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### IMPLEMENTATION OF POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAM IN PALEMBANG CITY

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### Abstract

This research aims to analyze the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Palembang city, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and develop a more effective policy model. This research uses qualitative methods. The data used in this research are primary and secondary data. While the data sources used in this study came from observations and interviews conducted in Palembang city, especially those involved in the implementation of poverty reduction. Various efforts have been made to reduce poverty, but poverty reduction receives different formulations of handling so that the topic of poverty that often exists every year is always evolving. Using a descriptive qualitative approach and Van Meter and Van Horn's implementation theory, recommendations include strengthening collaboration, optimizing resources, and utilizing digital technology to support integrated and local needs-based policies.

Keywords: Poverty alleviation, policy implementation, Van Meter and Van Horn, Palembang City.

### Introduction

Poverty reduction efforts that are part of regional planning certainly require the basis of scientific studies using appropriate analysis to plan real poverty reduction actions. Regional poverty reduction efforts are the implementation of Law number 13 year 2011 concerning poverty reduction. The legal umbrella for

poverty reduction efforts is Presidential regulation number 15 year 2010 concerning the acceleration of poverty reduction which was amended by Presidential regulation number 96 year 2015. In 2020, Minister of Home Affairs regulation number 53 year 2020 was issued concerning the work procedure and work alignment as well as institutional development and human resources of the provincial poverty reduction coordination team and regency / city poverty reduction coordination team. The mandate contained in this policy needs to be continued at the district/city level, in the case of Palembang city, to realize poverty reduction efforts that are in accordance with existing developments and problems and place people's welfare as a priority. Although various government initiatives have been implemented, poverty remains a significant issue, affecting education, health, and social welfare. The poverty rate in Palembang city shows a fluctuating trend in recent years. This is in line with the issuance of the Palembang mayor regulation number 7 year 2023 concerning the Palembang city regional development plan in 2024-2026.

In March 2024, the number of poor people (people with per capita expenditure per month below the poverty line) in Palembang city reached 173.59 thousand people (9.77 %. It decreased by 5.86 thousand people compared to the condition in March 2023 which amounted to 179.45 thousand people (10.22 percent). The poverty depth index (P1) of Palembang city in 2024 amounted to 2.06, a decrease of 0.19 from in 2022 which amounted to 1.66. The higher the index value, the further the average expenditure of the population is from the poverty line. The poverty severity index (P2) of Palembang city in 2024 amounted to 0.40, a decrease of 0.17 from 0.57 in 2023. The higher the index value, the greater the expenditure inequality among the poor. The poverty line in March 2024 was recorded at 660,932 rupiah per capita per month. This figure increased by 2.73 % compared to the March 2023 Poverty Line of 643,356 rupiah per capita per month. In 2024, Palembang city ranked the 4th lowest percentage of poor people (9.77) among other districts/cities in South Sumatra province, as in the previous year (2023). The districts/cities with the 1-3 lowest poverty percentages in South Sumatra Province are Pagar Alam City (8.18 %), Banyu Asin (9.31%), and East Oku (9.75%).

Table 1 : Poverty Percentage of Cities/Districts in South Sumatra Province

No.	17 districts/cities	Poverty Percentage		
		2022	2023	2024
1	Ogan Komering Ulu	11,61	11,61	10,68
2	Ogan Komering Ilir	13,23	13,23	12,08
3	Muara Enim	11,12	11,12	9,79
4	Lahat	15,61	15,61	14,14
5	Musi Rawas	13,34	13,34	13,44
6	Musi Banyuasin	15,19	15,19	12,88
7	Banyuasin	10,00	10,00	9,31
8	South Ogan Komering Ulu	10,56	10,56	9,86
9	East Ogan Komering Ulu	10,05	10,05	9,75
10	Ogan Ilir	12,33	12,33	12,30
11	Empat Lawang	12,03	12,03	10,78
12	Pali	11,76	11,76	9,82
13	North Musi Rawas	18,45	18,45	17,38
14	Palembang	10,48	10,48	9,77
15	Prabumulih	11,28	11,28	10,13
16	Pagar Alam	8,47	8,47	8,18
17	Lubuk Linggau	12,68	12,68	11,4

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) of Palembang City.

In general, poverty in the province of South Sumatra, in the period March 2014-March 2024, showed a downward trend in terms of number and percentage but this figure is still quite large. The number of poor people in South Sumatra province decreased from 1,100.83 thousand people in March 2014 to 984.24 thousand people in March 2024 but the number was not significant. The decline in poverty percentage also occurred from 13.91 percent to 10.97 percent. The development of the poverty rate from March 2014 to March 2024 is presented in Figure 1.



Some of the factors that affect the poverty rate during the period March 2023 - March 2024 are: 1) South Sumatra's economy in the first quarter of 2024 against the first quarter of 2023 experienced a growth of 5.06%, 2) The open unemployment rate in February 2024 amounted to 3.97%. There was a decrease compared to February 2023 which amounted to 4.53%, 3) Inflation in March 2024 was relatively controlled at 3.24%, 4) Farmer exchange rate in March 2024 amounted to 115.20, an increase of 11.19% points compared to the farmer exchange rate in March 2023, 5) Various social assistance programs were disbursed in January-March 2024 in all districts/cities in South Sumatra, 6) In the period March 2023-March 2024 there was an increase in the price of several basic needs such as rice, red chili, eggs, sugar and chicken.

Furthermore, although programs such as Direct Cash Transfer, microeconomic empowerment, and housing provision have been implemented, some barriers remain. Some of these obstacles include the existence of non-localized strategies where same policies do not fully match the unique needs of certain regions. Policies are often inconsistent and lack coordination between provincial and municipal governments. For example, the provincial government's business capital assistance program does not come with clear guidelines to accommodate micro enterprises in Palembang that are oriented towards local trade. This program, which is supposed to help small traders in traditional markets, is instead given more to other sectors such as agriculture that are less relevant in urban areas like Palembang. In addition, the allocation of funds is often determined based on a formula that does not take into account the specific needs of the city, such as extreme poverty or local unemployment rates. As a result, funds are not utilized to their full potential, and program effectiveness declines. As a solution, harmonization/ synchronization between provincial and city government strategies is needed by involving local stakeholders in the planning and decision-making stages.

Secondly, there are still differences in data between agencies, resulting in mistakes in the targeting of beneficiaries. This shows the inconsistency of data on poverty. The inaccuracy of poverty data is a significant obstacle. Programs are often mis-targeted because the data does not reflect the current condition of the community. The data from Central Bureau of Statistics of Palembang City is different from the data owned by local governments. This difference is caused by non-standardized methodologies between the relevant parties. For example, Central Bureau of Statistics of Palembang City uses per capita expenditure as a poverty indicator, while local governments often base data on the results of more fragmented local surveys. In addition, the lack of data updating means that many households that have moved out of the poor category are still

registered as beneficiaries, while those that have recently entered the poor category are not accommodated. This shows the need to integrate the data with a digital-based poverty information system, which allows synchronization between the central and regional governments in real-time.

Furthermore, community involvement in program planning and implementation is still low, so local needs are less accommodated, so it can be said that community participation is still limited in poverty alleviation. Community participation in program planning and implementation is still low. For example, in Kecamatan Ilir Timur, a program to empower women through handicraft training only involved 20% of the targeted target group. Local communities revealed that they were unaware of the training, as socialization was limited to certain communities. This caused the program to fail to reach the people who really needed it. In addition, in the Direct Cash Transfer program, some communities complained that there was no mechanism to convey their aspirations regarding the use of aid, so that funds were often used for consumptive rather than productive needs. To overcome this, dialogue-based approaches, such as village or city deliberation, are needed to ensure the involvement of all parties from the planning stage to program evaluation.

Several previous studies have made important contributions to understanding this issue. Taqiyah et al (2024) showed that collaboration between stakeholders in extreme poverty alleviation in Bojonegoro district has not been optimal due to the lack of success indicators being met. Another study by Handayani et al (2023) in Bangkalan district also found that collaborative governance has not been effective due to the lack of same standards and perceptions regarding the poor. In addition, Marliya (2013) highlighted that the communication aspect in the implementation of poverty alleviation policies in Palu is still weak, while the available resources are also inadequate. In addition, in 2022 and 2023, there was a decrease in the poverty rate with the percentage of poor people being 10.48% and 10.22% respectively. However, the number of poor people remains high, indicating the need for an in-depth evaluation of existing poverty reduction strategies. This study aims to analyze the implementation of poverty reduction programs in Palembang city, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and propose an integrated model to improve the results.

## Methodology

This research methodology uses a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Palembang city. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation studies. The research focuses on policy implementation, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the optimal model for poverty reduction. The types of data used include primary data from key informants and secondary data in the form of official documents. The research location was in Palembang city in Seberang Ulu 1 sub-district with a planned time. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data validity was guaranteed through triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of the research results. Because program implementation is one of the components in a policy, the efforts of the authorities to achieve goals. In measuring this study, researchers used 6 dimensions proposed by Van Metter and Van Horn, namely (1) *Standards* and *objectives*, (2) Resources, (3) *Characteristics* of *the implementing agencies*, 4) *Interorganizational communication and enforcement activities*, (5) *Economic, social, and political conditions*, and (6) *The* disposition of *implementors*.

### Literature Review

According to Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), Implementation is an action taken by individuals, groups, or government agencies directed at achieving the objectives set out in the policy decision. Meanwhile, according to Agustino (2014: 139) Implementation is a dynamic process where policy implementers carry out an activity and will ultimately achieve results in accordance with the goals or objectives of the policy itself. This is in line with the definition put forward by Pressman (2010), which states that implementation is the

stage in the system life cycle that is responsible for ensuring that the system that has been designed can be operated properly in a real environment. Referring to several definitions put forward by experts, it can be understood that implementation is an activity seen after the legal direction of a project, which includes efforts to manage inputs. Implementation is the implementation of a previously formulated idea or plan. The concept of implementation that is considered by the public relates to an activity or action. However, implementation is not limited to the act of implementing it.

In the context of this research on poverty reduction in Palembang city, this researcher uses the theory of policy implementation developed by Van Meter and Van Horn as the main analytical framework. This theory emphasizes that the success of policy implementation is influenced by six key variables, namely:

- 1. Policy Standards and Objectives: Effective policies require clear and consistent standards of success. Quantitative indicators such as a reduction in poverty or an increase in the income of the poor, as well as qualitative indicators such as community satisfaction with the program, are the main references in the evaluation.
- 2. Resources: Policy implementation requires sufficient resources, both financial and non-financial. This factor includes an adequate budget, human resource capacity, and facilities that support program implementation.
- 3. Interorganizational Communication: Successful implementation depends on clear, consistent and integrated communication between the actors involved. Poor communication can lead to overlapping policies, unsynchronized data, and errors in targeting beneficiaries.
- 4. Characteristics of the Implementing Agency: Policy implementers must have technical competence, indepth understanding of the policy, and high commitment. Involving the private sector, civil society organizations, and local leaders can also increase the effectiveness of implementation.
- 5. Disposition or Attitude of Implementers: The positive attitude of policy implementers is very important to increase commitment and innovation in overcoming obstacles in the field. Conversely, apathy can reduce program effectiveness and reduce public trust.
- 6. Social, Economic and Political Condition: The external environment, such as political support, social norms and economic conditions, affects the success of implementation. Political support can speed up resource allocation, while responsiveness to local norms and culture can increase public acceptance of policies.

By using Van Meter and Van Horn's theory, this research aims to analyze the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Palembang city, identify barriers, and propose more effective strategies based on local needs. Poverty itself is defined as a condition in which a person is unable to fulfill basic needs such as food, clean water, sanitation, health, education, and shelter (World Bank, 1990). Then according to the Central Statistics Agency of Indonesia (2011), poverty is measured based on the poverty line, which is the minimum amount of rupiah needed for a person to meet food needs equivalent to 2,100 kcal per capita per day and basic non-food needs and in line with this, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2019) defines poverty as more than just a lack of income, but also involves limited access to basic services, economic opportunities, and participation in decision making

Then from the poverty situation, there are poverty reduction efforts which are defined as efforts made to reduce the number of poor people and improve the welfare of the community through various policies, programs, and strategies. The main objective of poverty reduction is to ensure that every individual has access to basic needs such as food, education, health, employment, and decent housing. This is in line with what was said by Indonesia's Bappenas (National Development Planning Agency, 2020) which states that poverty

reduction is an effort that is carried out in a systematic, planned, and sustainable manner to improve the living standards of the poor so that they can fulfill their basic needs independently and sustainably.

# Results and Discussion 1. Policy Size and Objectives

In the dimension of policy size and objectives, researchers asked questions about the background of the implementation of poverty reduction programs in Palembang city and the objectives that have not and have been achieved. Based on the results of the interview with the Head of the Control, Evaluation and Strategic Planning Division (BAPPEDA) office, it can be interpreted that the objectives of a policy are certainly very influential. As the decree issued by the mayor, this confirms that Palembang city has a desire to be able to follow this poverty reduction program as it has been well implemented by other cities in Indonesia. It is hoped that the community can begin to realize the problems that exist and how to form solutions, and can be used as a collaboration not just a formality to meet the assessment indicators and of course the main goal of poverty reduction is to make the entire population of the earth no poverty or no poverty in the following years. Poverty reduction policies in Palembang often lack measurable standards of success. For example, success standards can include quantitative indicators such as a decrease in the percentage of poverty or an increase in the average income of beneficiaries by 10% in one year, as well as qualitative indicators such as community satisfaction with the program or improved access to basic services such as education and health. For example, the Direct Cash Transfer program does not set indicators to evaluate its impact on long-term poverty reduction, making its success difficult to measure. Program implementation is plagued by limited resources, both financial and non-financial. Financially, program funding is often insufficient to reach all target groups, especially in remote areas. For example, the skills training budget was only able to cover 60% of the planned number of participants. On the non-financial side, the limited capacity of human resources is also an obstacle. Skills training conducted in several sub-districts only used local instructors with minimal facilities, making it less effective in improving community skills. In addition, the lack of supporting facilities such as appropriate training equipment and standardized materials also reduced the success of the program. Efforts to optimize resources can be made by collaborating with the private sector to provide additional funding, utilizing CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), or collaborating with professional training institutions to improve the quality of implementation. From the results of the analysis above, when measuring the success of the implementation of poverty reduction programs, of course, measuring the size and objectives of certain policies that must be achieved by the implementers of poverty reduction program policies so that the achievement of the program can be clearly measured.

## 2. Resources

The success of the policy implementation process is highly dependent on the ability to utilize available resources. Humans are one of the most important resources in determining the success of policy implementation. Qualified human resources are required at certain stages during the implementation process, depending on the work and expertise required for the predetermined policy. But when the capacity of these resources is zero, then public policy performance can hardly be expected to succeed. The implementation of poverty reduction programs in Palembang city is plagued by resource limitations that include budget, human resource capacity, and supporting infrastructure. The available budget is often insufficient to reach all target groups. For example, the allocation of funds for skills training is only able to cover around 60% of the target participants, leaving some poor people unable to access the benefits. In addition, the limited capacity of human resources, both in terms of quantity and quality, is a major obstacle. In some sub-districts, skills training is

only conducted by local instructors without adequate certification, using minimal facilities, such as cramped rooms and non-standard equipment. This condition has an impact on the low effectiveness of the program in improving community skills. To address this issue, the government can allocate a larger budget through cooperation with the private sector, such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, to support additional funding. In addition, collaboration with professional training institutions can improve the quality of training. For example, in Yogyakarta, a training program based on collaboration with a local university successfully improved people's technical skills in digital entrepreneurship, enabling them to market their products online. This step not only increases the success of the program, but also creates a long-term impact in the form of community economic independence. Looking at this phenomenon, it certainly needs special attention so that the target of reducing poverty requires a very well-prepared readiness from various aspects, one of which is the aspect of Human Resources (HR) readiness.

# 3. Communication Between Implementing Agencies

Based on interviews conducted with the head of the Palembang city government's Social Service, it can be concluded that communication in the implementation of poverty reduction programs in Palembang city is still not running optimally, there are still many things that need to be improved both from top to bottom and from bottom to top. Effective communication between organizations is a key element in the implementation of poverty reduction policies. Based on Van Meter and Van Horn's theory, ideal communication should include the delivery of information that is clear, consistent, and acceptable to all parties involved. The lack of coordination between the central, provincial, and municipal governments means that policies often overlap. Ideal communication in the implementation of poverty reduction programs should be transparent, integrated, and involve a clear feedback mechanism. Based on Van Meter and Van Horn's theory, this communication plays a key role in conveying policy objectives, distributing information, and aligning interorganizational actions. For example, the government can use technology-based communication systems such as integrated digital platforms to facilitate data and information exchange between the center, provinces, and cities. The platform can also be used to reduce data duplication, improve implementation efficiency, and ensure all parties understand their roles and responsibilities. This can reduce differences in beneficiary targeting and increase transparency in policy implementation. A concrete example of poor communication between implementing agencies in poverty reduction is poor coordination between agencies, for example, the social affairs office, the urban village office and the subs-district office in recording data on residents who are entitled to receive rice assistance. The data recapitulated by the sub-district office and the social service office ironically changes when it is received by the urban village office so that the rice given to residents can be misdirected.

# 4. Characteristics of the Implementing Agency

Based on the results of the interview with the head of the Seberang Ulu 1 sub-district of Palembang city, it can be interpreted that the implementation of the poverty reduction program has been carried out with a mechanism but the lack of understanding the existing guidelines in depth. In accordance with what Van Meter and Van Horn said, the characteristics of the implementing agent are then the center of attention where the performance of (public) policy implementation will be influenced by the correct characteristics and matched with the implementers. Similarly, public policy implementation seeks to change human behavior fundamentally, and radically. Hence the implementers of the project must have harsh characteristics and strictly adhere to legal rules and sanctions. The most ideal implementing agents in the implementation of this poverty reduction policy involve competent government officials, civil society organizations, local leaders, and private institutions. The presence of civil society organizations and local leaders can ensure that the policy

is in line with the needs of the community, while the private sector contributes through funds and additional training facilities. The ideal implementing agent should also have the technical capacity, understanding of the policy, and commitment to run the program with high accountability. Implementing agents' dispositions, including their attitudes and motivations towards the policy, greatly affect program implementation. Agents who have a positive attitude towards the policy tend to show higher commitment and be innovative in overcoming challenges in the field. Conversely, apathy or dissatisfaction with the policy can lead to suboptimal implementation, such as delays in aid distribution or mistargeting

A concrete example can be seen in the micro, small and medium enterprises training provision program in Kecamatan Ilir Barat. The training succeeded in increasing participants' turnover/income by 20%, but only after retraining officials who previously lacked understanding of the specific needs of micro, small and medium enterprises actors. This shows the importance of technical capacity and high motivation of the implementing agents to achieve optimal results. To overcome this constraint, measures such as: (1) Capacity building through regular and local needs-based training; (2) Incentives for implementing agents who perform well, such as awards or career advancement; (3) Periodic supervision to ensure the program is running as planned; and (4) Collaboration with the private sector or academia to provide stronger technical support. It can be concluded that the characteristics of the policy implementing agency must be addressed so that the goals that have been formulated can be achieved.

# 5. Disposition / Attitude or Tendency of Implementers

The disposition or attitude of implementing agents towards policy is one of the key variables in Van Meter and Van Horn's theory. A positive attitude towards the policy increases the successful implementation, as implementers will tend to be more committed and innovative in overcoming obstacles in the field. Conversely, a negative or apathetic attitude can reduce program effectiveness, hinder implementation, and affect public trust in the policy. Some challenges related to the disposition of implementers include: dissatisfaction with incentives. Some officials at the sub-district level reported a lack of appreciation for their performance, which resulted in low motivation to run the program optimally. There is also a lack of apparatus understanding of policies. Apparatus who do not receive adequate training often have a limited understanding of policy objectives and mechanisms, leading to inconsistent implementation. For example, in the micro, small and medium enterprises training program in Ilir Timur sub-district, the implementers initially did not understand the specific needs of the business actors so that the training provided was not relevant. After retraining and increasing the capacity of implementers, the program was able to increase participants' income by 20% in one year. Therefore, to improve disposition, several steps can be taken, including increasing incentives, regular training, supervision and feedback, and collaboration with academics and experts. By improving the disposition of implementing agents, the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Palembang city can become more effective, consistent, and targeted

# 6. Economic Social and Political Environment

The social and political environment plays an important role in influencing policy implementation. Strong political support from local leaders, such as mayors or department heads, can accelerate resource allocation and ensure program sustainability. Political support from local leaders accelerates resource allocation. For example, the Palembang mayor's commitment to supporting social assistance programs has accelerated budget disbursement for direct assistance to pandemic-affected communities. In addition, the mayor's policy of promoting participation-based development has increased community trust in government programs. Unfavorable social, economic and political conditions can cause policy implementation failure.

Therefore, policy implementation efforts to achieve goals must pay attention to conducive external environmental conditions. On the other hand, social norms such as the spirit of mutual assistance have great potential to increase community participation in empowerment programs. For example, in micro, small and medium enterprises development programs in several sub-districts, communities voluntarily work together to provide training venues and support participants with raw materials. This spirit not only strengthens solidarity, but also ensures the sustainability of the program by involving more elements of the community

From an interview with the secretary of the Seberang Ulu 1 sub-district of Palembang, poverty reduction is often unsuccessful because it is influenced by various social, economic, and political factors that are not conducive. Here are some of the main reasons why this happens:

- 1. **Economic inequality** (Unequal distribution of wealth means that access to economic resources (such as education, health, and employment) is limited for the poor and resources are often controlled by the elite, making aid programs ineffective in reducing inequality)
- 2. **Political instability** (Political conflicts and changing policies make poverty reduction programs inconsistent and corruption in government hampers the allocation of funds for social programs, so aid does not reach the needy.
- 3. **Economic policies** that do not favor the poor (Economic policies that favor large investors and the formal sector often neglect the informal sector where many poor people work and misdirected subsidies and social budget cuts can worsen the conditions of vulnerable groups.
- 4. **Education and health inequalities** (Limited access to quality education makes it difficult for the poor to upgrade their skills and get better jobs and expensive and unequal health services make them more vulnerable to illness and loss of labor productivity)
- 5. **Social and cultural factors** (A cycle of poverty that is passed on from generation to generation due to lack of access to resources that can improve living standards and social norms such as early marriage and gender discrimination can also exacerbate poverty conditions in some communities).

Successful poverty reduction requires more inclusive policies, political stability, and a commitment to transparency and equity.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted by researchers on the implementation of poverty reduction programs in Palembang city which is analyzed using the theory of policy implementation from Van Meter and Van Horn (1975), it provides the following conclusions: Poverty alleviation in Palembang city faces significant challenges even though various policies have been implemented. This poverty is influenced by various things, including cultural factors and regional character. The COVID-19 pandemic is also another factor that worsens poverty conditions, especially due to economic restrictions. Data from BPS shows a fluctuating trend of poverty in this city, with an increase in the percentage and number of poor people in the 2017-2021 period, although there was a decrease in 2022 and 2023

The main obstacles in poverty reduction include inconsistencies in data between agencies, limited resources, low community participation, and ineffective communication between implementing agencies. In addition, policies that are often not tailored to local needs reduce their effectiveness. The success of the program is strongly influenced by the commitment and capacity of implementing agencies, political support, and responsiveness to local culture. Strong support from various parties, including the private sector and civil society, is needed to create sustainable and relevant programs. This research suggests the need for an integration model based on collaboration between stakeholders with local approaches to overcome existing

barriers. The use of an integrated digital platform, improving the quality of human resources, and a local culture-based approach are strategic steps in supporting the effectiveness of poverty reduction policies in Palembang city.

## Suggestion

The suggestion for further research is that researchers can study more deeply by analyzing policies, programs, and implementation factors in more detail and associated with other scientific aspects and with changes in phenomena that occur in the following year so that the research conducted can be more optimal and different from this research.

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