

Socio-Economic Impacts of The COVID-19 Pandemic: The Case of Bandung City

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Abstract: *The COVID-19 pandemic has had a wide impact on various sectors of people's lives, including the social and economic sectors. This study aims to analyze the social and economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, by taking a case study in the city of Bandung. This research was conducted using qualitative methods with data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and documentation studies. The results of this study found that the COVID-19 pandemic harmed the economy of the people of Bandung because many were unemployed and many became new poor citizens. While from the social aspect, a prolonged COVID-19 pandemic will lead to potential conflicts if the basic needs of the community are not met properly. The implication is that the Bandung City Government needs to expand its social protection program to help the poor, both new and existing ones. But the positive aspect of this pandemic is that it raises the collective awareness of the community to help each other, thus creating social solidarity among the people.*

Keywords: *pandemic, COVID-19, social distancing, physical distancing, PSBB*

Introduction

The world is currently being hit by anxiety and extreme chaos caused by the emergence of a major disaster, namely a new Coronavirus outbreak known as Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). In early December 2019, a new Coronavirus appeared in Wuhan, Hubei, China (Li et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2020; Prem et al., 2020; Adhikari et al., 2020). Further development, COVID-19 has spread rapidly throughout the world (Singh & Adhikari, 2020).

Never before in the history of human civilization has a virus spread so quickly and aggressively to almost all parts of the world in only about four

months since it first appeared in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, in early December 2019 (Ansori, 2020).

The World Health Organization later declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic on March 11, 2020, ago. COVID-19 pandemic is a major problem that is being faced in more than 200 countries in the world, including Indonesia (WHOa, 2020). Indonesia has become one of the countries in the world exposed to the COVID-19 virus since it was first detected on March 2, 2020.

President of the Republic of Indonesia Joko Widodo announced the first (and second) positive case of being infected with the new Coronavirus, or

COVID-19 in Indonesia on March 2, 2020. It was later discovered that two people (a 31-year-old woman and her 64-year-old mother) knew of their status infected from the news and that the President announced the matter to the public before health officials notified them directly (Almuttaqi, 2020).

Indonesia is one of the countries with the highest mortality rate due to COVID-19 with a figure reaching 8.9% at the end of March 2020. Cases of death due to COVID-19 in Indonesia are even higher when compared to China with only 4%. Though China is a country where COVID-19 was first discovered (Setiati & Azwar, 2020).

The high mortality rate due to COVID-19 is suspected because health facilities in Indonesia are not ready to deal with patients infected with COVID-19. Massive preparation should be taken seriously at the beginning of a disease that spreads in the People's Republic of China (Horton, 2020). Whereas before (Wu et al., 2020), has warned all parties since early January 2020 that COVID-19 could become a global epidemic and suggested that a readiness plan must be carried out by ensuring the supply of personal medicines, personal protective equipment (PPE), and human resources needed to deal with the global outbreak.

The Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergency Program then advised Indonesia to have a comprehensive strategy including strengthening the health system (WHOb, 2020). Responding to the 2019 Corona Virus Disease pandemic (COVID-19), the government of the Republic of Indonesia began to impose restrictions on social distancing (keeping social distance, avoiding crowds), and physical distancing (keeping distance between people at least 1.8 meters) from the beginning of March 2020 (Hadiwardoyo, 2020), even some regions have implemented Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). In the absence

of a vaccine, social distance has emerged as the most adopted strategy for mitigation and control (Ferguson et al., 2020).

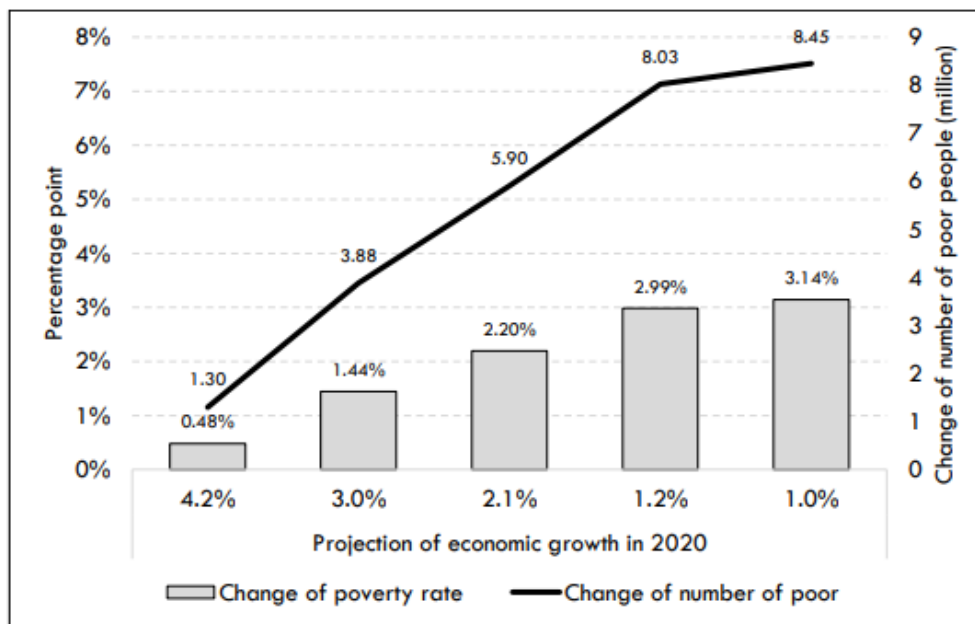
The spread of COVID-19 is very dangerous and has wide impacts in various sectors, such as social and economic sectors (Hartati & Susanto, 2020; Barro et al., 2020; McKibbin & Fernando, 2020). The prolonged COVID-19 pandemic and the policies adopted by the government have drastically reduced the activities and movements of people in big cities, including the city of Bandung. Even worse, the policy has paralyzed the social and economic activities of the community, where people cannot work and are encouraged to be in their respective homes.

Research on the COVID-19 pandemic in the world and even in Indonesia has been widely carried out. However, throughout the investigator's search, there have been no studies that have focused on the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the social and economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, by taking a case study in Bandung as one of the regions with the highest number of COVID-19 positive patients in West Java Province.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative method which is a research method that seeks to uncover the universal essence of phenomena experienced personally by a group of individuals (Esterberg, 2002; Taylor et al., 2015; Cresswell & Cresswell, 2017; Moleong, 2017). This study seeks to explore in-depth the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Bandung. The research data collection was carried out through observation, interview, and documentation study techniques. Data analysis was carried out with three analysis processes such as

Figure 2
Changes in Poverty Rate and Number of Poor People in Bandung City



Source: Sumner et al., 2020)

Figure 2 above shows the changes in poverty levels and the number of poor people in the city of Bandung. From Figure 2 above it can be seen from the amount of poverty and the growing number of poor people from the Covid-19 pandemic. This projection can continue to increase if the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, especially the city of Bandung continues for a long time which causes disruption of economic activity and increased economic growth.

The economic recession that occurred will encourage many people to fall into poverty, including residents of the city of Bandung. A study that included 138 developing countries and 26 high-income countries found that even in the mildest scenario, COVID-19 could impoverish an additional 85 million people (Sumner et al., 2020).

The decline in income from these elements of society will create layers of society that are very vulnerable to effects of COVID-19, both medically, economically, and socially. Those belonging to a weak economy are different from white-collar workers who

are unable to fully carry out social distancing because they have to continue working. Finally, they become the party most potentially exposed to the virus. The implication is that the Bandung City Government needs to expand its social protection program to help the new poor in addition to the existing poor.

Based on the Integrated Social Welfare Data (DTKS) integrated through the Social Service and Poverty Prevention (Dinsosnangkis) of the City of Bandung, the number of poor people in the City of Bandung is 137,000 Family Heads (KK). While the number of new poor people in the city of Bandung due to being affected by coronaviruses from non-DTKS reached 156,125 households, that number has the potential to change (Early, 2020). If this pandemic continues, the number of poor people will continue to grow.

Head of the Bandung City Manpower Office, Arief Syaifudin said that until April 22, 2020, 52 companies in the city of Bandung were affected by Covid-19. Also, based on online data collection, 3,396 people experienced termination of

employment, while 5,804 others were temporarily laid off (Batee, 2020).

The widespread and rapid spread of the coronavirus caused the government to react by limiting mobility and community interaction. Factories and offices are closed, schools are closed, restaurants do not accept food and drink on-site, and so on. All activities that make people gather are taboo. On the one hand, this social distancing has saved lives. Proven new cases increasingly show a downward trend. But on the other hand, social distancing causes the economy to be suspended. As a result, millions of people lost their jobs, becoming 'victims' of Termination of Employment (FLE).

While nationally, the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia Sri Mulyani noted that the COVID-19 outbreak could result in up to 3.78 million people falling into poverty and 5.2 million people losing their jobs (Gorbiano, 2020). In a more optimistic scenario, Sri Mulyani estimates that 1.1 million people have fallen into poverty while 2.9 million have lost their jobs.

To overcome the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Indonesia has strengthened and issued a social safety net policy. But the programs that have been launched are still inadequate. The reason is that the government has not yet made a cash assistance policy that is believed to be most needed by the poor, the poor, and those affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Even if there is cash assistance, the amount is too small and the targets are not evenly distributed.

Through Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 1 of 2020 concerning State Financial Policy and Financial System Stability for Handling Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and/or in the Context of Facing Threats that Endanger the National Economy and/or Financial System Stability, the Indonesian government undertakes efforts to manage

health, manage social impacts and save the national economy. Health care is focused on efforts to cure corona patients by increasing the health budget. The agenda for handling social impacts are focused on the implementation of social safety nets. Meanwhile, economic recovery is directed at providing fiscal, credit, and monetary incentives.

In response to that, the Bandung City Government has prepared a budget of Rp. 298 billion to handle the coronavirus problem, with details of Rp. 75 billion for health care, Rp. 5 billion operational task force. While the remaining Rp. 218 billion for social security nets. However, the current budget conditions are inversely proportional to the non-DTKS data which is inflated. While the sources of Bandung City Government revenue from various tax sectors experienced a drastic decline (Early, 2020).

The central and regional governments also seem to be in a frenzy in preparing an adequate social safety program for residents with vulnerable economies because of the growing number, while the budget is very limited. If this situation continues, the possibility of frustration from the community will accumulate to disappointment which can explode into social conflict. A sense of frustration in the community if not addressed properly by the government will lead to the emergence of violence if basic needs cannot be fulfilled (Webel & Galtung, 2007). This is something that must be considered especially by the government. Fulfillment of basic rights of citizens, whether it concerns clothing-food-board, economic rights, or the right to get jobs and health insurance, is the core of efforts to avoid violence or riots.

The problem of meeting basic needs is the main trigger that drives people to protest and commit violence. The concept of relative deprivation explained that people assume that they

have basic rights attached to him. On the other hand, de facto, they cannot fulfill all of these rights because they are obstructed by the social structure that exists within them. The gap between the two, or when "hope" does not match "reality", will open up opportunities for dissatisfaction and protests (Gurr, 1971).

The quarantine situation which was the impact of the spread of COVID-19 caused social ties in the community especially in the city of Bandung to become tenuous. The PSBB policy uses the principle of distancing, in fact not only driving people away physically but also socially. Society has unwittingly been trapped in a very significant physical and social distance.

Going forward, widening social and physical distance is believed to be something normal. The human condition when the COVID-19 outbreak is completed will increasingly emphasize the function of technology in mediating human interaction. Direct human interaction will then be replaced by indirect interaction. This is combined with the presence of new civilization challenges, ranging from the threat of government oversight via technology, increased government control over public privacy, to the phenomenon of loss of global solidarity in the face of emerging threats (Harari, 2020).

Widen social distance in society then raises the issue of the emergence of "new normal" (Naughton, 2020). This condition is considered a miniature pattern of community interaction in the future. As a result, there is concern that these "new normal" conditions will lead us to new forms of conflict. Conflict basically will occur in community interaction. As long as the community is related to each other, the conflict will always be in it.

However, the positive social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is to raise public collective awareness as

Durkheim's idea (Sari, 2020). In a situation of collective attachment, the COVID-19 pandemic provides a "new structure" that makes humans have to work collectively to ensure changes in collective behavior as the only way to break the chain of the spread of this virus.

Various health institutions have concluded that the reduction in the spread of the COVID-19 virus is highly dependent on changing the behavior of all humans to wash their hands, wear masks when interacting, carry out their quarantine, and maintain physical distance. If behavioral changes do not occur collectively, the consequences will not only affect the death and trauma of those left behind, but also the various economic, social, and mental health lives of the people.

In this difficult situation, we are witnessing a movement that has emerged from civil society to encourage widespread changes in community behavior to break the chain of transmission of the COVID-19 virus. The actions of washing hands, wearing masks, for example, are actions that must be carried out by each individual but require collective encouragement to ensure each individual does so. The suspicion that others might not change their behavior encourages various parties to facilitate efforts to change the expected behavior.

This movement was not only initiated by organized groups such as Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and community social organizations but also carried out by various individuals and groups across classes. An example is the movement to assist with tools to prevent transmissions such as masks, washing soap, hand sanitizers, public washing rooms, and food assistance. Many NGOs and community social organizations are responsive in moving to provide health equipment for the public.

Another collective movement is in the form of disseminating information

about behavior changes to keep a distance, wash hands properly, wear masks, and prevent people from gathering. Various NGOs make posters and visual forms on how to wash hands properly. Creative and innovative individual groups make YouTube videos encouraging individuals to wear masks, stay at home, and how to wash their hands properly. Religious leaders also move to explain the importance of worship at home. The social media timeline is filled with statuses that invite people not to think selfishly, that decisions are taken (related to worshipping outside, gathering, not wearing masks, not washing hands) will have an impact on others.

In addition to examples of two movements that were carried out massively by civil society both organized groups and at the individual and community level, there are still many other examples of movements such as raising funds for the provision of personal protective equipment or medical PPE, creating information databases, opening online consultations, raising information not to exclude those who are exposed, information about false news about co-19 to prevent panic in the community, and various other movements. All this indicates the seeds and the strengthening of awareness to act based on the common good (collective).

While from the Government side, the City Government of Bandung can emulate South Korea, where South Korea is one of the most successful countries in handling COVID-19 worldwide. The key to South Korea's success lies in the government's rapid and simultaneous response to mass testing and isolation of affected areas. All regions and hospitals in South Korea also simultaneously open themselves to COVID-19 patients who come of course with adequate preparation (Fleming, 2020). One of the keys to the right response from South

Korea is that the government and its citizens have a very high level of trust in each other. The South Korean government believes that its citizens will cooperate with their appeals.

On the other hand, South Koreans also believe that the government will handle their cases well. The emergence of a high level of trust from South Koreans towards their government also stems from the fact that they have managed to maintain the country's economic condition well. The South Korean government has succeeded in continuing to meet the basic needs of its citizens without exception. As a result, there are hardly any South Koreans who have experienced a drastic decline in the economy as in other countries.

The high level of trust in the government caused South Koreans who suffer from COVID-19 to voluntarily come to the hospital to get treatment. Churches and business centers in the affected areas voluntarily stop their activities even before being asked by the government (Jo, 2020). Our government and society should be able to learn from the South Korea case in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic so that the death rate from COVID-19 can be minimized and the social and economic situation of the community maintained.

Conclusion

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the world is not only a problem in the medical realm alone. More than that, the COVID-19 Pandemic has become a social and economic problem in the community. Shocks in the social system are mostly negative impacts of economic shocks due to the implementation of the Physical Distancing, Social Distancing, and PSBB policies. But the COVID-19 pandemic has also raised public awareness and created social solidarity in the COVID-19 Pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has

emerged as an important role for civil society to fill the government gap in response to this national and global disaster.

The COVID-19 pandemic situation requires the active role of the government as a party that has the resources to provide social security for its citizens. In this situation, the government should ideally act as an anchor capable of maintaining the equilibrium of the social system in its territory through adequate measures to uphold order while maintaining the livelihoods of its people. If the government cannot respond to this situation appropriately, it will foster potential conflicts, both vertical and horizontal.

About Author

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