

Research Article

Public Administration in Viewing Problems in the Bureaucracy During the Pandemic

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Abstract. Many things have changed due to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, including how the government manages its bureaucracy. This research will then aim to see how the public administration sees the bureaucracy can continue to run according to its function during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research will use a qualitative approach through a literature study method that will use relevant previous research and studies as data sources. This research then finds two main challenges that the bureaucracy needs to face during the pandemic. This challenge is internal in the form of efforts to regulate the resources owned so that the obligations of the bureaucracy can follow the duties and functions it has. The second challenge is how the community can continue to accept the services provided by the bureaucracy when there are various limitations in delivering public services.

Keywords: *Public Service, Bureaucracy, Covid-19 Pandemic.*

A. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic that has occurred since 2019 has had many negative impacts on various aspects of life, both in society and in government circles. In society, the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the decline in public health, which automatically reduces community productivity (Wang et al., 2021). At the government level, it can be seen from how the bureaucracy works, especially in carrying out public services which are no longer entirely carried out directly where the community will visit the public service institution unit but are carried out online where the public accesses the public service portal that has been provided by the institutional unit public service provider (Zarychta et al., 2020).

Public services provided before the Covid-19 pandemic have made a difference from those previously offered by the institutional unit providing public services (Bekir, 2021). This condition reduces the potential for the spread of Covid-19 during the Covid-19 pandemic in public service places. It also ensures that the services provided are based on the Covid-19 health protocol (Arfan et al., 2021).

Based on this understanding, the bureaucracy is facing various challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic, where the bureaucracy cannot carry out its functions the same as before the Covid-19 pandemic. This is because there are limitations during the implementation of the Covid-19 pandemic policy that is being implemented by the government (Alcadipani et al., 2020).

The challenges faced by the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic are at least based on initial findings consisting of 3 (three) main things. First, how are the apparatus resources in the bureaucracy to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, which is faced with the tasks and functions assigned (Lindhout & Reniers, 2020). This is because the provision of public services during the Covid-19 pandemic is different from before the Covid-19 pandemic, so whether the government apparatus as a resource owned by the organization can follow these changes or vice versa (Webb et al., 2020).

The second is how the work system can function in an organizational environment during the Covid-19 pandemic. This concerns how the Covid-19 pandemic impacts the bureaucratic work environment, for example, how the work division system between Work from Home (WFH) and Work from Office can run optimally. This concerns communication and coordination between various units within the bureaucracy in carrying out its functions to optimally provide public services to the community (Coyne et al., 2021).

The third is how the bureaucracy carries out its duties to provide public services to the community. This is based on the implementation of Covid-19 prevention policies that the government is implementing, such as the PPKM policy, which is being implemented strictly in several cities, where various government offices are closed to reduce the number of Covid-19 exposures (Saputro & Prakoso, 2021). As a result of this condition, it poses a challenge to the bureaucracy to provide indirect or online-based public services in which the public is not fully able to access public services based on the use of this technology (Liang et al., 2021).

Based on the description above, this article will examine the challenges of the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic, which will be seen from the perspective of public administration, especially how the bureaucracy carries out its duties in carrying out public services to the community. So, it is hoped that the end of the analysis in this article will find various bureaucratic challenges that can be taken into consideration in formulating policies regarding public services provided by the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic. This will then result in bureaucratic functions running well, despite the limitations of health protocols in dealing with Covid-19.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Public Administration

Administrative science talks about human cooperation to achieve a particular goal. The definition of administration is divided into two, namely, administration in a narrow sense and general. Researchers describe several definitions of administration according to experts. Herbert A. Simon, Donald W. Smithburg & A. Thomson argued that in a broad sense, the administration could be defined as the activity of a group of people or people who work together to achieve a common goal (Fischer et al., 2020).

Then White said that administration is a standard process for every business group, whether public or private, civil or military, large or small. Public administration is a science-based on the science of administration in which it discusses the scope of government organizations (government agencies). According to Dwight Waldo, the definition of public administration is the organization and management of people and materials (equipment) to achieve government goals (Moynihan, 2022).

The researcher assumes that several definitions of public administration are still needed. Therefore, the researcher adds the definition of public administration proposed by Siagian, who suggests that public administration can be defined as all activities carried out by all government apparatus of a country to achieve state goals. Finally, Dwight Waldo argues that public administration is the organization and management of people and things to achieve government goals (Salam, 2021).

2. Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is based on its terminology in English as the word bureaucracy. This word comes from the words bureau (meaning table) and cratein (meaning power), meaning that power is in the people or apparatus behind the desk. The bureaucracy itself can be used to show government organizations and indicate organizations in general that have an organized structure and clear goals (Da Cruz et al., 2022).

According to experts, bureaucracy is interpreted differently even though it has the same general meaning. Bintoro Tjokroamidjojo revealed that the bureaucracy is intended to organize regularly a job that must be done by many people in an organization (Septyanun & Yuliani, 2020).

Then Blau and Page put forward the bureaucracy as a type of organization intended to achieve various large administrative tasks by systematically coordinating (regularly) the work of many people (Weinstein-Tull, 2018). Thus, according to Blau and Page, the bureaucracy is precise in implementing organizational principles to increase administrative efficiency, although sometimes, bureaucratization often results in inefficiency (Tomo, 2019).

Furthermore, Ismani argued that there are rational rules, organizational structures, and processes based on technical knowledge and with the highest efficiency in the bureaucracy. From this point of view, there is no reason to think that bureaucracy is ugly and inefficient (Amis et al., 2020).

Finally, Dwijowijoto explained that the bureaucracy is a powerful institution with the ability to increase potential capacities for good and bad things in its existence as a neutral, rational administrative instrument on a large scale (Tanggung et al., 2020). Furthermore, it is argued that in modern society, where there are so many continuous and steady affairs, only bureaucratic organizations can answer them. Bureaucracy, in practice, is defined as civil servants (Ripoll & Rode, 2022).

Based on the descriptions above, it can be seen that the bureaucracy is an organizational unit that has the authority to carry out a task that has been given, which is oriented to carrying out government authority.

3. Covid-19 Pandemic

According to WHO (World Health Organization), the definition of a pandemic is the spread of a new disease in almost the entire world. WHO later noted that there were some of the deadliest pandemic diseases in the history of human civilization, such as the Spanish Flu, the Black Death, and so on (Morens et al., 2020). This is, of course, different from the term Epidemic, namely the emergence of a new disease with a scope of spread that is not so broad and limited as in one environment or maybe only per country, for example, the Ebola virus in Africa. The COVID-19 pandemic is a large family of viruses that cause disease in humans and animals (Tisdell, 2020). In humans, it usually causes respiratory tract infections, ranging from the common cold to severe illnesses and even death, such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). Covid-19 is a new type of virus discovered in Wuhan, China, in December 2019 and was later named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Covid-19 (Lombardi et al., 2021).

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia stated that a person could quickly become infected with this virus when they accidentally inhale air contaminated with small droplets from the nose and mouth of a COVID-19 sufferer coughing or sneezing spreads in the air. More than that, the transmission of this virus can also be through objects that have been contaminated or touched by the coronavirus sufferer or the droplet earlier (Dhama et al., 2021). Therefore, it is essential to do physical distancing or keep a distance of more than one meter from someone suspected of being able to transmit the virus. Until now, experts are still conducting research to classify and determine the source of the virus, the type of exposure, and the cure vaccine (Shankar et al., 2020).

C. METHOD

This research will use a qualitative approach through a literature study. This type of method is selected to find out how the bureaucracy can run and function in the form of parsing

descriptions. Sources of data used in this study came from various studies and previous studies that have relevance to this research. The researcher's data will be processed so that the results expected by the researcher can then be found.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Covid-19 Pandemic in Indonesia

The Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia from the beginning of 2020 until now has lasted for two years and still does not show that Indonesia is free from the spread of Covid-19. Various cases of exposure to Covid-19 continue to occur in multiple regions where the data so far is that at least Covid-19 has infected 4.2 million people, and the number of victims caused by Covid-19 has totaled 143,936 people died.

The government has responded to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has lasted for two years, by issuing various countermeasures policies that are basically to reduce the spread of Covid-19, which is expected to minimize the negative consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

At least there are main policies in dealing with Covid-19 that the government has made. First is the Large-scale Social Restriction Policy (PSBB). The PSBB policy is the first policy made by the government in the context of tackling Covid-19. This policy aimed to combat the spread of Covid-19, which was still of low intensity and had only been discovered in a few provinces. Therefore, provinces currently experiencing Covid-19 apply this policy, while other provinces implement social restrictions adapted to conditions in their respective regions.

Second, the Advanced Large-Scale Social Restriction Policy (PSBB), which was implemented from April to June 2020, is a government response to which the spread of Covid-19 has begun to spread with high intensity to various provinces in Indonesia with cases of exposure to residents. As the population increases, this policy is intended to stem the spread of Covid-19 more widely to different other areas.

Third, the Strict Large-Scale Social Restriction Policy (PSBB) is the basis for implementing this policy, namely the increasingly massive spread of Covid-19 in various regions in Indonesia. This then causes the need to tackle Covid-19 in an integrated and comprehensive manner, this policy is expected to be able to reduce the high number of Covid-19 infections in the community, so it is hoped that it will be able to stem any further negative impacts that may arise due to this pandemic.

Fourth, the Transitional PSBB Policy, in which this policy was implemented in the context of tackling Covid-19 in the community whose cases of the spread of Covid-19 began to decline, so this policy was carried out after the peak of the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia. This policy aims to ensure that the spread of Covid-19 is controlled and the community can live again in a new normal state based on the Covid-19 health protocol.

Fifth is the Policy for the Implementation of Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM), where this policy is the same as the PSBB policy but with a different approach. The difference is that the PPKM policy will be adjusted to the level that will be determined according to the conditions in an area once every two weeks so that this policy will change according to current conditions, such as at levels 2, 3, and 4 according to those in the area concerned.

The five policies that the government has implemented in the context of dealing with Covid-19 are ultimately aimed at stemming the spread of Covid-19, which has spread to various provinces, and also reducing the impact of Covid-19 on people's lives, such as being able to stem the increase in unemployment and poverty. This will ultimately cause the Covid-19 pandemic to not have many negative impacts on different lives, both in the community and in the government environment.

2. Bureaucracy during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Bureaucracy is an inseparable part of an organization that regulates social order and people's lives. As the holder of authority in carrying out government functions, the bureaucracy has the function to carry out policies both in the context of governance, development, and public services.

The bureaucracy in various existing conditions must carry out these three roles, and this is because the dysfunction of the bureaucracy will cause the regular life of the community not to run.

The administration of the bureaucracy is associated with the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, so at least the three existing functions must also be carried out by implementing the Covid-19 health protocol. First governance. The government function is an essential part of the bureaucracy where the bureaucracy is a form of government in carrying out its operations. Associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, the government's functions, on the one hand, must be optimized, such as efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19, which must be carried out. This places the bureaucracy as a government organ engaged in implementing the Covid-19 prevention policy. On the other hand, the government's functions cannot be fully implemented because the Covid-19 pandemic directly impacts the government administration process. Based on this understanding, the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic must play an essential role as a government tool in its efforts to tackle Covid-19.

The second is the implementation of development. Development during the Covid-19 pandemic underwent changes in which physical development decreased. In contrast, growth in the health sector experienced an increase, such as the government's allocation to build health facilities in the context of dealing with Covid-19.

This development change requires the bureaucracy to carry out development programs scheduled by the government so that various development efforts, especially those aimed at tackling Covid-19, can be carried out correctly.

The third is the implementation of public services. The performance of public services during the Covid-19 pandemic experienced various obstacles, such as the PSBB policy, which directly stopped public services and shifted them to online public services. This encourages the bureaucracy always to develop strategies to provide public services to the community well, even if they have to be carried out online.

3. Bureaucratic Challenges During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The bureaucracy faces various challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges must be able to push the bureaucracy in a better direction during the Covid-19 pandemic in particular and in the future in general.

First, build competent and professional government apparatus resources. The Covid-19 pandemic is when government officials are required to change the work culture that has been implemented so far, primarily due to the division of labor between working at home and working in the office. This condition requires government officials to adapt, especially regarding information technology when government officials are carrying out their work at home. Existing government officials must optimize the communication media used, such as electronic devices. This is done to be able to build competent human resources, including building government apparatus capable of mastering advances in information technology, so that there is a professional capacity of government officials in which they can support their work based on the use of information technology.

Second, providing optimal public services amid existing limitations and conditions. The Covid-19 pandemic has created different situations, particularly the limitations of direct interaction due to the potential for the spread of Covid-19. This is associated with public

services, so it has implications for the limitations of public service delivery units to optimally provide services to the community directly due to the obligation to implement the Covid-19 health protocol.

The condition of the limitations of providing direct public services is a challenge for the bureaucracy to provide services to the community optimally. One of the efforts taken is to offer online services where there is the use of technology that allows services to be provided to the community without having to meet face to face.

The challenge in providing public services directly is how the bureaucracy can maximally utilize existing technology to deliver public services so that technology can create a positive impact on the services offered.

Third, creating service innovations during the Covid-19 pandemic. Innovation is a must in an organization, and this is because the bureaucracy must continue to develop itself to be better. Based on these problems, innovation is used to improve the bureaucracy.

Innovation concerning the Covid-19 pandemic aims to ensure that the bureaucracy can adapt to existing conditions so that various problems that arise are not used as problems that can hinder the performance of the bureaucracy but are used as opportunities to improve the bureaucracy.

Innovation associated with the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic is also based on the understanding that innovation will improve public services, meaning that innovations born by the bureaucracy will be able to provide various models of public services that will ultimately provide good quality public services.

Based on the explanation above, the three challenges faced as described must be addressed by the bureaucracy to improve the bureaucracy in a better direction. Apart from that, the existing difficulties must be passed by the bureaucracy to provide excellent and quality public services to the community.

4. Recommendations for Bureaucratic Improvement during the Pandemic

Improvements to the bureaucracy in carrying out its functions during the Covid-19 pandemic need to be carried out. This is because the bureaucracy is the primary driver in carrying out its duties to provide public services to the community.

First, optimizing professional human resources. This includes at least two main things, namely increasing the competence of the bureaucratic apparatus regarding the duties and functions of the work that is their obligation. These two things will then be able to increase the professionalism of the apparatus, which will have a direct positive impact on the quality of public services that are being implemented or provided to the community.

The second thing is the level of adaptation of the government apparatus to the existing conditions and situations so that the government apparatus can work in every existing case and condition. Associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, the condition of direct service limitations where the implementation of the Covid-19 health protocol should not be a burden and an obstacle for bureaucratic apparatus to provide the best service to the community. However, this must be able to provide equal service before the Covid-19 pandemic or even more than before.

These two things must be carried out by government officials so that government officials can work professionally in various existing situations and conditions without any influence or decline in public services provided when the case and conditions in the bureaucracy change.

Second, restructuring the bureaucratic structure that can answer challenges in various situations and conditions. Restructuring the bureaucratic system has become an agenda in bureaucratic reform, in which the bureaucracy must create efficiency and effectiveness in carrying out its functions. Various efforts in carrying out bureaucratic reform aim to ensure

that the bureaucracy is in good condition and able to carry out its duties, including carrying out public service tasks.

Bureaucratic restructuring in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic is shown to carry out good functions amid existing social restrictions, and this means that the bureaucracy can work despite social limits in the context of the Covid-19 health protocol so that the tasks that are less than optimal can be optimized by restructuring the bureaucracy.

Third, communication and coordination between units in the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Coordination and communication are an essential part of the functioning of the bureaucracy, where one of the successful implementations of bureaucratic functions is the creation of communication and coordination between various elements within the bureaucracy itself.

Fourth is the use of technology. Today's technology can not be separated from people's lives. Technology has become a part that can facilitate people in carrying out their lives, so the community needs the existence of technology.

Empirically, technology in bureaucracy has been applied in the last few decades, where computers and internet networks were initially intended to facilitate communication between bureaucratic units in carrying out their duties.

Along with the times, technology is widely used in the bureaucracy, including it is used to provide public services in various government agencies. The use of technology will make it easier for public service providers to provide services to the community.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, where face-to-face interaction limitations encourage the use of information technology to be further improved, due to the potential for providing services to the public during the Covid-19 pandemic, it directly has the potential to cause the spread of Covid-19.

Based on this, the use of technology by the bureaucracy must continue to be carried out and developed until the community has the convenience of accessing public services based on this technology. It is expected that the quality of public services provided by the public service provider unit will have similarities with the services provided directly. It is even hoped that digital-based services will have better quality than services carried out directly.

Based on the description above, the various efforts that need to be made aim to improve the performance of the existing bureaucracy, especially the performance of the bureaucracy during the Covid-19 pandemic, so that it can be even better.

E. CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of life, including implementing bureaucratic functions where the bureaucracy faces at least 2 (two) main challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges include how to internally ensure that the resources in the bureaucracy can carry out their obligations following their respective duties and functions. Then the next challenge is how the bureaucracy can provide public services to the community where there are limited conditions that require public services to be based on the Covid-19 health protocol. Even it must be done online to support the Covid-19 prevention efforts that the government is carrying out. Nevertheless, this condition is an opportunity for the bureaucracy to develop various alternative ways to ensure that public services provided to the community can run optimally.

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