly the underutilization of local food resources such as cassava, taro, and sago, which in fact hold substantial potential to improve nutrition and strengthen community level food sovereignty in *Papua* (Hellegers, 2022). Deficits in public health and low levels of food security not only affect societal well being but also shape public perceptions of the state legitimacy (Baker et al., 2020). Within the framework of the Separatism Vulnerability Index, these factors constitute critical socio-economic indicators for assessing the risk level of conflict and instability (Grosso et al., 2020).

Analysis of Vulnerability Index Determinants Based on Ideological Reproduction Theory.

The persistence of separatist ideology across generations reflects a deliberate strategy employed by separatist groups to ensure the continuity of the movement. The strengthening of separatist ideas is facilitated through the transmission of narratives of injustice, the reproduction of identity symbols, and the embedding of collective memories of conflict, systematically directed at younger generations. This process demonstrates that separatism in Papua is not solely a structural issue but also a cultural and ideological phenomenon deeply woven into the social fabric of Papuan communities. The durability of separatist ideology thus becomes a key determinant in constructing the Vulnerability Index, as it signifies long term risks shaped not only by material conditions but also by psychological dynamics, identity formation, and value reproduction within communities. From the perspective of the National Security Early Warning System, this phenomenon constitutes a strategic indicator that requires intensive monitoring due to its significant potential to trigger conflict escalation and prolong cycles of instability in Papua (Type et al., 2025).

Drawing on Louis Althusser Ideological Reproduction Theory (1971), ideology does not develop solely through formal state structures but is continually reproduced through Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) such as families, social groups, customary institutions, and local cultural systems (Battistoni, 2025). In the *Papua* context, the findings show that ideological regeneration occurs organically through family narratives, intergenerational conflict memories, and community solidarity around historical grievances. In remote areas where the state is rarely present in substantive form, families and local communities become the primary centers of political socialization for younger generations. Narratives of resistance, experiences of discrimination, and historical accounts framed as “oppression” are passed down as collective truths, creating the perception that opposition to the state forms an integral part of communal identity. This ideological reproduction becomes a critical determinant in the Separatism Vulnerability Index, as it reinforces the movement’s ideological foundations and produces a persistent cycle of support that is difficult to dismantle (Dannhauer, 2024).

Althusser further asserts that ideology is reproduced through rituals, symbols, and cultural narratives that generate emotional resonance. In the case of Papua, Melanesian identity symbols, customary rituals, resistance songs, and narratives circulated in digital spaces function as systematic media for ideological reproduction. Alternative historical narratives questioning *Papua* political status, as well as symbols such as the Morning Star flag, serve as cultural devices that reinforce a resistance identity. Separatist propaganda strategies exploit these elements to cultivate an alternative sense of nationhood outside the Indonesian state, particularly among the youth. This creates a high risk environment for national security, as ideological regeneration is driven not only by structural factors but also by cultural mechanisms that are continuously renewed through collective memory and symbolic expression. These elements become strategic indicators within the Separatism Vulnerability Index, demonstrating that conflict is likely to persist as long as these symbols and narratives continue to be reproduced within Papuan social life (Rühlemann, 2022).

Overall Analysis. Taken together, these determinants structural conditions, governance quality, identity politics, digital information flows, and the capacity of basic public services constitute the core indicators in the construction of the Separatism Vulnerability Index. When systematically mapped, these indicators form a crucial foundation for developing a National Security Early Warning System that is more predictive, responsive, and contextually attuned to the evolving dynamics in *Papua*(Constantinou et al., 2021).

Analysis of Determinants of the Vulnerability Index Based on Law No. 3 of 2002 on National Defense

Law No. 3 of 2002 on National Defense affirms that national defense is a comprehensive effort involving all components of the nation to confront both military and non-military threats that endanger the integrity and safety of the state. In the context of separatism in *Papua*, such threats fall under non-military threats originating from ideological, political, social, and cultural factors that erode state legitimacy. The law mandates that the state must build an integrated defense system encompassing early detection, prevention, and rapid response to potential threats. Accordingly, the principle of early detection embedded in this law aligns with the necessity of developing a Separatism Vulnerability Index as a scientific instrument for mapping risk levels across regions(Cooperation, 2022).

Analysis of Determinants of the Vulnerability Index Based on the Early Warning System

Risk assessment plays a central role in identifying factors that heighten separatism vulnerability, as it enables systematic mapping of conditions that may trigger socio-political instability(Rusfiana & Kurniasih, 2024). In *Papua*, risk assessment reveals that chronic underdevelopment marked by inadequate infrastructure, limited access to health and education services, and weak food security forms the basis of public dissatisfaction with the state. Structural injustice, such as unequal resource distribution, mismanagement of Special Autonomy funds, and weak local governance capacity, further strengthens feelings of marginalization(Keevers et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the ongoing reproduction of separatist ideology through familial narratives, Melanesian identity symbols, and digital propaganda introduces additional ideological and cultural risks. Thus, risk assessment must evaluate not only physical and material vulnerabilities but also social, political, and ideological risks that are essential for constructing the Separatism Vulnerability Index and the National Security Early Warning System(Simpson et al., 2021).

Monitoring ensures that social, economic, and security dynamics are continuously observed so that emerging shifts can be detected before they develop into more serious threats. In *Papua*, sustained monitoring is needed to detect early signs of tension, such as rising public grievances, mass mobilization, dissemination of separatist hoaxes, or changes in the operational patterns of armed groups. In the economic sphere, monitoring captures welfare pressures, disparities in access to basic services, and disruptions in food availability. In the security domain, monitoring violent incidents, attack patterns, and propaganda intensity allows the state to assess escalation in real time. Thus, monitoring functions not merely as data collection but as a strategic mechanism enabling rapid, evidence based responses within the National Security Early Warning System(Ogra, 2022).

Analysis and communication integrate field data with strategic decision making through systematic, objective, and interagency coordinated information processing. In *Papua*, analyzing structural, social, ideological, and security indicators allows the government to identify vulnerability patterns, sources of conflict, and potential escalation based on empirical evidence. This information must be effectively communicated to stakeholders such as the *TNI*, *Polri*, and local governments, and relevant ministries to produce accurate and targeted policy responses.

Without comprehensive analysis and structured communication, field data remain passive information that cannot drive strategic action. Thus, this component ensures that every field finding is transformed into adaptive, measurable decision making that strengthens the National Security Early Warning System(Moya & Goenechea, 2022).

Response capability emphasizes institutional capacity to respond to threats swiftly and appropriately, preventing escalation before it reaches dangerous levels. In Papua, effective response requires readiness among security forces, local governments, and central agencies to act based on risk assessment, monitoring, and integrated analysis. A rapid response means addressing violent incidents, hoax dissemination, or separatist mobilization through proportional, evidence based measures. An appropriate response requires actions that consider not only security dimensions but also social, cultural, health, and welfare aspects such as improving public services in remote regions, facilitating dialogue with customary leaders, and strengthening local food systems. With strong response capability, the state can demonstrate substantive presence, reduce public distrust, and narrow the operational space of separatist actors. Therefore, response capability is a critical component of the National Security Early Warning System, ensuring that early warnings translate into strategic, effective, and sustainable actions(Johnson et al., 2020).

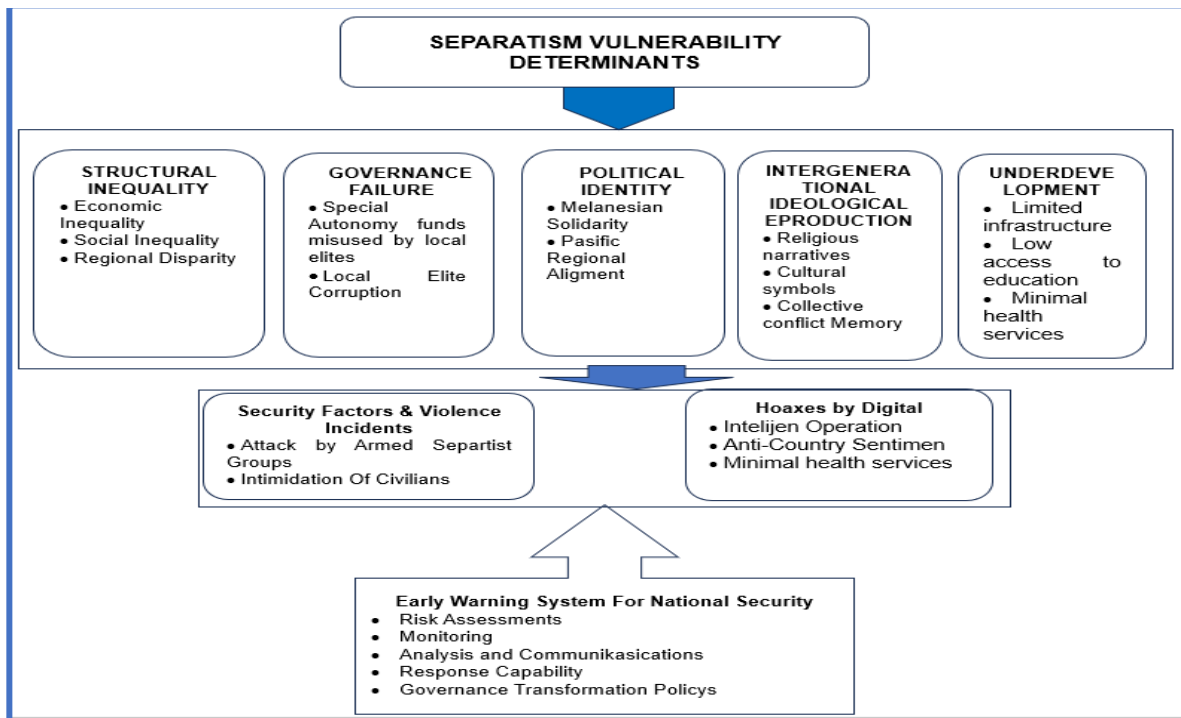


Figure 3. Mapping the Separatism Vulnerability Index in Papua

Figure 3 illustrates that the Separatism Vulnerability Index in *Papua* is shaped by a series of interconnected multidimensional determinants, ranging from structural deficiencies, governance failures, Melanesian identity politics, intergenerational reproduction of separatist ideology, to chronic developmental disparities. These factors collectively create a fragile socio political environment, further exacerbated by various incidents of violence and digital propaganda, which intensify public distrust toward the government and the state(Almalawi et al., 2023)(Hanisch et al., 2023).

The diagram demonstrates that these determinants ultimately converge on the urgent need to establish an Early Warning System aimed at strengthening social resilience in Papua and enhancing National Security within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of

Indonesia (Atobishi et al., 2024). Strengthening the components of risk assessment, monitoring, analysis and communication, and response capability is essential to ensure that the government and relevant stakeholders can detect potential separatist escalation more rapidly, accurately, and based on empirical evidence, thereby supporting informed decision making and adaptive policymaking toward a peaceful Papua and a more resilient national security posture (Browder et al., 2024).

Theoretical and Practical contributions

This study contributes theoretically by advancing the literature on separatism through the development of a separatism vulnerability indexing framework that integrates structural, social, ideological, and institutional dimensions into a measurable analytical model. It bridges the gap between conflict theory, national security studies, and public policy by translating qualitative insights into a risk quantification approach, thereby enriching theoretical discussions on national security early warning systems and context-sensitive separatism analysis. Practically, this study provides an operational foundation for governments and relevant stakeholders to formulate more targeted public policies and national security strategies through the application of the Papua Separatism Vulnerability Index. The proposed model serves as a decision-support instrument for prioritizing interventions, allocating resources, and preventing conflict escalation at an early stage, while strengthening evidence-based policymaking and enhancing the effectiveness of early warning and response mechanisms sensitive to local socio-political contexts.

Conclusion

This study concludes that separatism vulnerability in Papua is shaped by mutually reinforcing multidimensional determinants, including the historical controversy surrounding Papua's reintegration into the Republic of *Indonesia*, suboptimal development outcomes, structural inequalities, and the ineffective implementation of Special Autonomy Plus. These conditions are intensified by Melanesian identity propaganda, intergenerational reproduction of separatist ideology, and the circulation of hoaxes and digital disinformation. The vulnerability is further amplified by limited healthcare services, weak policy support for local food security, and inadequate public dissemination of the *uti possidetis juris* principle as the international legal basis for *Papua* integration into *Indonesia*.

The study affirms that addressing separatist ideology in Papua requires a comprehensive, multidimensional approach that prioritizes resolving foundational issues, particularly the historical context of *Papua* as a former Dutch colony and the reaffirmation of the *uti possidetis juris* principle establishing Papua as an integral part of Indonesia *de jure* and *de facto*. These efforts must be accompanied by structural reforms, strengthened social, health, educational, and food security infrastructures, and improved transparency and accountability in the management of Special Autonomy Plus funds. An inclusive dialogical approach must involve traditional leaders, religious figures, women, youth, and local communities as strategic partners in crafting shared solutions. Equally important is systematic oversight of digital hoaxes and continuous public education on national unity, the values of *Pancasila*, the 1945 Constitution, and *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* as the foundational identity of *Indonesia* plural society.

The findings provide significant analytical and empirical contributions by offering a comprehensive framework for mapping the multidimensional determinants of separatism vulnerability in Papua. This framework serves as an evidence based foundation for government strategic decision making and policymaking that is more predictive, responsive, and

empirically grounded, thereby strengthening the effectiveness of the Early Warning System and enhancing social resilience and national security.

This study is limited by its descriptive qualitative approach, the relatively small number of informants, and the geographically constrained research sites, which may not fully capture the diversity of separatism dynamics across Papua. Future research should expand the geographical coverage, adopt mixed method approaches, and develop quantitative models for measuring the Separatism Vulnerability Index to produce stronger empirical validation and broader generalizability.

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