

ROLE OF RESEARCH/ACADEMIC IN POLICY FORMULATION

M.R. Khairul Muluk
Suhartono Winoto

Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia

JAM

16, 2

Received, November 2017

Revised, December 2017

March 2018

Accepted, May 2018

Abstract: Research and development have a strategic role in formulating and implementing the policy. Research and development is one important step in order to produce a new idea. This article has a purpose produce a picture the existence of the difference between the point of view of academics with the point of view of a practitioner in formulating and implementing the policy. This article produced based on data collection started from focus group discussion and seminar. The results of analysis from focus group discussion, strengthened by seminar-seminar both at the local, national and international. The topic of the study subjects of many times successfully identified obstacles the role of academics and analysis the role of academics and the benefit of involvement academics. A new idea produced by academics cannot always directly applied by a practitioner. Any different and gap between the results of the study with the application of policy is caused by several factors. The differences that appear among others the different the time, different conception, different audience, different motivation and different consequences. There are 3 (three) way academics in influencing policy, through policy, the policy of research and development, and education policy and training (Adam, 2014). There are 3 (three) the key to strengthen the role of academics in the formulation policy among others network, reputation, and expectations.

Keywords: Research and development, academics, practitioner, policy.



Journal of Applied
Management (JAM)
Volume 16 Number 2,
June 2018
Indexed in Google Scholar

Research is one form of activities undertaken by researchers/academics to generate new ideas or prove a truth. The results of the study are expected to have wide benefits not only for the researchers themselves but also have widespread use for both governments, private, and community. Government policy in an effort to improve people's life degree requires multistakeholder synergy. As the driving force of the implementation of the State, the

government has the main duty to provide all the needs of the community. The biggest challenge is the limited funds and human resources, while on the other hand, the needs of the community continue to grow. In order to optimize funds and human resources, the Government is required to move more effectively and efficiently. The government becomes very careful in every action. This is because any action of the Government whether done or not done can produce consequences in the future. Government as a practitioner indirectly requires experts in the field in order to make the right decision and have positive consequences in the future. Therefore, all actions taken by the Government must have thought and analysis mature.

Correspondence Author:
M.R. Khairul Muluk,
Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia,
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21776/ub.jam.2018.016.02.11>

Ratzinger-Sakel (2015), describes the gap between practitioners and researchers on the basis of theme/topic and focus of attention. In the dimensions Ratzinger-Sakel produces, the practitioner's domain only focuses on the practical side, while the researcher's domain focuses on themes and updates. The two different domains contained slices containing matching themes and focus of attention. In other words, one way of reducing the gap between researchers and practitioners is by matching themes and the focus of attention. Meanwhile, another opinion expressed by Harper (2016), on how to minimize the research gap is the commitment and mutual agreement through the MoU (Memorandum of understanding). This MoU guides governance, goal setting, cooperative activities, and evaluation of resource allocation in partnerships.

Involvement of academics in policy formulation has an important function. Collaboration between practitioners and academics is expected to generate useful and applicable policies. The ability of academics in mastering certain disciplines becomes one of the practitioner's consultative areas in stepping and carrying out its duties. Practitioners do not have to stand alone and think about everything related to policy. Practitioners should be able to maximize the role of academics as a producer of new ideas and as experts in their field.

There are 3 (three) major roles of academics in influencing policy, that is through policy, Research and development policy, and education and training policy (Adam, 2014). These three roles will not be realized without the beginning of three key academic roles. There are 3 (three) main keywords in an effort to strengthen the role of academics in the formulation of policies such as networking, reputation, and expectations. These three main keywords can be an indication of how far the role of academics in influencing the implementation of a policy. The three main keywords affect each other. The network will not be able to wake up without a reputation owned by academics. Likewise, expectations will not be achieved without a reputation based on the competence and certain skill of an academician.

METHOD

This article aims to generate the identification of the obstacles of academic roles, the role of academics in influencing policies and the benefits of academic engagement. In order to obtain and produce data, the first approach is done through focus group discussions and seminars. In the implementation of the focus group, discussion generated some important points related to the role of academics in policy formulation. Focus group discussions conducted several times generate some thoughts. The thoughts generated in the focus group discussion are strengthened by the holding of several seminars at the local, national to international level discussing the same topic. The results of the seminar strengthen the argument that results in the identification of obstacles to the role of academics, the role of academics in influencing policy and the benefits of academic engagement. Furthermore, the second approach is done with empirical studies that want to identify the existence and analysis of academic point of view on practitioners, and vice versa practitioner's perspective on academics.

BARRIERS TO THE ROLE OF ACADEMICS IN POLICY FORMULATION

An academic often has difficulty in applying research results. Access to open-ended research is not correlated with access to the application of research results. Indirectly shows that the usefulness of every research result in the implementation of the policy is still small and limited. For example, the Faculty of Administrative Sciences Brawijaya University in one year can produce product knowledge reaches approximately 1000 scientific papers. However, out of the less than a thousand scientific papers produced per year, not many can be implemented into a new policy or new idea in the Government. Although the role of academics in the process of formulating a policy in Government has a strategic role, not all research and development results can be easily implemented.

Competence and intellectuality of academics are necessary for determining and reading the di-

rection of policy and the consequences of future risks. Studies and research results are needed to form the basis of policy formulation. Ideally from every research and development result can be used as government reference in formulating every policy. Government as a user is often faced with various regulations so that in formulating a policy is not as easy as imagined. Nasution (2008) argues that there are several factors that hamper partnerships are institutional, human and financial resources. To overcome these obstacles the government should be able to strengthen institutions, increase human resource capacity and financial strengthening.

The relevance and quality of research findings are central to the obstacles of academic roles in the policy formulation process. The quality of research results in the academic world is often judged from the publication of articles in indexed international journals. In terms of practitioners, assessing the quality of research results is often indicated by how much influence or impact the research has on government and society. The lack of relevance between research results and user needs (the government) has become one of the obstacles of academics playing a role in policy formulation. Relevance and quality of research results become the basic requirement that the quality of research is not always capable of being accommodated by the government as a policy.

The budgetary struggle and the power to fund the policy review are the next obstacles. Implement-

ing a policy review is not an easy matter, the complexity that academics face in preparing policy reviews correlates with financing needs. The involvement of various experts in formulating policy studies is necessary to produce a comprehensive and applicable policy review. Therefore, policy review activities require a low cost. The budget constraints managed by the government are one of the obstacles in financing a policy review. With the amount of budget required, the willingness of leaders to be the main reason for the implementation of policy review activities.

The next obstacle that arises is the lack of networking and personal contact. The network is one of the opening gates of partnership and cooperation between practitioners and academics. The established partnerships will create and develop networks. The reality of academics has a limited network, so often the results of research and development are only beneficial to the world of academics alone has no impact on government and society. Building a network is not an easy matter. Therefore, academics in demand not only able to generate new ideas and research, but also must be able to market the results of research and ideas.

TYPOLOGY OF DIFFERENCES BUILDER-EXECUTOR POLICIES AND ACADEMICS

Differences between points of view maker-executive policies (practitioners) with academics are

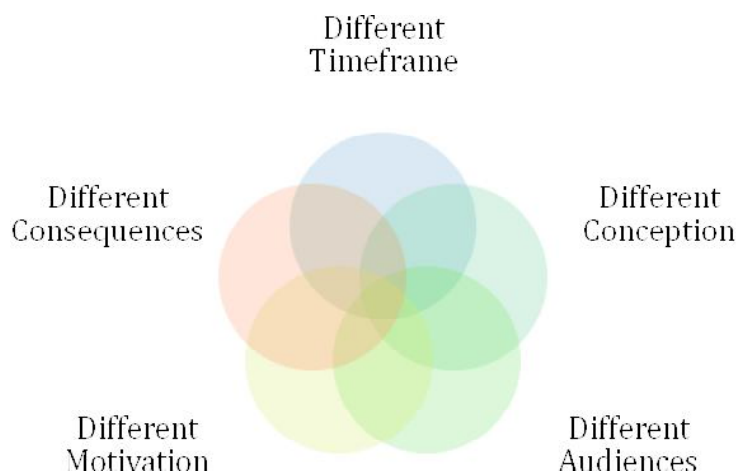


Figure 1 Typology of Differences Builder-Executor Policies and Academics

often difficult to reconcile. The practitioner's perspective tends to empirical reality, while the academic perspective is more theoretical. Differences in perspective affect the results of research and development that is not necessarily relevant and in accordance with the needs of practitioners. These conditions resulted in a typology of differences between policy-makers and academics. The typology produces five differentiating factors.

The Difference of Time Frame is the first component of the difference between practitioners and academics. Different time frames between practitioners and academics are due to many things. Practitioners always work according to the rules. The rules govern the time frame of work as well as when to plan, when to carry out and when to carry out accountability. While academics in the rules of the rules there is no time to bind when doing research and generate a new idea. Therefore, academics are more dynamic in their sphere of movement, unlike the practitioners who are obliged to follow the time frame of the applicable regulations.

Furthermore, different conceptions between practitioners and academics. The conceptual distinction between policy-makers and academics is often debatable. The conception of a new idea for practitioners is often difficult to accept. Often change is perceived as something negative and difficult to gain trust before looking at examples of implementation and success. Instead, academics consider the new idea to produce something new and have a better impact than before. Academics think the new idea is a process of improvement. The concept of understanding of practitioners assesses an innovation intended to solve problems while academics have a broader view of where innovation is designed not only to solve problems but also to add value to new knowledge and ideas. So often the views of practitioners are more pragmatic in seeing a new idea.

The next distinguishing component is the audience. Policymakers have substantial duties and pressures from the community. As a regulator, practitioners are required to meet all the needs and expectations of the community. Unlike the case of academics who have no direct responsibility to the com-

munity. Academics become independent actors compared to practitioners who have various rules. Any decision-making will have a major impact on society. While academics, research and development results have an impact on the development of science with the majority of consumers are those who are also in the same field.

Furthermore, the differentiating components are different motivations. An academic with an inherent basic task has a great motivation to keep generating new ideas and innovations. Unlike the case of a motivated practitioner not to generate new ideas and implement new policies, but rather to carry out the tasks as well as possible according to the rules. Often these conditions plunge practitioners into the comfort zone and kill off the creative minds that can not develop. The greatest motivation of a practitioner is to carry out basic tasks and functions. While academics have great motivation to be able to produce new papers & new ideas. The difference in motivation is certainly not independent of the differences in duties and functions of practitioners and academics.

The final component of the distinction between academia and practitioners is the different consequences. When viewed from the resulting consequences, practitioners have greater burden and consequences. Wrong decision-making and policy formulation will have a certain impact on society. Unlike the case of academics, errors and failures in the formulation of new ideas have no significant impact. In any academic world, the results of a study can be followed up with new research. In academic point of view, there is never a fixed nature. All the results of both successful and failed research will continue to evolve over time. In addition, the dynamic mindset of academics considers errors and failures to be part of the process of improvement so that it is not uncommon for research and development of an academician to complete enough once to achieve the goal.

LEVEL OF ACADEMIC RELATIONSHIPS WITH PRACTITIONERS

The partnership or partnership that exists between academia and practitioners has different lev-



Source: Robert, 2004
Figure 2 Relationship

els. The level of academic relationships with practitioners shows how much influence is generated and resources empowered. The relationship of academics with practitioners becomes one of the strategic relationships to support their respective roles and functions. Robert (2004), conveyed that partnership is a pattern of relationship where there is commitment together to achieve a certain success and purpose. Under no circumstances, the partnership allows for unity in the completion of the task. The partnership process that takes place between an acknowledgment and a practitioner includes all kinds of organized consultation processes under contractual agreements.

The related picture of the level of academic relationship with the practitioner shows the characteristics of each level differently. Each level has its own characteristics corresponding to the resources and contributions incurred. Networking is the first level of partnership between academia and practitioners. Networking has a simpler characteristic than other relationships. It is said to be simpler because the characteristics of networking are the exchange of information to achieve mutual benefits. Networking has a limited level of commitment and a level of trust (Robert, 2014). Networking is often limited and focuses on certain issues. These limits result in the restriction of shared resources.

Coordinating is the second level of partnership between academia and practitioners. The coordinating level is above the networking level. The characteristics generated are slightly more complex than networking. The coordinating process in addition to the exchange of information to achieve mutual benefits can also change the activities together to achieve common goals. Making access to services or resources easier to use is the main focus (Robert, 2004).

Cooperating is the third grade of the partnership between academics and practitioners. Cooperating levels indicate that partnerships will be far more committed where there is resource sharing to achieve common goals. The sharing of resources creates a high level of trust between the partners. Cooperating levels that focus primarily on resources also share risk, responsiveness, and reward (Robert, 2004). It shows a higher level of commitment than the level of relationship below.

Finally, collaborating is the fourth level of partnership between academia and practitioners. At the level of collaborating already shows a high level of commitment and trust that the level below. In addition to resource sharing conducted between parties, collaborating can also increase other capacities to achieve the same goals (Robert, 2004). In other words, the level of collaborating not only pur-

sues the achievement of shared goals but also the sharing of resources and knowledge for capacity building.

THE ROLE OF ACADEMICS IN INFLUENCING POLICY

The existence of academics as one of the actors in influencing policy is very strategic. Academics are seen as intellectuals who have more ability in their field. Such ability can be utilized by practitioners in helping and supporting the implementation of its activities. Academics with a qualified educational background are expected to generate a solute thinking from every problem that exists. There are 3 (three) major roles of academics in influencing policy, that is through policy, Research and development policy, and education and training policy (Adam, 2014).

First, the result of the formulated policy is the result of a series of review processes undertaken by academics. The policy becomes one of the outputs in research and development activities. In generating output, academics must have a campus network. The campus network can improve communication and expand information. Reputation is also one factor in building a campus network. Another consequence of a reputation is the national education and research network. Recognition of scholarship can begin to wake up from these networks. So is the case with a consortium of academics, becoming one of the important groups in influencing policy. A consortium of academics with high levels of trust and acknowledgment creates a massive influence in policy.

Second, research and development become a way of academics contributing to influencing policy outcomes. Policy review activities become one of the academic efforts to generate and formulate new ideas that can be continued as policy. The dissemination of new ideas the results of research is a very important role. In order to influence the user, new ideas of the research result should be disseminated. Dissemination of information becomes one way to influence users to apply research and development results. Indirectly, the dissemination of information

and new ideas the results of the study suggestions to impact on user reactions.

Third, education policy becomes an important key role of academics in policy formulation and implementation. With education, practitioners will directly need the views and scholarship of academics. Education on policy can change the view of practitioners to be more comprehensive not just practical. Knowledge and scholarship about education policy have a big influence. This is because practitioners will really understand the stages of the policy not only in terms of practice but also in terms of theoretical. Policy education and training are one of the main ways academics play a role in formulating and implementing policies. Academics play a role should not directly jump to research and develop a policy, but academics can also play without direct plunge. This is done by way of education and training policies towards practitioners and users.

ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT BENEFITS

The Engagement of academics is often limited and unsustainable. Yet if able to understand the situation and conditions, the inclusion of academics on an ongoing basis can ease the practice of practitioners and of course the resulting policy can be much better and comprehensive. The sustainability in question is the synergy effort between practitioners and academics is not only limited to the planning phase, but also up to the implementation and evaluation stage.

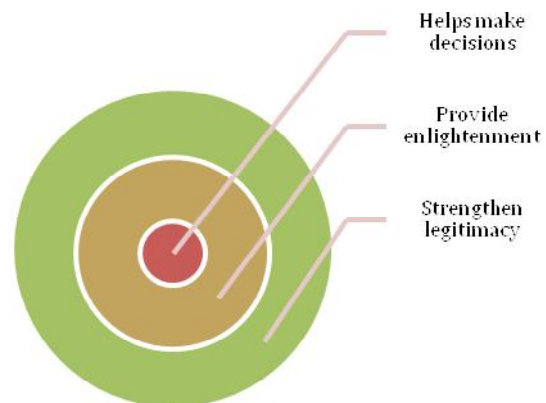


Figure 3 Academic Involvement in Policy

There are 3 (three) academic engagements in policy, which help decision-making, enlighten and strengthen legitimacy. Overall all three engagements lead to consultative functions. Academics as someone who has more understanding of something is entitled to get the function. Academics can assist practitioners in making decisions because academics have the knowledge and understanding of what the practitioners will decide. Academic recognition

certainly cannot be separated from the reputation they have. Practitioners will not find it easy to solve a problem for academics who have no reputation in their field. Furthermore, the most important involvement of academics in policy is to create and strengthen legitimacy. Academics who are judged to be known will have a profound effect on a policy application.

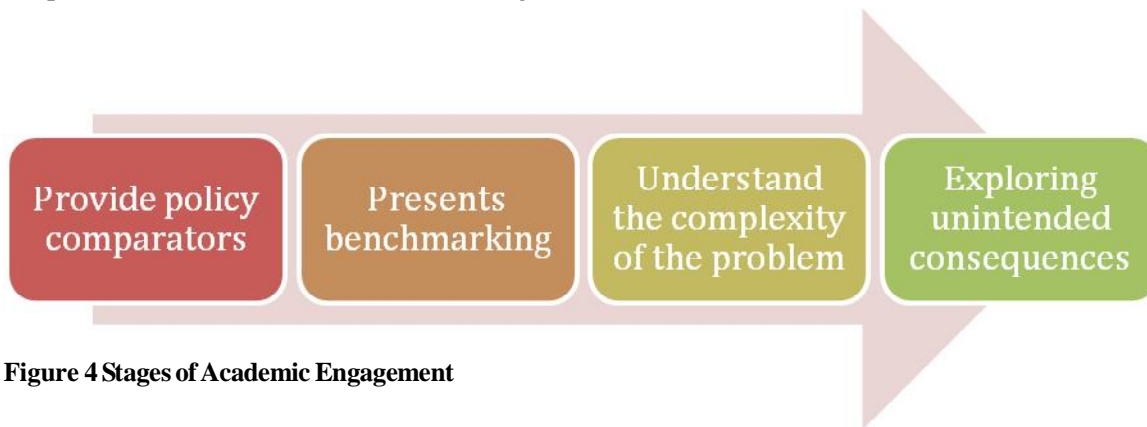


Figure 4 Stages of Academic Engagement

Providing enlightenment in the policy process is one of the functions of academia. There are several stages in which academics engage in enlightenment. First, provide a benchmark policy. Comparisons are needed to assess the positives of a policy. This policy comparison process yields an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of a policy. The process allows for an alternative policy. Second, presents benchmarking. Benchmarking presentation is necessary to know the comparative product of the resulting policy. By presenting benchmarking, users will be much more understanding and have a picture of a policy. Third, understand the complexity of the problem. Problem identification is done at each start of the formulation phase. Recognizing the existing condition to pursue the priority of the problem becomes one of the important stages in formulating the policy. Fourth, explore the unintended consequences. Such conditions must be taken into account by academics and practitioners. The consequences arising from the implementation of the policy should be well thought out. The views and experience of academics are needed to analyze the condition.

CONCLUSION

Empirically, between academics and practitioners have two different points of view. Academics see themselves as rational, objective and open to new ideas. An academic morally has no burden when a result of his research fails, it is different from the more prudent practitioners and policymakers in applying new ideas. Policy practitioners see themselves as responsible, action-oriented and pragmatic.

A different point of view is that academics see the creator, the implementer of the policy as an action-oriented and interest-oriented person making it difficult to accept empirical facts and new ideas. The academic mindset and movement that can be said to be more dynamic are one of the advantages over the more static policy practitioners. On the other hand, policy practitioners judge academics as naïve, full of concepts far from reality.

If based on these conditions, the key to the relationship between academia and practitioners is on networking, reputation, and expectations. Both parties explicitly point out that each other actually needs each other and is able to support its performance

but it is limited by the existence of networking, reputation, and expectations. The vast network of academics with practitioners is one of the impacts of the academic's reputation of expertise. So that can be ascertained, practitioners will not play games and select origin in choosing academics to be able to help solve the problem. In addition, there are also expectations of each party. Differences of expectation certainly occur where both parties have a different work domain. Often expectations of both parties are difficult to put together.

REFERENCES

- Adam L. 2014. *Policy Paper: What is happening in ICT Sector in Ethiopia*. ResearchGate Publication.
- Howard, Patricia B., et al. 2016. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, Vol 0, No. 0 (September): pp 1–1 © 2016 Elsevier Inc.
- Maskur, Ali, et al. 2012. *Cooperative Development in Thailand: An Alternative Approach for Cooperative Development. Proceeding: Community, Sustainable, and Development*. UB Press and Faculty of Administrative Science University of Brawijaya.
- Robert, Joan M. 2004. *Alliances, Coalitions, and Partnership*. New Society Publisher.
- Ratzinger-Sakel, Nicole VS, and Glen L.Gray. 2015. *Moving Toward a Learned Profession and Purposeful Integration: Quantifying the Gap between the Academic and Practice Communities in Auditing and Identifying New Research Opportunities*. Journal of Accounting Literature: University of Florida, Fisher School of Accounting. Published by Elsevier Ltd.