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Vertical Conflict, Public Policies, and Pandemic Covid-19: Case Study of Central and Regional Government of DKI Jakarta

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world, including Indonesia, led all heads of state to respond with various policies aimed at controlling the spread of Covid-19. This research wants to see and analyze the dynamics of central and local government relationships in response to policies taken in handling the Covid-19 pandemic in pre-crisis and crisis through political communication conducted. Using the literature study method, this research concludes that there is no good synergy between the central and local governments in handling Covid-19. A number of policies formulated between the central government and the provincial government of DKI Jakarta, appear to be running on their own without good coordination. Policymaking is seen to highlight sectoral egoism and political communication between actors at the central and local government levels, potentially affecting the political environment in Indonesia which boils down to the influence of electability in the 2024 presidential election. This study recommends the government improve the model of deliberative, mediative, multicultural, consensus, and excellent organizational communication and build a synergistic coordination system, in order to escape sectoral egos and short-term interests that are group and personal. Those political communication models are important especially in disaster management including the Covid-19.

Keywords: *Public Policies, Covid-19, Central dan DKI Jakarta Governments, Political Communication*

Abstrak

Pandemi Covid-19 yang menyerang seluruh dunia, termasuk Indonesia, membuat semua kepala negara meresponnya dengan berbagai kebijakan yang bertujuan untuk

mengendalikan penyebaran Covid-19. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat dan menganalisis dinamika hubungan pemerintah pusat dan daerah dalam merespons kebijakan yang diambil penanganan pandemi Covid-19 pada masa pra krisis dan krisis lewat komunikasi politik yang dilakukan. Dengan menggunakan metode studi kepustakaan, penelitian ini berkesimpulan bahwa belum adanya sinergitas yang baik antara pemerintah pusat dan daerah dalam penanganan Covid-19. Sejumlah kebijakan yang dirumuskan antara pemerintah pusat dan pemerintah provinsi DKI Jakarta terlihat berjalan sendiri tanpa koordinasi yang baik. Pengambilan kebijakan terlihat menonjolkan egoisme sektoral dan komunikasi politik antar aktor tingkat pemerintah pusat dan daerah, berpotensi mempengaruhi lingkungan perpolitikan di Indonesia yang bermuara pada pengaruh elektabilitas di pemilu presiden 2024. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan kepada pemerintah untuk meningkatkan model komunikasi politik deliberatif, mediatif, multikultural, konsensus, dan unggul serta membangun sistem koordinasi yang bersinergis, demi melepaskan diri dari ego sektoral dan kepentingan-kepentingan jangka pendek yang bersifat kelompok maupun personal. Model komunikasi politik tersebut penting dilakukan terutama dalam penanganan bencana termasuk pandemi Covid-19.

Kata Kunci: Kebijakan Publik, Covid-19, Pemerintah Pusat dan DKI Jakarta, Komunikasi Politik.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19, or scientifically is named as a “Coronavirus Disease” that was discovered in 2019, is a type of coronavirus group that attacks the respiratory tract as well as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory (SARS) (WHO, QA for public, 2021). In a joint WHO-China Study report, a new type of coronavirus variant, named SARS-CoV-2, was first detected in 2019 at Huanan Market in Wuhan, China, with initial suspect derived from wild animals such as horseshoe bats (*Rhinolopus spp*) and pangolin (WHO, WHO Convened Global Study of Origins of SARS-CoV-2: China Part, 2021). However, it found interesting facts in the joint report that SARS-CoV-2 was not found in animals, but found in frozen foods, packaged foods, and cold chain products that have been distributed in 31 provinces in China. Regardless of the origin of COVID-19, as of May 11, 2021, the total number of confirmed cases in 223 countries in the world has reached 158,651,638 cases, with 3,299,764 confirmed deaths (WHO, WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard, 2021). As indeed, Covid-19 has affected all countries of the world. Modern human civilization seems paralyzed in the face of those invisible virus. In Indonesia, according to data from the Task Force on Handling Covid-19, the total number of confirmed cases in Indonesia reached 1,723,596 cases, with the total increase cases per day reached 6,570 cases, and the total deaths reached 47,465 cases (Satgas Penanganan COVID-19, 2021).

Covid-19 was declared as a global pandemic by WHO on March 11, 2020 (Azhar & Azzahra, 2020). It has already messed up the social and economic life in globally. Almost all countries in the world, still struggling to prevent the spread and cope with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, through policies that are able to harmonize between public health and economic growth. Some countries that are

considered successful in suppressing the number of virus spread and fatalities and also pay attention to their country's economy with their respective formulas and policies. The country such as Taiwan who took early preventive measures because they learned from the SARS pandemic in 2003, and South Korea, which learned from the MERS pandemic in 2015 because it considered the government's poor handling of the current pandemic (Stasavage, 2020: 12). However, there are some countries that considered slow in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic through their policy spending such as Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Hatcher, 2020: 614). Indonesia, as a country that has been attacked lately by the Covid-19 virus, should make the experience of other countries a valuable lesson. Instead of making other countries a valuable lesson, the Indonesian government's response is in contrast to the reality. The Government of Indonesia at that time seemed ignorant of the threat and the spread of the Covid-19 virus outbreak, with the presence of several statements from public officials that were not based on data and knowledge. Considering these conditions, the Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education and Information (LP3ES) has detailed 37 misleading statements by Indonesian government officials about Covid-19 (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020), and the Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence (KontraS) filed a class action against the government for being slow in responding to Covid-19 (Suparman et al., 2020).

In reality, there is no country that is completely free from the threat of Covid-19, nor Indonesia, when President Jokowi announced that there two positive cases on March 2, 2020, the optimism that the virus will not spread to Indonesia changed drastically and turned around. The sense of optimism became a pessimistic because there was a stutter from the Indonesian government in handling Covid (Mas'udi, 2020). Unpreparedness in the facing the spread of Covid-19, is shown from the most basic things such as the unclearness of Covid-19 patient referral hospitals, unrepresented virus detection tools, the lack of personal protective equipment (APD) availability, and the lack of policy preparation related to health protocols. In addition to the unpreparedness of the central government in handling Covid-19, different things are seen by some local governments in Indonesia. A few days after that, the provincial and local governments at the district /city level, swiftly published several initiatives in response to the Covid-19 outbreak. Some provincial governments and local governments issued policies to close access in and out of their territory either by air, land, or sea as an anticipatory measure. For example, on March 25, 2020 Helmi Hasan as Mayor of Bengkulu asked the provincial government to close access to Bengkulu area (Putro, 2020). On the same day, Dedy Yon Supriyono as mayor of Tegal took a lockdown policy in Tegal city for 4 months starting from March 30, 2020 to July 30, 2020, by closing all border access by using concrete guarded by the authorities (Kompas, 2020). Long before that, on March 16, 2020, the Governor of Papua had taken the first step. He implemented a policy to keep Papuans at home and also stop transportation services such as airports, land lines and piers from March 26 to April 9, 2020 (DKJN Papua, 2020). Some other local governments make some policies with a variety of approaches that are either coercive or agitative. The same condition was also seen by the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta at the level of coordination and initial breakthrough in trying to limit the spread of the virus in Jakarta by propose a regional quarantine to the central

government, but The Palace refused the Governor's request (Gian Asmara, 2020). It is very clear that the central and local governments in the Covid-19 outbreak, indicated that both institutions and government leaders are taking their own steps with no coordination among each other, and showing political miscommunication among policy makers.

In the perspective of political communication, the government as an actor should be able to provide a political message that does not cause noise in the community. The public response at that time due to the government's statement ignoring the spread of Covid-19, led to the creation of political polemics and even political rejection. Not only does the government is lack of appreciation, but also it is judged by the public subjective view where the Institute for *Development of Economics and Finance* (INDEF) explained the results of its survey that 66.28% of Indonesians respond negatively to communication conducted by the Indonesian government, especially by President Joko Widodo and The Minister of Health Terawan (Ardiyanti, 2020). This is the importance of government communication skills in responding to such matters, because according to Denton and Woods, political communication has characteristics that contain a certain intent of the sender to influence the political environment (Nair, 2011: 4). Good political communication from a political elite at the level of the president and their ministers, will greatly influence the success of a policy to be well coordinated from the central to regional levels, especially policies facing pandemic situations such as Covid-19.

The development of research on government political communication during the Covid-19 pandemic is not much, because some of them are more concerned about government crisis communication during the COVID-19 pandemic such as Muhammad Saeful Aziz and Moddie Alvianto Wicaksono's research entitled "*KOMUNIKASI KRISIS PEMERINTAH INDONESIA DALAM PENANGANAN COVID-19*". They explained that crisis communication is necessary for the government to re-iterate control over the factors involved in order to resolve emerging issues and to restore reputation in the eyes of stakeholders and the public. Crisis communication can thus be interpreted as a series of communication strategies used by organizations, both in the pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis phases with the aim of managing crises that can threaten the reputation and survival of the organization (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 196). The findings of the study stated that the problems that arise in the communication strategy of the Indonesian government crisis during the Covid-19 pandemic include; (1) the establishment of public distrust; (2) inconsistencies in public communication messages; (3) no sense of crisis; (4) weak internal communication (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 200-203). The research also presents a solution that also serves as an evaluative material of the Indonesian government in the future, by rebuilding reputations with rebuilding posture that contains two steps, namely *compensation* and *apologia*. *Compensation* where the government should provide compensation and convey a meaningful message of full responsibility to all Indonesians in the steps of handling the spread of Covid-19 and the impacts of arising from the pandemic. Meanwhile, *apologia* where the government shows a message to the public that seems to maintain the opinion that the government is fully responsible and make every effort to deal with this pandemic (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 204).

This study is different from previous research because in this study takes the perspective of political communication. However, previous research on communication crisis will be very useful for the author as a reference on how the government's communication style during the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in the pre-crisis and crisis phases that the author will associate with political communication. This study wants to see and analyze the dynamics of public policy and political communication between the central government and the provincial government of DKI Jakarta in overcoming the Covid-19 pandemic by aligning themselves in the pre-crisis and crisis phases. Some of the research questions asked by the authors are: (1) How is the policy response and relationship between the central government and the DKI Jakarta provincial government in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic? (2) How is the political communication of the central government and the provincial government of DKI Jakarta? (3) What is the ideal political communication during the Covid-19 pandemic? The results of this study will be useful to the central and local governments as well as related stakeholders, to conduct evaluations in the future. This study also provides an overview of the ideal political communication pattern between the government of the Republic of Indonesia and the provincial government of DKI Jakarta in order to handle the Covid-19 pandemic.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Crisis Phase

Coombs (2015) mentions that the crisis is a perception of unexpected events that threaten the expectations of stakeholders related to economic, health, safety, environmental issues, and can seriously affect the performance of the organization and produce negative results (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 195). According to Coombs, the crisis has 3 phases, where the phases are pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis. Crisis communication aims to develop communication strategies in these three phases where in the pre-crisis phase, crisis communication relies on an anticipatory management model. Then in the crisis phase, crisis communication aims to see how an organization solves and assists communication strategies in phases that are considered crisis, because any action in this phase can have a significant impact on the reputation of the organization. The last is the post-crisis phase, where this phase is the period of time after the crisis phase is considered over and can be handled, however, the impact arising from the crisis phase is not over and needs further management (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 196).

If previous research focuses more on how a proper communication strategy should be conducted in the face of these three phases, namely with crisis communication. In this study, the authors tried to adopt phase division according to Coombs (2015), to analyze how the dynamics of policy response and political communication of the central government and DKI Jakarta provincial government in the pandemic, by laying themselves only in the pre-crisis and crisis phases only. The pre-crisis phase we referred to was when who announced the discovery of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. While the crisis phase, we refer since March 02, 2020, when President Joko Widodo announced the discovery of the spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia, namely cases 01 and 02 in Jakarta, until April 30, 2020

where at that time COVID-19 cases in Indonesia reached 10,118 cases (Mukaromah, 2020).

2. Regional Autonomy and Decentralization.

Under the Constitution of Republic Indonesia, UU No. 23 Year 2014, which discusses local government, decentralization is the handover of government affairs by the central government to autonomous regions based on the principle of autonomy. The term autonomy comes from the word *autos* which means self-sufficiency and the word *nomos* which means regulation (Ni'Matul Huda, 2014). However, as time progressed there was an expansion of the meaning of regional autonomy if the former regional autonomy was only interpreted to form its own regulation or form a regional role, now regional autonomy is interpreted as taking care of its own government. This is similar to what Van der Pot said about the term *eigen huishouding* which if interpreted has the meaning of taking care of his own household (Heryansyah, 2016). Regional autonomy allows the presence of local wisdom from each area so as to adapt to the wishes of the people in the area. This means that regional autonomy and decentralization are considered as a formula that is able to bring policies more effective and efficient and closer to the people through the long-term hand of the central government to the local government (Busrizalti, 2013). All of these things are certainly to address the shortcomings of the model of making and implementing policies from above (central government) that are often considered not in accordance with the needs and conditions of local communities (Sellers, 2002). In this study, decentralization theory was used to measure how policies were taken in handling COVID-19.

3. Excellent Organizational Communication Model

The definition of political communication is an activity of message exchange conducted by a person, a group of people, or an institution to influence and stimulate others in political activities part of the effort to gain authority to defend the people, either in the function as an implementer of government or as a member of a social structure of society, and can influence a policy system of power or government in various components (Effendy, 2008). The message goes on to explore the change and growth of desirable information in the community. The political communicator must be able to understand the content, objectives, and political messages that want to be conveyed in order to be able to shape and influence public opinion.

The political communication model projected in this study is the excellent organizational communication model. Excellent communication occurs when organizations use communication to manage relationships with diverse audiences (stakeholders) to achieve mutual understanding, realize organizational goals, and serve the public interest. Then an excellent organization is an organization that is able to empower the structure under which autonomy and also give it the opportunity to make strategic decisions are decentralized, not centralized and develop an innovative spirit in organizing.

4. Good Governance

The United Development Program (UNDP) defines governance as the implementation of economic, political, and administrative authorities to manage state affairs at all levels

and the ways in which the state promotes social cohesion, integration, and ensures the well-being of its citizens (Azhar & Azzahra, 2020: 243). These three elements must have a good interconnection in order to create good governance. Principles of good governance are as follows:

1. Community participation: all citizens have a voice in decision making, both directly and through legitimate representative institutions representing their interests. The overall participation is built on the basis of freedom of association and expression, and the certainty to participate constructively.
2. The rule of law is upheld: the legal framework must be fair and be applied indiscriminately, including laws relating to human rights.
3. Transparency: transparency is built on the basis of free information. All government processes, institutions and information are necessary.
4. Can be accessed by interested parties, and the information available must be sufficient to be understood and monitored.
5. Caring and stakeholders: institutions and the whole process of government must try to serve all interested parties.
6. Consensus oriented: good governance bridges different interests in order to build comprehensive consensus on what is best for community groups, and if possible, consensus on policies and procedures.
7. Equality: all citizens have the opportunity to improve or maintain their welfare.
8. Effectiveness and efficiency: government processes and Institutions produce results according to the needs of citizens and by using available resources as optimal as possible.
9. Accountability: decision makers in government, the private sector, and community organizations are responsible, both to the community and to the institutions concerned.
10. Strategic vision: leaders and communities have a broad and far reach perspective on good governance and human development, as well as sensitivity to what is needed to realize this development. In addition, they must also have an understanding of the historical, cultural, and social complexities that are the basis for that perspective (Azhar & Azzahra, 2020: 243-244).

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used by the author in completing this research is Library Research. According to Nazir (1998), literature study is a data collection technique by reviewing books, literature, notes, and various reports related to the problem to be solved (T. & Purwoko, 2018). The author uses secondary data in a sense, the data used by the author already exists before or in other words, the author does not directly jump into the field to retrieve the required data. Literature search using Google search engine by taking various literature such as scientific journals, scientific articles, legislation, and online portals related to political communication, good governance, decentralization, and handling of the COVID-19 pandemic by the Central Government and DKI Jakarta Provincial Government.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Policy Response and Central Government's Relationship with the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta in Handling COVID-19

Covid-19 as a global pandemic announced by WHO on March 11, 2020 (Azhar & Azzahra, 2020: 241), has impacted various aspects of life in different countries in the world. According to May 11, 2021, COVID-19 has spread in almost 223 countries in the world to cause 158,651,638 cases, with 3,299,764 confirmed deaths (WHO, WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard, 2021). Virus that started in November 2019 in Wuhan, China (Hatcher, 2020: 614), has tested various countries in the world in terms of health, economy, even politics. The United States first announced cases of Covid-19 on January 20, 2020, Taiwan on January 22, 2020, Thailand January 24, 2020, and Japan on January 28, 2020 (Kompas, 2020). The World Economic Forum (WEF) sees the virus as beginning to show its impact on economies in the world where economic growth in some countries will be negative or could be interpreted as recession and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declared that 170 countries in the world will experience negative per capita income by 2020 (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 195). Various countries around the world are trying to deal with Covid-19 in the pre-crisis and crisis phase, with various policies that can control the rate of spread of the virus with social distancing policies and even lockdowns such as in Wuhan, China on January 23, 2020, which is a continuation of the policy with the terminology "fangkong" or means "prevention and control" which has been announced on January 7, 2020 (Stasavage, 2020: 4). Some countries in Europe are considered late in responding to this pandemic, some of them are Italy, Spain, The United Kingdom, Portugal, and Greece, are considered less good in terms of the national health system, judging by Covid-19 patients who need medical treatment, but it does not get access because of medical limitations (Seixas, 2020). As for countries that are considered successful in the sense of fast response in handling the Covid-19 pandemic, such as New Zealand (Hatcher, 2020: 614; Suoneto, 2020), which doing measurements through tracking, and tests to the community effectively. Other countries such as Taiwan have also been tracking, testing, and isolation of people potentially exposed to Covid-19 since who first announced a case of pneumonia in Wuhan on December 31, 2019, as well as South Korea by issuing legislation allowing the health ministry to collect telecommunications data on individuals that can be used to track potential new cases of Covid-19 (Stasavage, 2020: 13).

In contrast to the countries that successfully handled COVID-19 starting from tracking during the pre-crisis phase, since the beginning of WHO announced the discovery of pneumonia on December 31 in Wuhan, China, the Indonesian government seems to be not heeding the WHO information seriously. In times that considered as pre-crisis such as January to February 2020, the central government focuses more on the economic sector rather than anticipatory efforts such as tracking data in and out of immigration, tests, and other measures focused on national health. On February 25, 2020, Minister of Economy Airlangga Hartanto allocated Rp 103 billion in promotional funds, Rp 25 billion for tourists, and for influencers to promote Indonesia at Rp 72 billion. There is also an allocation of funds for airlines to stimulate the influx of foreign tourists amounting to Rp 298.5 billion, travel agents Rp 98.5 billion, aircraft fuel subsidies Rp 265.5 billion, special funds for 10 tourist destinations Rp 147.7 billion, as

well as the elimination of hotel and restaurant taxes in 10 tourist destinations, while other countries such as Australia, have announced the status of "Emergency Responses" and prohibited citizens of other countries from entering their countries if in the last 14 days have made travel to China (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 197).

After the government does not heed the information from WHO and does not see the other countries as valuable lessons in dealing with Covid-19, on March 2, 2020, President Joko Widodo announced the discovery of the first 2 cases of Covid-19 in Indonesia and in line with who's notification on March 11, 2020 that Covid-19 has become a global pandemic, Jokowi issued Presidential Decree No.7 of 2020 on the Task Force to Accelerate the Handling of Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) in Indonesia, which will be transformed into Presidential Decree No. 9 of 2020 with the main task of anticipating the impact of Covid-19 in Indonesia and strengthening the implementation of the Covid-19 Acceleration Task Force in Indonesia (Azhar & Azzahra, 2020: 244). Since March 15, 2020, the President has asked the local government to make study from home policy for student, and leave the emergency status to the district head (Gitiyarko, 2020).

Although in the Presidential Decree in article 11 states that the Governor and Regent / Mayor are also directed in forming a Task Force on Acceleration and Handling of Covid-19, however, it is felt that provincial and local leaders are not enough to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. This condition, has an impact to the un-coordination of the central and local governments in shaping policies to handle Covid-19 well, where some regions have taken anticipatory measures first such as on March 25, 2020, Helmi Hasan as mayor of Bengkulu asked the provincial government to close access to Bengkulu area (Putro, 2020). On the same day, Dedy Yon Supriyono as Mayor of Tegal took a lockdown policy in Tegal city for 4 months starting from March 30, 2020 to July 30, 2020, by closing all border access by using concrete guarded by the authorities (Kompas, 2020). Long before that, on March 16, 2020, the Governor of Papua had taken the first step. He implemented a policy to keep Papuans at home and also stop transportation services such as airports, land lines and piers from March 26 to April 9, 2020 (DKJN Papua, 2020). Several governors such as Anies Baswedan, Ridwan Kamil, and Ganjar Pranowo stated that they had prepared a lockdown scenario as an anticipatory measure to deal with the rate of spread of the virus. Anies Baswedan, Governor of DKI Jakarta on March 28, has also sent a written letter to the Palace as a preventive measure considering the Eid al-Fitr holiday, and some health experts consider the move a good step to anticipate the explosion of cases in Java Island with a total population of 141 million people, but Anies' plan was rejected by the central government (Gorbiano & Ghaliya, 2020). As of March 27, 2020, Covid-19 cases in Indonesia have reached 1,406 cases, and that prompted the Board of Professors of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Indonesia (FKUI), to request a regional quarantine with consideration of health services will be paralyzed if the case surge is getting bigger (Gitiyarko, 2020). Finally on March 31, 2020, the President issued Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 21 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions in order to Accelerate the Handling of Covid-19, and at the same time, the President held a live-streamed state speech from Bogor Palace by reminding

all regional heads not to make their own policies and to keep coordinating with the central government (Gorbiano & Ghaliya, 2020).

In early April 2020, Covid-19 was declared a non-natural national disaster by President Joko Widodo through Presidential Decree No. 12 of 2020 on The Determination of Non-Natural Disasters Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) (Pangaribuan & Munandar, 2021: 2). Following PP No. 21 of 2020, local governments are given the authority to carry out Large-scale Social Restrictions but must go through the approval of the central government and must comply with the mechanisms regarding PSBB listed in Regulation of the Minister of Health No. 9 of 2020 concerning Guidelines for Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Framework of Handling Covid-19 (Gitiyarko, 2020). Following up PP No. 21 of 2020 and Permenkes No. 9 of 2020, on April 9, 2020, the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta enacted Governor Regulation No. 33 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions in the Handling of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) in DKI Jakarta starting from April 10, 2020 with validation for 14 days (Pangaribuan & Munandar, 2021: 5). In Governor Regulation or Pergub No. 33 of 2020, it is explained that the Provincial Government of DKI closed a number of public facilities, work activities and schools conducted from home (Work from Home), and only 11 sectors are allowed to operate, that is food, energy, communication and technology, information, finance, logistics, hospitality, construction, public and industrial, as well as daily needs that are considered as national vital objects (Pangaribuan & Munandar, 2021: 6). Until the end of April 2020, there are already 3 provinces and 16 districts / cities that implement PSBB that is, DKI Jakarta, West Java, and West Sumatra provinces, as well as districts/cities including Bogor, Depok, Bekasi, South Tangerang, Tangerang, Pekanbaru, Makassar, Tegal, Bandung, Bandung, West Bandung, Sumedang, and Cimahi (Gitiyarko, 2020), and as of April 30, 2020, Covid-19 cases in Indonesia have reached 10,118 cases of (Mukaromah, 2020).

Looking at the data collected by the author above, the uncoordinated policy between the regions and the central government, makes the public often encounter confusion to follow the rules that seem to overlap between the central and local governments (Suparman, Sakti, & Anwar, 2020). Referring to regional autonomy and decentralization, district heads have authority and authority directly granted by the central government. Regional autonomy and decentralization trust and provide flexibility for local governments to improve the quality of public services with local wisdom owned by their respective regions. The basis of decentralization law, especially in the field of health, is The Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 32 of 2004 and The Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 23 of 2014 on Local Government and Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia No.2 of 2018 on SPM. According to Law No. 24 of 2014 on Local Government, in the affairs of health efforts, the central government regulates:

- a) Management of individual health efforts (UKP) and public health efforts (UKM) national referrals / cross-provincial areas,
- b) Implementation of registration, accreditation, and standardization of public and private health care facilities,

- c) Issuance of class A hospital permits and foreign investment health care facilities (PMA) as well as national health care facilities.

Meanwhile, the provincial government regulates:

- a) Management of UKP and UKM referrals at provincial/cross-district/city level,
- b) Issuance of class B hospital permits and provincial health care facilities.

In Indonesia, the implementation of decentralization still encounters many obstacles including limited human resources, facilities and infrastructure, management, natural resources, local native income, the use of budgets, including health funds, which have not been fully used effectively and compromised depending on needs, whereas the intent of the real decentralization of health is an opportunity for areas where, in the region can be handled and coordinated faster, directed, and on target from what the community needs. In an effort to deal with the Covid-19 virus, several regional heads are taking anticipatory measures in an effort to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. As well as the regional quarantine policy (lockdown) taken by the Governor of DKI Jakarta aimed at limiting certain activities, increasing anticipation of escalation development so that there is no massive spread of the virus. However, the initiative taken by the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta was instead rolled out by the central government and considered not in line with the policies of the central government. Whereas if disseminated by Law No. 23 of 2014 the local government has a responsibility in providing basic services, especially in the field of health. Although basically the central government has implemented the principle of decentralization by establishing a Task Force on Handling Covid-19 at the Provincial and District / City levels. The problem that occurs at the regional level is that the central government has not authorized adequate local governments to innovate in handling Covid-19 cases. On the other hand, the vagueness of the options given by the central government with regard to Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) creates a variety of different local government policy. The central government should provide a more specific explanation regarding large-scale social restrictions so as not to cause confusion in local governments in interpreting. However, Indonesia is not the only country that is not ready to handle the arrival of Covid-19. Unpreparedness is also shown if we look at the United States, where in the early weeks of 2020, President Donald Trump made a statement that Covid-19 would disappear and stated that the existence of the media should educate the public about "democratic hoaxes" (Hatcher, 2020: 616). The most tangible impact of Covid-19 in the United States is the tendency that Americans trust their state and local governments more than trust the federal government to handle crises (Stasavage, 2020: 11). The United States is not the only country where Covid-19 challenges a decentralized form of democracy. Even in Germany, where the response to Covid-19 is much better, pandemics still weigh heavily on the country's constitution where in the Weimar Constitution, Germans in 1949 voted for a constitution that restricted central power, but under this law, it is difficult to see where the authority is between the federal government, state governments, and regions in emergencies such as Covid-19, and even tends to be questioned (Stasavage, 2020: 11).

Political Communication of the Central Government and DKI Jakarta Provincial Government in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to Denton and Woodward, political communication is defined as a pure discussion of the allocation of public resources (revenue), official authority (who is given the power to make legal, legislative and executive decisions), and official sanctions (what are the state awards or penalties) (Nair, 2011: 3). Doris Graber also added that the meaning of 'political language' is not limited to mere rhetoric, but can be seen from paralinguistics such as body language and political act. Denton and Woodward characterize that political communication has a certain intent and intent from the sender to influence the political environment, as Brian Mc Nair quoted them in his book, *Introduction to A Political Communication*, "the crucial factor that makes communication 'political' is not the source of a message (or, we might add, referring back to their earlier emphasis on 'public discussion', its form), but its content and purpose (Nair, 2011: 4). Seeing this, political communication is actually a process of conveying political messages by political actors to the public that are packaged in certain mediums with the intention to influence this behavior individually or group. Mc Nair mentioned that in political communication, there are 3 influential elements, that is political actors, media, and audiences (Nair, 2011: 5-14).

Image 1. Elements of Political Communication

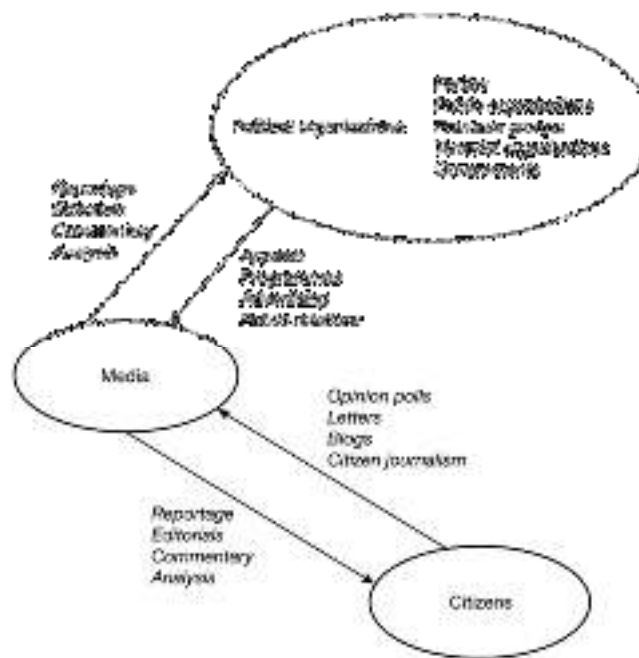


Figure 1.1 Elements of political communication.

Source: Brian Mc Nair, *Introduction to A Political Communication*, 2011

Political actors who give these political messages in this case can be parties, public organizations, pressure groups, terrorist organizations, or governments. How government political communication greatly affects individual behavior especially in times of crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic, is also stated by Thompson, where

communication used by political leaders can have a wide impact on a nation's health by influencing behaviors related to individual health and policy-making decisions. In addition, clear communication from the political elite on health issues, will affect the effectiveness of the implementation of bureaucratization (Hatcher, 2020: 615). Money also added that communication conducted by the political elite can spread throughout the political system because other elites and their supporters can adopt the same language in describing policy issues (Hatcher, 2020: 616).

Seeing the bitter reality that in the pre-crisis period since WHO first announced the discovery of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, China, on December 31, 2019, the Indonesian government seemed indifferent and did not heed the information by issuing a careless statement. The Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education and Information (LP3ES) has detailed 37 misleading statements by Indonesian government officials about Covid-19 such as the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, Terawan Agus Putranto (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 200).

Coordinator Minister for Politics, Law and Security (Menkopolhukam) Mahfud MD and Airlangga Hartanto as Coordinator Minister for Economic Affairs, also commented on social media by saying that Covid-19 will not be able to enter Indonesia due to convoluted licensing. Then there is also a statement from Luhut Binsar Panjaitan, Coordinator Minister for Maritime Affairs and Investment of Indonesia who said;

"From our modeling results, Indonesia's equatorial weather is hot and the humidity is high for Covid-19, it's not strong enough."

Vice President of the Republic of Indonesia, Ma'ruf Amin also added that wild horse milk can ward off coronavirus, as well as a statement that is no less important came from the Government Spokesperson on the handling of Covid-19, Achmad Yurianto;

"The rich protect the poor so they can live a normal life and the poor protect the rich so they don't get sick". (Mawardi, 2020).

Seeing the lack of sense of crisis from the communication of the Indonesian government in the early pre-crisis to the crisis, raised public distrust of the government's performance (Aziz & Wicaksono, 2020: 200). Director of the Center for Media LP3ES, Wijayanto assessed that the form of denial shown by the government is protracted through communication conducted by state officials in the pre-crisis phase in Indonesia (Mawardi, 2020). Similarly, the Institute for Development of Economics and Finance (INDEF) explained that 66.28% of Indonesians responded negatively to communication conducted by the Indonesian government, especially by President Joko Widodo and Minister of Health Terawan (Ardiyanti, 2020). The United States, which is also considered unresponsive to its handling of Covid-19, was also pointed out by President Trump on March 9, 2020, who compared Covid-19 to common flu deaths through his tweets on social media twitter;

"So last year 37,000 Americans died from the common Flu. It averages between 27,000 and 70,000 per year. Nothing is shut down, life & the economy go on" (Hatcher, 2020: 616).

This can be fatal to the behavior of individuals who do not follow health directions to stay at home, social distancing, or other activities that can suppress the spread of

Covid-19 more widely. Because their favorite political actors, like Donald Trump, seem to be saying that the virus seems ordinary. The research results of Eunice Castro Seixas entitled *War Metaphor in Political Communication on Covid-19*, the use of words in government political communication such as the metaphor 'war', 'battle', is very helpful in managing in times of crisis and gaining certain achievements such as; (i) prepare the public for difficult times; (ii) persuade citizens to change their behavior; (iii) foster national unity, (iv) mobilization and resilience; (v) showing compassion, attention and empathy and so on (Seixas, 2020: 4). As part of a speech by the President of Portugal, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa on March 18, 2020 which also coincided with the announcement of the state of emergency,

“This war - because it is a real war - has been going on for a month, it started after European neighbors, and for this reason, it could take longer to reach the peak of its expression. And the Portuguese, with the experience of those who have lived everything in a history of almost nine centuries, disciplined themselves, understood that the combat was very hard and very long and were and have been exemplary” (Seixas, 2020: 4).

In contrast to the central government, the Governor of DKI Jakarta showed his seriousness in handling the Covid-19 pandemic. The governor of DKI Jakarta in fighting the Covid-19 virus was widely criticized by some citizen who judged that the Governor was looking for a political stage in the middle of the pandemic outbreak. But on the contrary, many also support Anies related to his response in handling the Covid-19 virus as stated in one of the Kompas articles where the British media, assess Anies Baswedan more agile in tackling the Covid-19 virus than President Jokowi. The reason that makes the Governor of DKI Jakarta is considered as a rival of the President, especially in the handling of Covid-19 cases in Jakarta and Indonesia (Kompas.TV, 2020). In a press conference in March 2020, Anies Baswedan said that within a month the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta had been monitoring patients suspected of exposure to Covid-19.

“In Jakarta there are 115 patients under the supervision of the Provincial Government” said Anies when asked for information (Ika Defianti, 2020).

On that occasion, Anies Baswedan has prepared a fast response team and information center as a call center with the destination number 112 that can be contacted by the public when the public finds information about suspected COVID-19 patients around them. In addition, the DKI Jakarta government is actively supervising the mobilization of citizens suspected of exposure to Covid-19. In some aspects, the author believes that the local government of DKI Jakarta is quite ready in tackling the case of Covid-19 in the early stages of its spread. On the other hand, the Government of Indonesia is trying to encourage visits to tourist areas and also lower the price of airline and train tickets to a number of tourist attractions, of course it is done to boost and promote tourist visits in the situation of the Covid-19 virus outbreak. The Statement of the Governor of DKI Jakarta regarding there are 115 patients who are under monitoring was refuted by Terawan Agus Putranto as Minister of Health. According to him, all checks on people who are suspected of exposure to coronavirus (Covid-19) show negative results.

"I think that statement is not correct because all PCR analyzes are negative". he said (Sulistyawati., 2020).

However, soon the President of the Republic of Indonesia Joko Widodo announced the first positive case of coronavirus in Indonesia as well as the statement of the Former Minister of Health. Since then, the stage war between the President of the Republic of Indonesia and the Governor of DKI Jakarta has been increasingly seen in the handling of the Covid-19 pandemic case, plus the debate between the two supporters coloring the wall of social media that makes the competition is heat up.

Political communication that was considered ineffective during the pandemic was particularly in the pre-crisis period, causing the emergence of its own policy initiatives by various heads in the Indonesian region because the central government did not feel serious about responding to this problem. Researchers from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Noory Okthariza, said that the central government looks more concerned with the broader policy implications, while local governments are more focused on exercising their authority to prevent viruses from entering or spreading in their respective regions. However, without clear guidelines from central government, local governments will choose to act on their own and that means the state does not have a unified strategy for tackling the outbreak (Gorbiano & Ghaliya, 2020). Seeing this, the policy response taken by the government is not in a good enough level of coordination, and the emergence of policies that run individually in some areas in Indonesia, shows that there is still sectoral egoism, where sectoral egoism can be seen as behavior where each official in the government feels the most authorized where this attitude arises due to excessive bureaucracy and lack of communication between levels of government (HM Soeharto, 2021).

Finally on March 31, President Joko Widodo issued Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 21 of 2020 concerning Large-Scale Social Restrictions in order to Accelerate the Handling of Covid-19, and at the same time, the President held a live-streamed state speech from Bogor Palace in general such as reprimanding district heads with the contents of his speech,

"With the issuance of this government regulation, everything becomes clear now. Regional heads should not make their own policies. All regional policies must comply with existing regulations." (Gorbiano & Ghaliya, 2020).

The handling of Covid-19, which is considered as a political stage, was affirmed by Charta Politika Director, Yunarto Wijaya that the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic did create a stage for political actors, especially district heads, to increase their electability in the 2024 presidential election, because the ability and capabilities of a leader can be directly measured. According to him, it is perfectly legal during the corridors of the policy-making race, which is considered dangerous if a leader makes a policy only limited to political marketing (Wardy, 2020). On the International stage, Covid-19 also has a significant impact on politics, as in South Korea, President Moon Jae-in's successful steps and policies in dealing with the Covid-19 crisis have received high votes. Public confidence in the government is evident from the last general election on April 15, 2020. In the United States, Trump's approval that the ratings dropped and strengthened Joe Biden's position to win the November election. A recent

survey by CNN found that 55% of voters would vote for Biden if the election were held that day, while 41% would vote for Trump (Suoneto, 2020).

Anies Baswedan's response to the pandemic, which is considered by some to be more responsive from the central government, was demonstrated through the survey results of the Indonesian Political Indicators (IPI) survey institute on the leadership and institutional effects in handling Covid-19 in Indonesia where Anies received the highest score of 72.9 among 6 other regional heads juxtaposed in the survey (Farisa, 2020). Evidence of increased electability of Anies Baswedan was also shown when the IPI survey continued on April 13-17, 2021 involving 1200 respondents with random sampling with the research topic of the 2024 presidential candidates. The survey results showed that Anies Baswedan came in second with 14.6 percent electability, while the first position was filled by Ganjar Pranowo with 15.7 percent electability. Third and fourth place, filled by Prabowo Subianto with 11.1 percent and Ridwan Kamil with 10 percent (CNN Indonesia, 2021). At a virtual conference on April 28, 2020, Anies also revealed the secret of his answer,

"If I share some of the reasons why we are moving fast, in this case in Jakarta, we study what is happening in China, in South Korea, in Japan, in Italy. With all that, which we have been monitoring since January, there are many lessons to be learned and we also hope to learn something like this from other countries to be able to get out of this massive social distancing measure soon". (Sebayang, 2020).

Political drama and stage war in the handling of Covid-19 in Indonesia can be said that the intensity of this political competition became so strong during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ideal Political communications in Pandemic Era and Challenge for Democracy

There is no conformity between the central government and the local government. Not only does it concern about policy and communication, but it also concerns about the data released by each institution. Park and forest service DKI Jakarta released a report listening the 283 dead bodies by the COVID-19 protocol. This is certainly different from the data released by the COVID-19 task force listing the 122 national scale deaths. In this case, Anies claimed that the government of DKI Jakarta Province is holding the 3 basic principles there are transparency, factual and urgency or moving rapidly which means that right from the start, he did transparent about the data of COVID-19 case released in Jakarta. (Dewanto Samudro, 2020).

If it is reflected by Superior political communication model, The findings exhibit that the political communication between the center and the local government has not properly implemented. One of the causes is the egoism of each the society's leaders regarding the treatment of Covid-19. In this case, the central government is exhibiting the political communication structure in the policy centralized and is not prioritizing the decentralized principle as well as little does It give the room to the local government to innovate in responding the Covid-19 issue. In the principle, this is needed a political communication who does not accentuate its personal importance in any moral or material delivery of information. Whom we realize that the threat of Covid-19 is real dan dangerous. In consequence, it is needed a collaboration and solid pattern of organization political communication in resisting the virus. Besides that, to

emphasize decentralized line properly, to realign the principles of regional autonomy and decentralized as well as to implement on principal assignment and function is very needed as regulated in UU. Pemerintah Daerah No. 23/2014.

In resisting Covid-19 pandemic situation, the government institution has to be integrity and is not become object of the importance. So that, it should not be interfered in this condition with the political motives leading the bureaucracy. Who leads the government institution must keep up with ethics and professionalism of government in implementing the duty so that the importance conflict can be avoided; it has been a time for us to become the whole package either central government, local government or regency/city working professional to some common interests; When it has not been invented communication line and a good coordination, accordingly it will raise inefficient government arrangement and bring out the people's misery. Therefore, strong relation between state institution on all levels of government in accordance to the proper authority, duty and ethics established in objectifying the government prioritizing the principles of good governance is really needed by the government. Referring to one of principles of good governance is consensus oriented, where a good governance must bridge the interest to build a comprehensive consensus of what is the best for community. if it is possible, it is consensus on policy and procedures. If the central government and the local government did not coordinate well, thus what happened was distrust by public to the government as it did in Kosovo, where the prime minister albin kurti resigned from the chair of power cause of 82 of the 120 legislative's votes supported of the vote of disbelief concerning the prime minister who did not fix emergency status to Covid-19 pandemic.

This is required an appropriate politics communication pattern to transfer politics messages in Covid-19 pandemic situation. The government must strengthen the excellent patterns of organization politics communication to reach understanding in the government sector. In the other side, we will be faced with the condition which is dilemma when emergency status such as Covid-19 attacks the democracy states where the power is decentralized. The Covid-19 absolutely challenges democracy states. Eventually, several the state leaders tend to fall into authoritarian chasm by trying to close all the taps of information stream on Covid-19 and do not care about that. Therefore, they count on the local government to overcome that. In Russia, Vladimir Putin did not pay attention to the Covid-19, push down the information stream and instruct the governors to handle the crisis (Stasavage, 2020, hal. 6). In Hungary, Viktor Orban completed a series of autocratic "reforms", as a result of Covid-19 he had a power to instruct widely by decree. In Cambodia, a new emergency rule allowed the Prime Minister Hun Sen to monitor and control all the temporary individual communication as well as to control media strictly to handle the Covid-19 (Stasavage, 2020, 10).

CONCLUSION

On March 2020, the first case of corona virus was announced by President Jokowi Dodo. From that moment on the speed of corona virus transmission have seen that the government have not ready to handle Covid-19 issue, especially the relationship between central – local government. There was no the strategic move prepared by the

actor state. We can judge that Indonesia have not had good government. Early in the advent of the Corona Virus, the government was not spry in responding that spread. In addition to, a weak coordination and miss-political communication between the central government with DKI Jakarta Province causes the public's distrust to the government.

Several cases occurred in Indonesia at the beginning of the Covid-19 transmission have exhibited that the central government is not ready and slow in anticipating so that it evokes sort of policy initiatives by the local government. In the other side, Covid-19 is decentralized test. Which means that the central government has not granted the authority enough to the local government in handling the Covid-19 spread. If it looks farther that a role of the local government is quite important in handling it. The suggestion and recommendation which can be given to the central government and DKI Jakarta Province is increasing a synergy between stakeholders especially at the regional level to maximize the decentralized of Covid-19 treatment.

This study exhibits the politics communication between the central with the local government, especially DKI Jakarta Province not good because it is seasoned by the importance and egoism of each institution. As a result, the central government and DKI Jakarta Province do not show synergy in handling Covid-19. In consequence, this study recommends DKI Jakarta Province to be involved in event with the central government to increase the deliberative, mediative, multicultural, consensus, and superior politics communication model.

In the attempt to fight the Covid-19, to create the coordination system and a strong synergy as well as to put the crisis as a common mission, regardless of sectoral egoism and politics importance either group or personal. The handling of Covid-19 requires collective work passing all the sectors and levels of government. It should not be recreated relationship unclear between the regional and central government especially DKI Jakarta Province.

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