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Public leadership and strategies of Indonesian province during the Covid-19 Pandemic: A Paternalistic Approaches

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Abstract

This paper discusses the role of the governor as a public leader in creating strategies in coping with the Covid-19 pandemic in one of the largest provinces in Indonesia, East Java. The authors examine the typical Indonesian response with regards to how the leadership of the province in Indonesia responded to the central government policies. By using the qualitative method, this research uses a literature study involving nation regulation examination as well as media observation that publish the reaction of the provincial leader in regards to the Paternalistic leadership. It appears that in managing the province with a multicultural background, flexibility in deregulating the Covid-19 national policy needing a wiser approach as a benevolent act in protecting the citizens' wellbeing and economic prosperity. This proves that in this uncertain condition, one of the Paternalistic approaches is required in making the leadership practices effective. The articles examine the paternalism strategies applied by the Indonesian governor regarding the Covid-19 pandemic crisis based on the effect of this deregulation and strives to define their prominent strategies.

Keywords: Leadership; Paternalistic; Covid-19 pandemic; Province government; Indonesia

1. Introduction

The importance of a leader in an organization cannot be overstated, particularly in this tumultuous environment where the Covid-19 pandemic is expected to strike in early 2020. During this crisis, the sense of leadership has had to change, especially in the public sector, from governing the government to serve the civic for civic protection. Governments, societies, and organizations are in a state of confusion and are striving for leadership. Leaders are stewards of the public good. Leaders' existence is no longer purely to fulfill the duty to occupy structural vacancies. However, the leader must be able to offer excellent service to everyone he leads, including the general public, especially during a crisis. Greenleaf (2002) was the first to incorporate the idea of a leader as a public servant in the leadership literature. To apply servant leadership in fulfilling citizen demands, the servant's leadership model encourages service to others, whether it's to staff, clients, or the society at large. Furthermore, Greenleaf (2002) believes that the first thing a successful leader can do is support others for the sole purpose of motivating them.

Leaders are public servants who provide services to others, including subordinates in the collectivist culture like Indonesia, need a specific approach, where Irawanto et al., (2012) argued that leading the public sector are demanding paternalistic leadership. This would strengthen the bond between leadership and subordinates. The interaction between the leader and his or her subordinates will have a positive effect on the execution of duties and obligations because having a shared understanding of how to deliver excellent civil services, especially during the pandemic.

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In Indonesia, collectivist culture has influenced leadership styles that are still in use today. Since culture, leadership, and organizations are all interconnected, leadership style research is still evolving today (Wolf, 2006). Especially in Javanese culture, which has had a significant impact on Indonesian leadership style (Irawanto et al., 2012; Irawanto et al., 2020). During the Soeharto regime, when Javanese culture's presence in Indonesia grew stronger, the regime enabled Javanese culture to spread and increase its influence across Indonesian formal organization life (Dodi Wirawan Irawanto et al., 2011). In this uncertain situation, the public is in dire need of guidance from the leaders who display benevolent acts and in the same way discipline aspects that are covered in the authoritarian model as it is described by the paternalistic approach. The leader's commitment is the starting point for accelerating service quality improvement. Without pure and nurture dedication, it is impossible to quality public services, especially in a crisis like this.

The central government, in this case through the Covid-19 Task Force of the Indonesian government, calling on all regional leaders to demonstrate strong leadership so that people can feel more secure in living and perform daily activities to combat the COVID-19 pandemic while avoiding economic hardship. With a strong commitment and public leader initiatives the optimism that if the district's chief continues to lead well, the community will not be exposed to COVID-19.

This qualitative study examines the typical Indonesian response with regards to how the leadership of the province in Indonesia responded to the central government policies. By using the qualitative method, this research uses a literature study involving nation regulation examination as well as media observation that publish the reaction of the provincial leader in regards to the paternalistic leadership.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Public Leadership

Public leadership is seen as an individual who holds a prominent role in the service of the public, such as a Mayor or Councillor. Public leadership is characterized in terms of relative authority within a group, with the leader being the individual in a position that has more influence over the group than others, according to Kurt Lewin and others. In social psychology, the study has created a new way of understanding leadership over the last 20 years (Bose, 2020). This theory not only offers an integrated view of leadership, but also provides an overview of leadership dynamics—how leadership is acquired, retained, questioned, and contested. The study of underlying causality in social psychology is dedicated to understanding the essence of the human mind at work in social life. Theorizing about the essence of mental processes in social psychology must consider the practical interdependence of mind and culture, according to social identity theorists (Dowding, 2008). Scholars are interested in the differences in leadership across sectors (the public/private debate), how leadership operates at various levels of administrative hierarchies, and the appropriate values that should be embodied by public leaders, as well as leadership in cross-jurisdictional settings, such as public-private partnerships (Chapman et al., 2016). According to the literature, policy insiders and elected officials, as well as administrative leaders (Ospina, 2008; Plaček et al., 2020).

The new pandemic appears to be putting global leadership to the ultimate test (Dirani et al., 2020). Others are struggling to handle this unprecedented crisis, although others have risen to the occasion. To ensure that their company and workers feel empowered, organizational leaders depend on their intuition and expertise. The news and social media have revealed how some politicians are failing to save their people. Leaders are expected to be effective as soon as they win approval for processes and decisions, improving their parties' and governments' reputations and/or electoral prospects (Jong, 2017; McConnell, 2011). On the other hand, elected officials are often faced with the public effects of crises and will be kept accountable for crises triggered by others. This public position has a wider range of rhetorical functions, including expressing concern for victims, symbolically framing the significance of the case, regaining public confidence, and promoting regeneration through public commitments (Griffin-Padgett & Allison, 2010; Jong, 2017; Jong et al., 2016; Littlefield & Quenette, 2007).

2.2. Paternalistic Leadership in Crisis

Crisis and leadership are two phenomena that are inseparably related (Boin & 'T Hart, 2003; Demiroz & Kapucu, 2012; Plaček et al., 2020). A crisis brings leadership into sharper focus (Hayashi & Soo, 2012) and different facets of leadership in times of crisis have been investigated. Organizations of all sizes, from small local nonprofits to foreign organizations and even states, are affected by various forms of crises. Furthermore, the various crises, which differ in scale, length, and complexity, have heightened the importance of leadership in their management. The dynamic capacity of crises necessitates inter-organizational coordination and collective leadership skills (Boin & 'T Hart, 2003; Demiroz & Kapucu, 2012). The way leaders respond to the crisis could substantially damage their communities' economic, social, and health

foundations. Some of these leaders will rise to the occasion, while others will disappear into the background. This is the time for genuine leaders to assist processes and individuals in overcoming their shortcomings and fears to improve their results.

In Indonesian culture, where collectivism is emphasized, styles such as Paternalistic Leadership, which is made up of three styles: authoritarian, benevolent, and moral (Wu et al., 2012) are successful. Irawanto et al., (2012) present a paternalistic leadership (PL) model that compares how this model works in Indonesia to other PL models, such as the Taiwan PL model or the Turkish PL model. Visible leadership, authoritarian leadership, benevolent leadership, and moral leadership are the four aspects of PL studied in this study (Irawanto et al., 2012). Members expect visible leadership from their leaders because, in Javanese culture, leaders are seen as figureheads for the members, and they will obey what the leaders do in the organization. Authoritarian leadership is characterized by the leaders' strict behavior and total control over all members (Cheng et al., 2004). Benevolent leadership refers to how important it is for leaders to be concerned about the well-being of individuals or families (Wang et al., 2018). Moral leadership entails setting a precedent by displaying superior values in leaders, as well as demonstrating self-discipline so that others can obey (Cheng et al., 2004).

These four critical factors largely influence how PL in Indonesia operates, especially in Javanese culture. Visible leadership is associated with Indonesians' perceptions of their leaders as figureheads who must be respected, while authoritarian leadership is associated with "bapakism," or father-son relationships, benevolent leadership is associated with Indonesians' perceptions of leaders who care for their well-being and needs, and moral leadership is associated with Indonesians' perceptions of leaders who have superhuman abilities (Irawanto & Ramsey, 2011). The distinction between the Indonesian PL model and other PL models is that, whereas other PL models encourage employees to become more self-directed and empowered, Indonesian PL models encourage employees to become more "family" focused (Irawanto et al., 2012). That is to say, in Indonesia, personal feelings and connections between leaders and members are highly valued. This also demonstrates that the PL model in each country differs, depending on the cultural influences, like Indonesia.

2.3. Covid-19 Government Responses in Indonesia

The COVID-19 pandemic's latest developments have put public leadership to the test. A large number of newspaper articles have focused on the involvement of public officials in coping with the pandemic threat, as well as the degree to which public officials and governments were prepared for such a crisis. President Joko Widodo declared the first two confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection in Indonesia on March 2, 2020. The establishment of the Indonesia Task Force for Rapid Response to COVID-19 (Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan COVID-19) on March 13, 2020, is the first important regulation (Djalante et al., 2020). This means that, amid delays in top leadership, the Task Force's formation offers greater inter-agency coordination and response mechanisms, even though it took more than 10 days after the first reported cases in early March 2020. Indonesia needs to collect data rapidly and actively to get a detailed image of current COVID-19 distributions.

DKI Jakarta Governor Anies Baswedan closed several tourist destinations, schools, and carried out large-scale social restrictions in Jakarta as a first step to anticipating the spread of the Covid-19 virus. In addition, he appealed to the public not to travel outside the city or return to their hometown, as well as to limit the number of passengers who will take public transportation in Jakarta. He also provides temporary housing and incentives to all medical personnel in the response to the coronavirus or Covid-19 in Jakarta and asks the public to apply for an entry and exit permit (SIKM) if they want to enter the Jakarta area.

Central Java Governor Ganjar Pranowo issued a Circular regarding increased awareness of the risk of transmission of coronavirus infection (Covid-19) through four mechanisms. First to carry out coordination, socialization, and education regarding prevention and control efforts to elements of society and business actors following their respective authorities. Second, he conveyed that all agencies should take precautions as early as possible, by providing various equipment and necessities for checking body conditions. third, he instructs to postpone or limit activities that present large crowds in public places. Such as car-free days, camping, study tours, and so on. Finally, the form of integrated information posts in each agency.

East Java Governor, Khofifah Indar Parawansa, took several massive preventive measures by implementing restrictions on micro-community activities or local lockdown in East Java. The basic concept of handling Covid-19 patients in East Java is comprehensive-collaborative. Comprehensive in terms of efforts to understand Covid-19 from various aspects, including medical and non-medical aspects. Medical aspects include the pathophysiology of the disease, namely the host-agent-environment relationship, disease characteristics, disease course, epidemiological parameters, and

surveillance. These efforts involve a team of experts in their fields. Thus, therapeutic methods, provision of service facilities, and development of management can be carried out effectively and efficiently. Meanwhile, non-medical aspects include updating and speed of information dissemination as well as large costs and economic stagnation. If treatment is not carried out properly, more serious social problems will arise. The East Java Provincial Government is conducting testing efforts followed by tracing and isolation to control the morbidity or increase in cases. Along with the dynamics in the field, the East Java Provincial Government continues to increase the number of referral hospitals for Covid-19 patients.

3. Research Methods

The empirical regulation approach method is a mixed-method analysis that focuses on the application or implementation of government regulation in effect on any specific case that occurs in society. The use of this type of analytical method in a study results in descriptive study requirements. Descriptive research methods include data collection and preparation in the form of legal provisions, legal facts, legal opinions, legal decisions, and other data, as well as data analysis and interpretation. In this analysis, data was gathered by conducting data collection sources to obtain information and explanations about research objects, accompanied by direct observation or observation of research objects based on the media release by the credible press in Indonesia. The regulation taken for discussion is based on the central government regulation as well as governor regulation in aim to enforce the effectiveness of Covid-19 prevention:

- Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020 concerning large-scale social restrictions in the context of perception for coronavirus disease 2019.
- Decree of the Governor of DKI No. 1023 of 2020 concerning the enforcement of large-scale social restrictions during the transition period towards a safe and productive healthy society
- East Java Governor Regulation No. 53/2020 concerning the implementation of health protocols in the prevention and control of coronavirus disease 2019
- Decree of the Governor of Central Java No. 440.1 / 108 of 2020 concerning standard operational and law enforcement procedures for the coronavirus disease health protocol in Central Java Province.
- The qualitative research method is carried out descriptively qualitatively following the approach to evaluating all the data provided in this study to decide if there is a connection between symptoms and/or incidents, conformity, and what should be enforced.

4. Result and Discussion

Penta-helix collaboration is one of the keys to East Java's success in controlling the spread of the coronavirus. The elements involved are the provincial government, district, city government, East Java Regional Police, task forces, universities, mass organizations, private donors, and volunteers. All move together in promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative, and social safety network efforts. An example of such collaboration is the justification operation which significantly increased community discipline in adhering to health protocols. The justification operation was carried out by the entire ranks of the East Java Regional Police, local government, mass organizations, and the private sector.

According to (Hillyard, 2000), following the civic crisis, responding to the development of the environment, appreciating ideas and being flexible, being able to identify new sources of ideas both within and outside the government regulation, developing products/services, and putting forward next practice rather than best practice are all important attributes in the civic problem solving mindset. As the above regulation issued by three governors in the Java island, the encompassed instruction based on the President regulation is in aim to give clearer direction for the citizen in their provincial coverage. The main regulation stating:

“ ... that, amid delays in top leadership, the Task Force's formation offers greater inter-agency coordination and response mechanisms” (Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020).

Furthermore, East Java governor responding by the local regulations stating

“ ... basic concept of handling Covid-19 patients in East Java is comprehensive-collaborative” (East Java Governor Regulation No. 53/2020).

The media responses of this issuing regulation resulting positive responses, especially during June 2020, where the Covid-19 cases in Indonesia is dominated by cases from East Java responses, as publication by Kompas in June (2020

1), stated that the issuing regulation by East Java governor forces all stakeholders within the government agency to work collaboratively and creates law enforcement. With the cultural background in East Java – it is not an easy task, where Javanese tend to socialize and have a tendency to pace the life as in a normal situation. With the leadership style of the governor and most East Javanese major where they never stop in socializing the important to obey the health protocol as well as serves as a role model. This called Visible leadership is associated with Indonesians' perceptions of their leaders as figureheads who must be respected and in the same time display authoritarian leadership where in Javanese senses is associated with "bapakism," or father-son relationships

Furthermore, in the Central Java province, the regulation issued by the Central Java governor highlight the prevention acts:

“to carry out coordination, socialization, and education regarding prevention and control efforts to elements of society and business actors following their respective authorities” (Decree of the Governor of Central Java No. 440.1 / 108 of 2020)

Whereas in Central Java government, the public media responses April 2020 indicating positive responses from the civic as it is published by detik news (2020 2), where the issuance of Decree of the Governor of Central Java No. 440.1 / 108 of 2020 in early stages, encompassed the clean and health standard by the Central Java citizen, this decree is a variation of the implementation of central government regulation where putting flexibility as well as creative implementation of the government using the local perspectives. In relate to this response, the collaborative work of all Central government from the provincial level to regency and city limits that headed by the city mayor, act in benevolent leadership way is associated with Indonesians' perceptions of leaders who care for their well-being and needs, and moral leadership is associated with Indonesians' perceptions of leaders who care for their well-being and needs.

Lastly in, the Central Jakarta (DKI) where the civic movement is characterized by the usage of public transportation, the Governor of DKI issuing regulation that prevent the spread of the virus in the public transportation facilities:

“as to limit the number of passengers who will take public transportation in Jakarta. He also provides temporary housing and incentives to all medical personnel in the response to the coronavirus or Covid-19” (Decree of the Governor of DKI No. 1023 of 2020).

The media responses were positive and the citizen awareness in complying with the regulation is increased as the Media Indonesia responses (2020 3) that the citizen of DKI Jakarta felt safer with the issuing of the regulation and this display the collaborative work of all DKI Jakarta provincial government leader in making sure the act of moral leadership that associated with Indonesians' perceptions of leaders who care for the civic safety.

5. Conclusion

The pandemic resulting sensitivity of the government in making sure the civic safety. From the leadership perspectives, the respond to the paternalistic approaches as discussed in this paper resulted positive responses, at least from the media responses. By displaying visible, authoritarian benevolent and moral leadership, the central government regulation is narrated positively by the three governor in Java Island providing greater handling strategies in coping with the crisis. Precautions should be putting in the front that this study is only using descriptive method where the generalization of the results should be implemented with precautions.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflicts of interest to be disclosed.

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