

Policy Capacity and Community Empowerment as Instruments of Indonesia's Social Development in the era of Covid-19 Pandemic

Author:

Ahmad Sururi¹, Budi Hasanah²

Affiliation:

Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University, Jl. Raya Palka KM.3, Sindangsari, Serang City, Banten, 421631, Indonesia¹

Serang Raya University, Jl. Raya Cilegon Km. 4 Drangong, Serang City, Banten, 421631, Indonesia²

e-Mail:

ahmadbroer@gmail.com¹, budihasanah@gmail.com²

***Corresponding author**

Ahmad Sururi

Serang Raya University

Email: ahmadbroer@gmail.com

Received: Sep 19, 2024

Revised: Mar 12, 2025

Accepted: Aug 10, 2025

Available Online: Aug 16, 2025

ABSTRACT

This research aims to discuss policy capacity within the scope of social, analytical and political capacity as an instrument of social development in the Covid-19 pandemic era. in Indonesia. These three aspects are important to study in depth because they have implications related to aspects of community empowerment. The research method used is a qualitative approach through a survey search of relevant academic literature from various sources, namely electronic media, journals, books, and government documents. The results show that social, analytical and political capacity can be operationalized through aspects of community empowerment which include processes, communities and organizations, active participation, and access to resources as instruments of social development in the Covid-19 pandemic era. All three are complementary and have very important implications, especially in supporting community empowerment policy efforts in the Covid-19 pandemic era through patterns and relationships that are able to provide strengthening to the community to be empowered and independent.

Keywords: Community Empowerment; Covid-19 Pandemic; Policy Capacity; Social Development

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membahas kapasitas kebijakan dalam lingkup kapasitas sosial, analisis dan politik sebagai instrumen pembangunan sosial di era pandemi Covid-19 di Indonesia. Ketiga aspek tersebut penting untuk dikaji secara mendalam karena memiliki implikasi yang berkaitan dengan aspek pemberdayaan masyarakat. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif melalui penelusuran survei terhadap literatur akademis yang relevan dari berbagai sumber, yaitu media elektronik, jurnal, buku, dan dokumen pemerintah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kapasitas sosial, analisis dan politik dapat dioperasionalkan melalui aspek-aspek pemberdayaan masyarakat yang meliputi proses, komunitas dan organisasi, partisipasi aktif, dan akses terhadap sumber daya sebagai instrumen pembangunan sosial di era pandemi Covid-19. Ketiganya saling melengkapi dan memiliki implikasi yang sangat penting terutama dalam mendukung upaya kebijakan pemberdayaan masyarakat di era pandemi Covid-19 melalui pola dan relasi yang mampu memberikan penguatan kepada masyarakat untuk berdaya dan mandiri.

Kata Kunci: *Pemberdayaan Masyarakat; Pandemi Covid-19; Kapasitas Kebijakan; Pembangunan Sosial*

INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 recorded a history that will continue to be remembered by the entire world population about the emergence of Novel Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2 or known as COVID-19 which was first discovered in Wuhan, China. Worldometers data showed that on March 27, 2021 globally from 221 countries, active cases were 21,870,928, recovered 102,370,710 and died 2,783,592. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the number of active cases is 124,517, recovered 1,327,121 and died 40,364. Indonesia's position among world countries is ranked 20th in the world and 4th in Asia.

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected various social, economic, political and cultural sectors. The World Health Organization (WHO) together with the International Labor Organization (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in October 2020 stated that the socio-economic disruption due to Covid-19 is very large (Aditama, 2021) and Covid-19 is not only a health crisis, but also a

humanitarian, social and economic crisis (United Nations, 2020) which has significant psychological and social effects on the most exposed populations and groups, including children, students, and health workers, potentially causing post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression (Saladino et al., 2020).

In addition to the impact on health, the Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the social and economic aspects of the community such as high divorce rates due to hampered economic factors, violence against women and children, higher crime rates, unfinished children's education, and the difficulty of the community's adaptation process to the new normal era (Yanuarita & Haryati, 2021), in addition to financial difficulties where 50% of them have limited employment due to sluggish business activities as a result of the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) policy and causing reduced household income, when the prices of various daily necessities tend to increase (Fimela Editor, 2021).

The Indonesian Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic from a policy and institutional perspective has been carried out by forming the Task Force for the Acceleration of Covid-19 Handling through Presidential Decree Number 7 of 2020 and health protocols, massive handwashing-mask-wearing-distancing campaigns and setting large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) in various regions. Then in July 2020, the Committee for Handling Covid-19 and National Economic Recovery was formed as a replacement for the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Covid-19 (Gugus Tugas Covid-19) although with the same functions and structure through Presidential Decree Number 82 of 2020 as well as replacing the term PSBB (Large-Scale Social Restrictions) with PPKM. In addition, the implementation of the Work From Home campaign was implemented as a step to break the chain of the spread of Covid-19.

In addition to various policies such as regulations that have been made, in the perspective of social assistance, the Government has provided various assistance policies to the community such as food packages for residents of DKI Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, South Tangerang, and Bekasi (Jabodetabek) where each food package is worth Rp 600,000, Direct Cash Assistance (BLT) which is given in the form of cash and given to residents outside the Jabodetabek area of Rp 600. 000 for 3 months, namely April, May, and June, electricity tariff incentives in the form of exemptions and discounts on electricity bills intended for subsidized 450 VA and 900 VA household customers, BLT Dana Desa through the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and

Transmigration (Kemendes PDTT) which diverts part of the village fund budget as direct cash assistance where each month, each Beneficiary Family (KPM) gets funds worth IDR 600. 000, Pre-Employment Cards intended for employees affected by layoffs, unemployment, or MSME actors whose businesses are affected by the Covid-19 pandemic by receiving incentive assistance totaling Rp 3,550,000, employee salary subsidies for those registered with BPJS Employment with salaries below Rp 5 million, receiving salary subsidy assistance of Rp 600,000 per month for 4 months, BLT UMKM which is distributed to each MSME actor, namely Rp 2.4 million. The funds are distributed in one transfer, directly to the accounts of registered MSME players. ASN credit assistance through the Ministry of Finance (Kemenkeu) by providing credit allowances ranging from Rp 200,000-400,000, - to support ASN work from home (WFH) and free quota to students, teachers, students and lecturers during distance learning.

Although these social assistance policies have not been able to resolve the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic as a whole, they have demonstrated the state's ability to mobilize social and economic support and achieve goals related to the public interest (Painter & Pierre, 2005) and the ability of government institutions to respond to change (Weiss, 1998) and realize the role and responsibility of government to society. However, various social assistance policies are only short-term and cannot be implemented in the long term, one of the reasons is due to the limited budget capacity of the government.

The government's limited budget capacity has led to the need to encourage community involvement and participation in the form of community empowerment. In this case, community empowerment is interpreted as a deliberate and sustainable process centered on local communities, involving mutual respect, mutual care, and group participation, where all people have equal access to various resources; or a process where people have control over their own lives, participate democratically in a community and have a critical understanding of environmental conditions (Perkins & Zimmerman, 2000). Through community empowerment, it is expected to be one of the important keys in an effort to provide support for fellow community members where the community must take an independent role and jointly provide support to the government in handling the COVID-19 pandemic case oriented towards independence, sustainability, and sustainability in an effort to prevent and transmission of COVID-19.

Several forms of community empowerment such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, donation programs (charity), capacity building and community empowerment as research conducted (Muna et al., 2020) have been able to drive the local economy and develop the capacity of fostered partners by maximizing the potential of local wisdom in a pandemic situation. Then (Hidayat & Warsono, 2020) in their research results show that the community empowerment model mechanism carried out by BUM Desa Delta Mulia during the COVID-19 pandemic has been running well based on planning and processes even though there is still

community non-compliance in complying with the appeals of the government and BUM Desa Delta Mulia regarding the Health protocol.

In addition, community empowerment during the COVID-19 pandemic can be carried out through community, village and community approaches in health development (Situmorang et al., 2020) and education related to optimizing the use of yard land, as well as promoting live stalls for community food security (Suminah et al., 2020). The mechanism of community empowerment in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic is highly dependent on an empowered community, with a spirit of mutual cooperation and being able to adapt to changes and be able to face all problems with the power of community innovation in meeting their needs (Widati, 2020).

Some of the studies that have been described have a connection with each other, namely making community empowerment a step in overcoming various problems in the Covid-19 pandemic era, but research on community empowerment in the Covid-19 pandemic era in the context of policy capacity and social development instruments has not been carried out in depth. Therefore, this research will discuss the capacity of community empowerment policies as an instrument in supporting social development in the Covid-19 pandemic era. We believe that community empowerment has strategic value and can be an instrument of social development in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic that is currently happening. This is because the process of community empowerment cannot be separated from economic and political realities at the

national, regional and international levels; including in this case the lack of local capacity to participate effectively in development (Singh & Titi, 2015).

Therefore and in line with this, the purpose of this study is to discuss policy capacity within the scope of social, analytical and political capacity as an instrument of social development in the Covid-19 pandemic era. These three aspects are important to study in depth because they have implications related to aspects of community empowerment.

The policy capacity literature is interpreted in various different perspectives. According to (Dunlop, 2015) policy capacity is constructed as a challenge supported by learning relationships that exist among government actors or in other terms as knowledge management and organizational learning (Common, 2004), in this case policy capacity plays an important role in policy formulation, especially to identify problems and policy needs to be taken such as objective indicators of the number of staff in support, the level of education, the availability of resources and what forms of education and training are appropriate to implement (Wellstead et al., 2011) or in a comprehensive context (Painter & Pierre, 2005) suggests that policy capacity is the ability to maximize available resources to be used intelligently to determine strategic policies.

The focus of policy capacity lies on the ability of organizations to produce analysis and suggestions to be recommended in policy formulation activities (Prince, 2007) and the ability of individuals to produce policy analysis (Dobuzinskis et al., 2005; Parrado, 2014). According to (Surubaru, 2017)

capacity can be understood by examining how political factors affect the development of administrative capacity and processes around the absorption of funds while (Pattyn & Brans, 2015) interpret how organizational analysis capacity and competencies and conceptualize policy capacity includes skills and competencies - analytical, operational and political - at the individual, organizational and systemic levels so that policy capacity is here defined as a set of skills, competencies, resources, and institutional arrangements and capabilities with which key tasks and functions in the policy process are structured, organized, and supported (Wu et al., 2015).

Policy capacity refers to the skills and resources needed to perform policy functions, while effective place-based policymaking involves coordinated measures that are tailored to specific local conditions and involve a wide range of stakeholders (Sarah, 2023). In this case, skills and resources are important assets in building organisational resource capacity which includes efforts to maintain a learning relationship between government and the public. To be successful, governments must describe an issue, draw public attention to it, and actively engage and empower communities.

The concept of policy capacity and empowerment is explicitly put forward by (Dunlop, 2015) who argues that establishing two-way communication means empowering citizens to monitor activities and engage in dialogue with government actors on issues of concern to society especially in the development dimension.

It can thus be explained that policy capacity needs to be 'aimed at maximising the development potential of each region,

grounded in sound theory and evidence, combining human and regional approaches and empowering local stakeholders or communities to take greater control over their future' (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018).

Community empowerment is a construct that links strengths, individual competencies, natural support systems and proactive behaviour with policy and social change (Rappaport, 1981) so that in practice, empowerment pays attention to participation in achieving goals and efforts to gain access to resources (Perkins & Zimmerman, 2000) and as explained that empowerment requires policy capacity which includes skills and resources, this is important because the output of community capacity and empowerment is social development that has the potential to have an impact on local communities.

Policy capacity which includes social, analytical and political capacity (Wu et al., 2015) is an important dimension for community empowerment which consists of 1) process; 2) occurs in communities and organisations; 3) involves active participation; 4) involves access and control of resources (Perkins, 2010) so that if it is associated with social development, empowerment is interpreted as an effort to provide space for the community to increase its capacity to deal with environmental changes, increase social awareness, encourage social and economic participation and use the ecological process of change towards sustainable development patterns (Singh & Titi, 2015).

Strengthening policy capacity is very important because empowerment is not merely the result of government decisions to support citizen initiatives, but as a means to

achieve goals that have been set based on performance criteria and technical requirements (De Boer et al., 2017) or in this case empowerment is expected to strengthen effectiveness by encouraging community participation in decision making, exercising initiative and imagination while providing rewards (David, 2011).

The purpose of this research is to discuss policy capacity within the scope of social, analytical and political capacity as an instrument of social development in the Covid-19 pandemic era. These three aspects are important to study in depth because they have implications related to aspects of community empowerment.

METHODS

To answer the questions in this research, a literature review on policy capacity development, community empowerment and social development in Indonesia was used. The source of data analysis relied not only on metadata from the Scopus database but also Google Scholar. The literature review using the Google Scholar database was accessed on 7 June 2024, with a search string of 'policy capacity' AND 'community empowerment' AND 'social development'.

The literature search consisted of articles published in international publications between 1990 and 2023. Articles that specifically emphasised the three searches were reviewed and aggregated by topic and keyword. To ensure consistency, we developed a detailed protocol (Table 1). The exclusion criteria used included 1) Papers published in English, 2) Articles with explicit mention of the concepts of policy capacity,

community empowerment and social development, 3) journal sources, and 4) articles that were not published in English.

At this stage, the 48 most relevant ones were selected in the Google Scholar database search to be analysed, as well as at this stage the Text data from the search in Article Title, Abstract, and Keywords became the criteria.

The stages of data analysis include (1) Understanding the data by actively and critically reading the literature to find meaning related to the research questions; (2) Coding the literature data that has been selected and is relevant to the research; (3) Searching for themes, which is compiling literature data that has suitability (4) Reviewing themes to ensure the literature is relevant to the research questions; 4. Drafting the manuscript, carried out after the themes are defined.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social Capacity

Social development is closely related to various individuals and institutions or communities that originate and are formed by the community. In this context, social capacity is owned and described as the flow/consequence of social capital over a certain period and remains within the social and environmental carrying capacity (Mauerhofer, 2008). Furthermore, it is stated that social capacity includes the sum of human capacity and additional aspects (positive or negative) to be achieved solely through cooperation. Social capacity is the ability of individuals to act as part of a community group that has responsibility for managing public relations (Lichterman, 2009).

Therefore, it can be said that social capacity in the Covid-19 pandemic era has become social capital, which includes collective responsibility and strong cooperation, which are important factors for the community socially to take actions that are in accordance with the values adopted by the community and the norms regulated by the state.

In the context of process, social capacity can be defined as the growth or development of each hierarchical level of human or social integration within a certain time span (Mauerhofer, 2013). Social capacity in the context of processes in the Covid-19 pandemic era can involve cooperation between individuals in society and the Work From Home campaign that has been socialized by the Indonesian government and various countries in the world is a process to measure social capacity in the aspects of awareness and compliance. As stated by (Lichterman, 2009), the process can be in the form of the ability to speak and act reflectively, coordinate, engage in problem solving that may involve government and include various socially diverse groups and communities.

Other forms of processes that have a correlation with social capacity in the Covid-19 pandemic era such as the process of community empowerment through the mechanism of the social capacity development model carried out by BUM Desa Delta Mulia during the Covid-19 pandemic and as the results of previous research that have been described have shown an effective process. Thus the essence of social capacity as a process requires the involvement of individuals and groups that provide space for

each individual and group to continue to develop.

The context of institutionalization in social capacity is a community effort to strengthen in the Covid-19 pandemic era. Forms of community empowerment during the Covid-19 pandemic can be carried out through community, village and community approaches in health development. On the other hand, the characteristics and cultural traditions of Indonesian society such as consensus deliberation and gotong royong are a form of non-formal community that can support the strengthening of communities and organizations in the community.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, fundraising collected by NGOs together with the Indonesian National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) to overcome Covid-19 that occurred in Indonesia has amounted to Rp. 628.6 million. NGOs that have the highest contributor distribution priority for funding of around 79.5% or Rp. 500 billion by Tzu Chi Indonesia. This shows that institutional synergy is an important capital for social capacity. There are three main elements that must be carried out by every government in various countries in the face of Covid-19, namely first disease prevention policies by campaigning for the use of masks; second, utilizing digital governance infrastructure and third, two-way communication channels between the government and the community (Yen, 2020), this is important to do in the midst of a pandemic crisis that is full of uncertainty so that collaboration and the level of community obedience will greatly help communities and organizations. However, it is important to understand that these aid programmes have limitations due to their

short-term and temporary nature, so efforts to build sustainable cooperation through mutually beneficial relationships need to be considered.

Empirical evidence in Taiwan suggests that social capacity can influence responses to a pandemic. Specifically, intentions to receive vaccines and wash hands were more frequently associated with the connecting and bonding dimensions of social capacity, while intentions to wear masks were associated with all forms of social capacity (Chuang et al., 2015)

Community empowerment in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic is highly dependent on a community that is empowered, has a spirit of mutual cooperation and is able to adapt to changes and be able to face all problems with the power of community innovation in meeting their life needs. On the other hand, Covid-19 is a cross-border and unprecedented crisis, so the challenges that must be faced by the government must be done together (Ansell et al., 2010).

Analysis Capacity

The ability of analytical capacity is needed so that organizations can create knowledge including the level of consistency in the domain to be integrated, and failures that can cause integration failure (Stead & Meijers, 2004) and community empowerment which aims to enable the community to be independent, namely efforts to empower the community starting from the creation of an atmosphere and climate that allows community potential to develop (Hasanah & Sururi, 2018) can be done positively even in the midst of a pandemic situation and climate such as millennial farmers from Ketanggan Village,

Gringsing Subdistrict who join the Muda Tani Berkarya (MBT) community who are able to innovate and invite people to love farming in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic by converting unproductive village land into plantation land (Ayo Batang. Com, 2020).

In addition, socialization and information from several regional heads such as Ridwal Kamil invited residents to take advantage of Urban Farming (farming in the home and urban environment) which has 3 (three) benefits, namely ecology, economy and education during the COVID-19 pandemic (Merdeka. Com, 2020). This shows that the leadership adaptation approach to anticipate the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic situation has been carried out (Brunner & Lynch, 2010).

The two forms of community empowerment that have been described show that analytical capacity is closely related to the ability of the initiator or leader to solve problems and the ability to formulate strategies that are in line with the administrative boundaries of the existing integration process (Steurer, 2007) and are related to the prevention and anticipation of future pandemics and the collection and processing of information needed for contact tracing and quarantine (Ridho et al., 2020), which is in line with the concept of contact tracing and quarantine, 2020), this is in line with the concept of community empowerment which includes community development activities that are organized systematically, planned, and directed to increase community access to achieve better social, economic, and quality of life conditions (Hasanah et al., 2019).

However, both forms of empowerment are not without weaknesses

and can even be ineffective such as the limited number and capacity of human resources, lack of agricultural land and the absence of government support, therefore it is important to apply the concept of sustainable agricultural education by empowering the community through training, transfer of knowledge and skills and policies that can force the community to develop their potential in a sustainable manner.

On the other hand, analytical capacity relates to the scope and quality of data collection across the system, the availability, speed and ease of access to data and information that is important for the integration process, especially in the context of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic so that the government's ability through institutional strengthening to get things done (Holt & Manning, 2014) can continue. In the context of policy integration, (Steurer, 2007) calls it a 'configuration approach' to strategic public management that combines flexibility with systematic planning, facilitating the governance and management cycle.

Thus forms of community empowerment and policy integration must have implications for the development of analytical capacity. This is because analytical capacity requires leadership and initiator intelligence in dealing with the high conflict and challenges of facing the Covid-19 pandemic so that harmonization of analytical capacity with other capacities is needed. And this is supported by leadership is a simultaneous activity to mobilize society to adapt to challenging realities or problems.

Political Capacity

Political capacity is closely related to the ability or political will of the government in formulating community empowerment strategies. Therefore, actor interaction and shared government challenges (Ansell et al., 2010) are important points, especially in formulating various policies such as the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM), socialization of Health protocols which have so far been implemented in the Java-Bali region.

Facing an epidemic situation, the government must develop strategies in response by carrying out prevention such as border control, regulations on wearing masks and social distancing; disease detection includes measures such as entry screening, travelers, contact tracing, quarantine policies, and disease testing and treatment policies with a focus on increasing the capacity of health facilities including vaccine research and development (Yen, 2020). The pandemic situation has a considerable impact on all aspects of democracy and several issues that must be responded to by public policy such as the character of the ruling regime, public participation, the development of democratic institutions, mass media and public space, the presence of a meaningful civil society, and political culture (Bambang, 2021).

Political capacity is related to trust, legitimacy, and political communication that will affect the level of community compliance with recommendations, policies, and regulations issued by the government (Ridho et al., 2020), thus the response of several regions that are synergistic with central government policies is an integral part in

overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic. West Java regional head Ridwan Kamil's step by changing the strategy through increasing the capacity of puskesmas (Website Jabar, 2021) is a political step as a response to the not optimal health capacity and the efforts of the Governor of East Java by increasing the success of facilities and infrastructure capacity to minimize the burden on hospitals cannot be separated from political capacity carried out at the right time (Berita Satu, 2021).

Thus, political capacity requires political communication as an effort to disseminate policy information and the community (voters) rewards party leaders who have provided relief spending for disaster management (Healy & Malhotra, 2009) and have empowered the community in pandemic situations. (Fukuyama, 2020) explains that there are 3 (three) important aspects when the government of a country must be present to save its citizens from a pandemic attack, namely state capacity, public trust and leadership, these three things become social capital for community empowerment in the Covid-19 pandemic era.

Political capacity is closely related to the ability of leadership to adapt to various changes, and according to (Janssen & van der Voort, 2016) the adaptation process is carried out through governance that puts the public interest first through rapid response to environmental changes so that the important key to adaptive leadership is decentralized decision making by involving various stakeholders from the community. In this case, the context of political capacity through adaptive leadership can be carried out in response to the Covid-19 pandemic situation which includes the ability to identify

problems, maintain the level of complex problems through adaptive work, focus on maturing problems, not to reduce stress, provide work that suits the capabilities of each individual and keep problems from getting more complex even though criticism is still very necessary (Heifetz, 1994).

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected various social, cultural, economic, political and health sectors. From a policy and institutional perspective, the Government of Indonesia has responded to the Covid-19 pandemic situation through regulations and social assistance policies to the community. Forms of community empowerment during the Covid-19 pandemic can be carried out through community, village and community approaches in health development and the context of institutionalization in social capacity as a community effort to strengthen in the Covid-19 pandemic era.

Policy capacity within the scope of social, analytical and political capacity can be operationalized through aspects of community empowerment which include processes, communities and organizations, active participation, and access to resources as instruments of social development in the Covid-19 pandemic era. And from the three aspects of capacity that have been described, it can be concluded that all three have very important implications, especially in supporting community empowerment policy efforts. The collaboration of the three capacities can be optimized and produce community empowerment outputs that are able to have a minimal impact on the Covid-19 pandemic through patterns and relationships that are able to provide

strengthening to the community to be empowered and independent.

Specific recommendations for policy makers to improve the practical implications of the research findings are facilitating systematic strengthening of capacity and community empowerment among various stakeholders in handling pandemic risks and increasing sustainable public health information, especially to minimise the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

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