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Shifting waste policy issues at the local level: a case study in Banyumas

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Abstract. Waste management in Banyumas Regency entered a new history following the shift on waste management from government management, into community management. This is a breakthrough in the Governance Era and stimulates a greater public role in waste management. However, the policy issues regarding waste have widened, and this study aimed to explain it. Qualitative research was carried out by tracing the issue of waste problems in online mass media, observations, and interviews. The data analysis technique was carried out with interactive analysis techniques. The results showed that the issue of waste problems widened into several issues, including the transfer of local government burden to the public, the destruction of city face, bureaucratic egocentrism, and the inability of non-governmental groups.

1. Introduction

The issue of waste problems in Banyumas Regency in 2018 and 2019 was about the final location of waste processing. At that time there was a waste emergency because the location of the final waste processing site was sued by residents [1,2]. The local government cannot provide a quick solution because of the complexity of procuring a location for the final waste disposal site.

Over time, a bold step was taken by the Banyumas Regency Government by launching an independent waste management program with the community [3]. This waste management policy is quite extreme because first, this independent community-based waste management policy is beyond the public's expectations of the waste issue and the government. Second, it also increases the public burden on the waste sector. The new policy in waste management raises new waste issues that must be observed by the Banyumas Regency Government, the public, and environmental activists. The issues are important to be considered; the policy should satisfy the people in terms of relationship, process, and the policy itself [4]. Public issues are all problems that deserve to be solved by the government. Some of these issues later enter the government's agenda to be resolved in the area of public policy. However, not all public issues can be on the government's agenda [5–9]. This study aimed to reveal the public issues after waste management in Banyumas changed to community-based waste management.

2. Research methods

Qualitative research was conducted by collecting data from online mass media, the official government released, interviews, and observations. To achieve a high degree of confidence, the data were triangulated. The checking and verification of data were carried out between one data source and other data sources [10]. An interactive analysis was carried out as a data analysis technique [11]. The obtained data were then condensed, displayed, sorted by research focus, verified, and conclusions drawn.



3. Results and discussion

3.1. *The issue of transferring the burden of local government to the public*

The task of the local government is to ensure the implementation of good and environmentally sound waste management so that the waste management budget remains the responsibility of the local government. It is important because, in the presentation text of policy socialization, one of the benefits of waste management with the concept of independent waste management by the community is a clause "the budget is reduced, and it can be used for other activities". The Local Government with this program also encourages citizens' independence, but on the other hand, wants to release the basic responsibility for managing the public sector to the community. This hurts the people's hearts, because the local government is the only party that is most responsible, has adequate authority, and the authority to force residents to solve this waste problem. There are advantages and disadvantages when this waste problem is left to the public. The advantage for local governments is that the government stimulates the public to think about the waste problem and find solutions together. Second, the government's burden is gradually decreasing because the obligations that were originally borne by the government are slowly being transferred to the public's burden. When waste management is handed over to the community independently, a huge disadvantage is that the community does not have the resources to meet waste service standards. It can be seen from the lack of facilities in the hangar that will manage waste in the adoption of an adequate integrated waste processing site, transporting waste that meets standards, and having wastewater treatment (leachate).

One of the important issues that have become a follow-up issue from the above issues is the issue of the government's inability to manage waste. The local government raised the white flag in managing waste, so it is "forced" to involve the public in its management [12]. This issue is sensitive because the public is now smart enough to compare their area with other regions. When the public sees that other residents in other regions are not burdened with waste problems, they then demand their government to not burden them too. When they are overburdened, this issue arises automatically.

The Banyumas Regency Government, based on the development of waste issues in recent times, must be introspective, whether this new policy will produce satisfactory results for the public or cause public disappointment. The government should hear a lot of input from the public about this waste issue and must be able to make the public satisfied.

3.2. *The issue of the damaged face of the city*

After the community's independent waste management policy, various corners of the city are decorated with rows of garbage carts – like trains – waiting to be picked up by the officers. The new policy also resulted in garbage scattered in various corners of the city, a lot of garbage piled up on corners, sides and shoulders of the road [13,14]. Even more tragic is that people who do not want to bother throwing garbage to the point of return, throw garbage into the river which is easily found in Banyumas Regency. Even though this scene was relatively unheard of in the past. The issue of the destruction of the city's face is in line with research findings that three variables influence waste management, namely attitudes, facilities and infrastructure and exposure to information media [15].

3.3. *The issue of bureaucratic egocentrism*

The issue of bureaucratic egocentrism means the reluctance of the bureaucracy to manage certain public affairs so that the obligations are transferred to other institutions. Bureaucratic ego has a negative impact on the development, policies, and public services [16–19]. In the context of waste in Banyumas, bureaucratic egocentrism is seen from how difficult it is to choose a garbage collection point as it has been determined by administrative boundaries. Administrative boundaries seem non-negotiable for the better management of public affairs. For instance, one *kelurahan* (urban village) that does not have a gathering point cannot deposit its waste in another *kelurahan*. Garbage collection points that used to open in the past, are not reopened as new gathering points because of the fear of the presence of "strangler" garbage collectors. The Non-Governmental Organization should have thought a thousand

times when handling this waste matter about the presence of stowaway garbage collectors. One of the characteristics of public affairs is that it is not easy to prevent the presence of free riders in their management. Some areas find it difficult to determine a meeting point because of the high egocentrism of the bureaucracy, whereas when there are government assets that can be shared, it should be used as a temporary gathering point.

3.4. *The issue of the inability of non-governmental groups*

After the implementation of the new policy, many parties complained about the performance of non-governmental groups. Non-governmental groups are considered unable to handle the waste problem, especially in efforts to meet standards in waste management. Based on the results of interviews and observations, some issues were found, including the piling up of waste that was longer, the transportation of waste pickers, and the waste processing units that are considered improvised. Many parties defend that this is a new phase that must be passed and over time, non-governmental groups will continue to improve the quality of services. This is the weakness of policy making in developing countries. Policies that should be designed as ideally as possible become an area of trial and error. The public should get certainty that a policy is taken based on evidence, offers a better future, and invites the public to be in a new, happier area [20–27]. When the policy does not bring the public to these things, then the policy will surely bring public disappointment.

4. Conclusion

This research shows that after waste management is carried out on a community-based basis, there is a contraction of new public problems in waste matters. The problem that initially only revolved around the inability to provide final waste disposal sites developed into the issue of transferring the burden of local government to the public, the damaged face of the city, bureaucratic egocentrism, and the inability of non-governmental groups. The contraction of public problems in waste management may only be temporary, and the pressure will decrease as the new waste management adapts. More serious attention from the local government to improve waste management in the future is needed.

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