

Intervention of Public Policy on Behavior Change of Street Children in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Poverty has a contribution to increase the number of street children then, street children are minors who maintain their lives on the streets. Many children stay in the street to make a living every day. Because they are the country's most important resource, children, the policy and investment decisions made today will have significant implications for the country's future. The aim of this analysis is to analyze the implementation of public policy on behaviour change of street children in Indonesia. The method used in this analysis is Narrative Policy Analysis (NPA). NPA is a research method by using a narrative approach. Policies in dealing with street children in Indonesia are still top-down, so their implementation is measured through the indicators put forward by Edward III which include: communication, resources, arrangements, and bureaucratic structures. However, the needs of street children must also be known through a collaborative approach by combining top-down and bottom-up methods. In conclusion, direct individual support from government officials, the social community, and families also play a role in changing the behavior of street children. Policies that are repressive and do not understand the condition of street children tend not to change the behavior of street children. Policies should concern the real needs of street children and find out the vital causes of why they choose to live on the streets to prevent those condition. This analysis focused only on narrative policy to overcome children's welfare. Thus, this analysis has a limit in comparing the condition of street children in various cities of Indonesia.

Keywords: street children; intervention; policy; behavior; NPA

INTRODUCTION

The issue of poverty has become a frequent topic of debate in national and international contexts. According to the World Bank (1995), poverty has many different faces in every place and time, thus its management also varies depending on each country's circumstances and capacity. Poverty has a widespread impact on children in Indonesia (Nugroho et al. 2021), not only refers to income but also covers entire children's life (Fernald et al. 2012). Children are often seen as a source of income for families, putting them at risk of reducing their quality of life and well-being. Families with many children often face hardship meeting basic needs such as clothing, food, health care and education (Gertler and Molyneaux 1994; Hatton et al. 2018; National Research Council 1983). An analysis conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reveals that households with a higher number of children face the worst impact during

the COVID-19 pandemic, but also receive more social assistance (UNICEF 2021b). To reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the Indonesian government has committed to enhance child well-being. However, it is crucial to emphasize that this commitment must be followed by concrete actions to protect children's welfare. When children do not get adequate protection, they may seek protection within broader social community even leading to street life (Cappa and Hereward 2019). Street children are victims of various factors such as poverty, war, domestic violence, and despair (WHO 2002). Poverty stands out as a significant contributor to increase the number of street children, along with displacement due to natural disasters and family conflicts. Street children endure harsh living conditions, such as landfills, train stations, or under bridges (Humanium.org 2011). The phenomenon of street children is very complex, influenced by interrelated family, economic, social and political factors. Although it is difficult to identify a single cause, common reasons cited by street children include family problems, poverty, abuse and conflict.

The term "street children" can have negative consequences because it is often seen as a stigmatic label. Street children are often perceived by society as a threat and potential criminals. In 1992, the United Nations introduced a resolution addressing The Fate of Street Children, highlighting concerns about their emergence, marginalization, and exposure to violence (Theirworld.org 2023). Street children are children who earn a living or roam the streets and other public places. Although they did not choose to live as street children, they are compelled to do so due to various reasons. From a psychological view, street children are a group of minors who have limited mental and emotional resilience. Street children encounter the challenge of street environment that can devastate their self-development. The number of street children forced themselves to make a living has increased every day. According to The Ministry of Social Affairs in 2017, there was 36,000 street children which have risen to approximately 232,894 to the present. Based on data of Statistics Indonesia (BPS), showed that 79,8 million children in Indonesia aged from 0 to 18 years old in 2018 and around 17,6 million children or 22,14 percent classified as marginalized group. (Susanty 2022).

To settle the issue of street children in urban areas of Indonesia, policies that focus on protecting their human rights are needed. Article 34 paragraph (1) of the 1945 State Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia stated that "The poor and neglected children are cared for by the state". Therefore, the government plays an important role in handling street children in various locations, especially in big cities in Indonesia. According to Law (UU) Number. 23 of 2002 on Protection of Children emphasizes that every child has a right to live, grow and and receive protection from violence and discrimination. In addition, other regulations are regulated through Regional Regulations, both at the provincial and city/district levels. Globally, UNICEF established a convention on children's rights in 1989 that serves as a reference for every country in policy-making, emphasize that no child should be treated unfairly, regardless of the circumstances. Moreover, adults role for making a decision has an impact to children that is why the government is obliged to ensure that children are well protected and cared for by their parents. Globally, UNICEF has issued a convention on children's rights in 1989 that serves as a reference for every country in policy-making, emphasize that no justification can justify unfair treatment towards children (UNICEF 2021a). Parents role for making a decision has a significant impact to children that is why the government is obliged to protect children from their parents. In formulating policies related to street children, the top-down approach is commonly used, wherein the government holds the authority to determine the appropriate approach to mentor and assist street children, with the aim of amending their behavior in accordance with the government's

desired outcomes (Peters and Pierre 2006).

This analysis is deemed significant considering the current phenomenon of street children in Indonesia, particularly in several major cities where there is a noticeable increase. The objective of this analysis is to examine the implementation of public policies regarding behavioral changes among street children in Indonesia. Presently, most society hold the perception that children living on the streets tend to exhibit negative behaviors.

METHOD

This analysis uses Narrative Policy Analysis (NPA) method, which is a narrative approach of analysis. NPA method consists of four stages of approach (Roe, 1994). The first stage is an analysis of policy issues in the form of a story which is arranged in an orderly manner, starting from the beginning, the middle, and the end. Its narrative included support and obstacle of policymaking. The second stage involved a narrative that identify the inappropriate issue related to the existing narrative policy. It also can be called as counterstories condition. The third stage included a syllogism implementation to compare the narratives that have been presented, with the result many perspectives on those comparison. The third stage involved the application of syllogisms to compare the narratives that have been presented, resulting in various points of view in the comparison. The last stage is a determination on how the narratives that have been built and it can be formulated into problems that can be used as a policy analysis tool for various groups.

The NPA method includes assumptions, levels of analysis, concepts, and hypotheses. There are several crucial elements in the NPA that can be used as a reference in developing a narrative. These elements include: (1) Social construction explains that policies are always form in a social context; (2) Relativity refers to the fact that social construction is relative and produce different policies, limited by ideologies and beliefs; (3) Generalization of structural elements leads to a narrative that has a specific structure that can be identified and generalized; (4) The level of interaction analysis, in which the narrative must reflect the relationships and interrelationships at three levels of social activity: micro, meso, and macro; (5) The homo narrans model, which emphasizes that a narrative is an important form of thought expression in cognition and communication.

The NPA approach explains the time and place settings, actors involved, and the moral message conveyed by a policy. The NPA approachclassifies the narrative contents into two main aspects, namely narrative components and narrative content, distinguished based on the manifestation of formed assumptions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Policy Narrative Identification

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has as one of its most important goals to eradicate acute poverty worldwide by 2030. According to the article "Goal 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere" by the United Nations (UN), the COVID-19 pandemic has had significant repercussions. The global poverty rate increased significantly from 8.3% in 2019 to 9.2% in 2020 (UN, 2015). As one of the developing nations, Indonesia has also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The poverty rate in Indonesia from 2017 to 2022 is displayed in the table below:

Table 1. The Number of Poverty in Indonesia (2017 – 2022)

Year	Number (Million People)	
	(Semester 1)	(Semester 2)
2017	10.64	10.12
2018	9.82	9.66
2019	15.32	15.01
2020	14.99	15.43
2021	15.33	15.53
2022	14.64	14.75

Source: Official News of the Central Bureau of Statistics, processed by researchers, 2023

Table 1 demonstrated that Indonesia still had a significant poverty rate, despite a rise in 2019. However, the decline in poverty was short-lived due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which led to Community Activities Restrictions Enforcement (CARE). CARE significantly affected various economic sectors. Indeed, the cessation of activities in various economic sectors directly impacted the community's economic conditions (Purkey et al. 2022). Consequently, implementing CARE significantly affected the increase in the poverty rate. The poverty rate increased from the second semester of 2020 through the second semester of 2021. This number decreased during the first semester of 2022, when the CARE was lifted, and various economic recovery initiatives were initiated. the poverty rate will increase if the category of individuals with Problems of Social Welfare (PMKS) currently exceeds 21 million people is included (Suharto 2015). PMKS include unhoused people, beggars, street children, orphans, elderly people who have been neglected, and people with disabilities who are unemployed or underemployed.

Each nation has its own set of public policies to combat destitution. These policies aim to construct an ideal society, not exacerbate existing problems. Government policies are essential for addressing current issues and enhancing the welfare of the populace. The government takes steps to guarantee the health and prosperity of society. Public policy is essential to enhancing the well-being of developing nations. While some nations have weak policies, no nation is inherently impoverished. The prosperity of a nation's public policy development determines its capacity for growth. Therefore, public policy has a significant effect on a nation's development. A government's actions or inactions are examples of public policy. It consists of government goals and programs that can influence public policy (Purkey et al. 2022).

Several cities in Indonesia have policies governing the treatment of street children that are governed by local regulations. The implementation of these policies, however, encounters numerous obstacles. Budgetary constraints and a dearth of facilities and infrastructure are typical obstacles in caring for street children. In order to accomplish synergy in addressing the issue of street children, government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) must increase their cooperation. It is necessary to raise public awareness about caring for street children; thus, it is not solely the government's responsibility but also involves community participation.

Table 2. Obstacles to the Implementation of Street Children Management Policies in Several Indonesian Cities

City	Aspect	Obstacle	Source
Bandung, Jawa Barat	The implementation of the policy is governed by the Bandung City Regional Regulation Number 4 of 2019	Insufficient coordination between government institutions and the Department of Social Affairs Lack of facilities and funding Difficulties in coordinating with other institutions	(Nuradhawati 2019)
	Training Program The street children data collection	Not implemented in a sustainable manner Pragmatically oriented (temporary). Insufficient coordination among local government agencies	
Tangerang Selatan, Banten	The implementation of the policy is regulated by the South Tangerang City Regional Regulation Number 3 of 2012	Inadequacy of rehabilitation facilities and shelters for street children	(Andriansyah et al. 2021)
Padang, Sumatera Barat	The implementation of the policy is derived from Law No. 23 of 2012.		
	Skill training programs and parental guidance Print media campaign: Prohibition of giving money to street children in Padang City	Insufficiency of funding and facilities to carry out the training	(Frinaldi, Putri, and Fitria 2015)
Bandar Lampung, Lampung	The implementation of the policy is regulated in the Regional Regulation of Bandar Lampung City Number 3 of 2010	Insufficient socialization regarding the rules prohibiting the giving of money or goods to street children Budgetary constraints and limited facilities to address street children Lack of monitoring	(Mersa, Utoyo S, and Fitriani 2022)
	Training Program	Missed target	
Serang, Banten	The implementation of the policy is regulated by the Serang City Regional Regulation Number 2 of 2010	Lack of coordination among stakeholders	(Setiawati and Syafari 2020)

The "Who gets what?" question will be affected by government policies. Distributive or redistributive government policies in education, social affairs, and the tax system substantially affect the distribution of the "cake" available to the entire community (Blakemore and Warwick-

Booth 2013). This is a list of objectives and targets for various government programs (Widodo 2021). Street children are juvenile delinquents whose educational and social circumstances have generally prevented them from reaching all levels of society; as a result, some individuals who should be at the education level at various levels encounter difficult social conditions. Numerous social and economic issues ultimately lead these children to engage in juvenile delinquency, as is well-known for street children. The government must therefore intervene to alter juvenile delinquency. Due to fact that delinquency is caused by socioeconomic and educational conditions, which can only be resolved through government intervention. Table 3 outlines, in general, the components of the policy narrative on street children.

Table 3. Component of policy narrative

	Narrative Form		Narrative Content
Setting	Areas of Poverty and Street Children	Belief system	Street children delinquency does not occur out of nowhere; there are numerous factors that drive and accompany it
Character	Government Low society Street children	Strategy	Street children are victim The publication of Ministerial Regulation Number 4 of 2020, which addresses the fundamental social rehabilitation of abandoned children. The establishment of transitional shelters for street children in various areas
Plot	Uneven development Impact on education Emergence of street children Handling of street children		
Moral	Causal relationship between poverty and education Relationship between education and character		

Counterstories

In various regions of Indonesia, poverty and inequality result from uneven development. The government has enacted macro-level policies, such as immigration, to promote development equality. However, these policies can directly or indirectly impact street children's presence (Embleton et al. 2016; Ibrahim 2012; Panter-Brick 2002; le Roux and Smith 1998). Efforts to enhance the economy, such as immigration regulations, can increase the number of minors living on the streets. The inability of a single social system to comprehend street children results from the cultural mixture caused by immigration (Ongowo, Ngetich, and Murenga 2021). Due to destitution, numerous students are compelled to drop out of school and seek employment on the streets to satisfy their daily requirements (Amiru et al. 2022). Typically, street children engage in occupations such as peddling, busking, beggars, unhoused, et cetera. Others are destitute, Some reside with relatives (Puspitawati 2018).

Children in Indonesia are a valuable national asset and a key to the future of this nation. Today's policies and investments in children will significantly impact Indonesia's future, contributing to the realization of a more just, equitable, and prosperous society. Indonesia has experienced remarkable and rapid economic and social growth. Once affecting nearly half of the

population, poverty rates have been reduced to single digits. Indonesia has transformed from the weakest to a middle-income nation (Hodge et al. 2014). Other positive indicators include falling infant and maternal mortality rates, near-universal primary school enrollment, and primary health care availability in remote areas. The Indonesian government and policymakers are committed to the nation's youth and children. This commitment is reflected not only in words but also in concrete actions at the national, provincial, and local levels, as evidenced by the efforts of the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture, which asserts that children are one of the most critical determinants of the nation's future development (Kemenkopmk.go.id 2020; UNICEF 2020).

Multiple stakeholders, including the Ministry, the Social Service, and education observers, can provide information about the counterstory in street children regulation. Several conclusions can be drawn from the explanations of Social Service and Ministry of Social Affairs officials: (1) The rehabilitation of street children not only focuses on their protection but also takes into account the needs of the community in terms of security and comfort; (2) Transitional shelters serve as a temporary residence for street children prior to their rehabilitation, ensuring that insight and skill training are provided at the rehabilitation center rather than at the transitional shelters; (3) The factors contributing to the rising number of street children are primarily associated with micro-level factors; (4) There still exists a lack of comprehension regarding the technical aspects of protecting and rehabilitating street children.

Based on some of the presented counterstory, the following counterstory conclusions can be drawn as: (1) There is a possibility that the rehabilitation of street children will become a result center rather than a problem center; (2) There is a possibility of shifting responsibility between officers in shelter homes and rehabilitation houses; and (3) There is a chance of suboptimal handling and implementation.

Narrative Comparison

In identifying the presented story and counterstory, it is possible to compare the narratives as follows:

Table 4. Narrative Comparison

Narrative	Counterstory	Factor on causing differences
Rehabilitation is one of protection way on street children	Rehabilitation is an effort to create security and comfort for society	Differences in perspectives and belief systems regarding protection
Transitional shelters serve as a place for street children to acquire knowledge, insights, and various life skills	Transitional shelters are solely utilized as transit locations	The difference in understanding regarding the definition and function is due to the absence of a more detailed operational framework
The emergence of street children is caused by macro-level factors	The emergence of street children is caused by micro-level factors	Differences in assumptions among policy makers
The implementation of regulations is already understood by all policy implementers	There are still some aspects that are not fully understood and have the potential to cause confusion	There has been no socialization or knowledge sharing among relevant parties

Policy Measures

The Indonesian government's policy regarding street children is still top-down, so its implementation can be analyzed using Edward III's *Direct and Indirect Impact on the Implementation* policy model, which is described as follows:

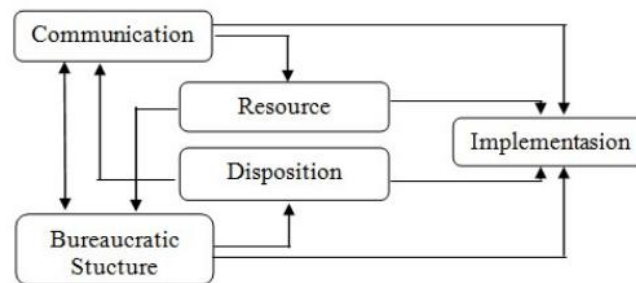


Figure 1. Policy model of Top-Down Edward III

Source: Edward (1980)

To alter the conduct of street youth in Indonesia, several analyses can be performed. First, communication is crucial to successfully implementing public policy (Fernandez and Rainey 2006; Siddique 2016). Implementers must communicate the policy explicitly to prevent misunderstandings. For policies to be devoid of ambiguity, it is also necessary for policymakers to convey clarity to policy implementers. To avoid ambiguity when implementing policies in the field, orders must be consistent.

Second, resources affect the implementation of policies regarding street children. These assets consist of personnel, information, authority, and facilities. The presence of institutions that monitor the conditions of street children is essential; thus, their treatment can be adequately regulated (Ongowo et al. 2021). The role of non-governmental organizations and observers of child rights assists the government in implementing policies and providing a persuasive strategy for coping with street children. Education and training that improves the fundamental skills of street children can also provide additional benefits (Setiawati and Syafari 2020). However, limitations regarding real-time data on neglected children, including street children, must be resolved to manage street children effectively (Kemenkopmk.go.id 2020).

Thirdly, dispositions affect the implementation of policies regarding the care of street children, particularly concerning the appointment of administrators and incentives. Employees who work with street children must be prepared to encounter problematic attitudes and attend to street children's problems (Ongowo et al. 2021). Poor management can hinder policies regarding street children. Consequently, the chosen implementers must be competent and given the appropriate incentives.

Fourth, The bureaucratic structure impacts policy implementation (Fernandez and Rainey 2006), including the treatment of street children. An inconsistency between structure and policy might make it difficult to allocate resources and carry out policies (Gofen 2014). The policy requires practical cooperation and coordination among the bureaucracies involved (Fernandez and Rainey 2006; Gofen 2014; Jensen and Pedersen 2023; May and Winter 2009; Siddique 2016).

The government has evaluated policies to deal with street children, such as placing children in institutions, providing employment, and regulating the population to improve the community's welfare (Amiru et al. 2022; Jensen and Pedersen 2023). Children are a constitutional mandate that must be safeguarded collectively; hence, a firm commitment from multiple stakeholders is also required for dealing with street children.

The primary objective of the policy is to change the behavior or lifestyle of street children. They should be able to live adequately without engaging in illicit activity in the general community (Aslinda 2023; Consortium For Street Children 2019; Vedung 2017). Using the concept of changing behavior can aid in observing changes in street children (Aptekar 1994). Behavior modification seeks to reunite street children with their families and get them off the streets (Embleton et al. 2016). Government must involve all relevant parties in changing behavior (Ibrahim 2012; Panter-Brick 2002; le Roux and Smith 1998; Wanjiru 2016).

CONCLUSION

Poverty and the phenomenon of street children are two interconnected issues in Indonesia. Poverty has extensive impacts on children, including their income and overall quality of life. Households with many children often face challenges in meeting basic needs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, households with many children have experienced more severe impacts but also received more social assistance. The Indonesian government has committed to improving child welfare to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. However, concrete actions are needed to protect the welfare rights of children, preventing them from seeking protection in wider social communities or becoming street children. The factors of phenomenon street children affected by families, economy, social, and politics which are interconnected. Street children lived in harsh condition and are vulnerable to violence and exploitation. The term "street children" have a negative consequence and stigmatic. Thus, there is a need to emphasize the importance of protection the rights of street children. In handling the phenomenon of street children, policies that focus on protecting their human rights are crucial, involving the roles of government, legislation, local regulations, and decision-making by adults. The needs of street children also should be understood through a collaborative approach that combines top-down and bottom-up methods. It is important to figure out poverty and protect children from becoming street children by adopting effective and efficient policies to safeguard their well-being. Policies should concern the actual needs of street children and strive to understand the root causes of why they choose to live on the streets in order to prevent such conditions.

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