

## Communication Factors In Policy Implementationpoverty Reduction In Maluku Province In 2023

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Keywords:</b> Communication, Policy implementation, Public policy, Pove	This research aims to identify and analyze the communication factor in the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Maluku Province in 2023. This study employs a qualitative approach, adopting the theory of Edward III, where policy implementation is based on four factors: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. However, the main focus discussed in this research is the communication factor. Data collection was conducted using in-depth interviews with several key informants from local government in Maluku Province, including the Social Service, Education Service, Health Service, Industry and Trade Service, Manpower and Transmigration Service and the Regional Development Planning Agency. The results indicate that the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Maluku Province generally still requires improvement in terms of communication. It is imperative for the government to strengthen and intensify communication and coordination between policy-makers and the targeting of the policy. This crucial step is necessary to realize the intended and successful outcomes of the poverty reduction program implementation in Maluku.

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## INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a global issue that is of concern to all parties, not only in poor and developing countries, but also in developed countries (Conceicao et al., 2016). In relation to public administration, poverty is seen as the impartiality of public policies towards poor communities (Choiriyah, 2018). Poverty alleviation is a sustainable development goal as stated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) point, namely no poverty, which is also adapted into the 2020-2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMN) through the mission of increasing quality and competitive human resources, one of which is poverty alleviation. Purwanto (2007) stated that failure to overcome poverty can lead to the emergence of various social, political and economic problems.

Maluku Province has one of the highest poverty rates in Indonesia. According to the March 2023 National Socioeconomic Survey (Susenas), Maluku Province ranked fourth among the provinces with the highest poverty rate, slightly ahead of Papua, West Papua, and East Nusa Tenggara. The poverty rate in Maluku Province has also consistently exceeded the national average for the past five years. This has undoubtedly resulted in the failure to achieve the target of reducing the percentage of poor people in the 2019-2024 Maluku Province Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD). Poverty alleviation is one of the key development policies of the 2019-2024 Maluku Province.

Poverty alleviation is a global issue that every country aspires to, but efforts to overcome it are not simple because they encompass multidimensional issues that require policies and strategies from each region. The Maluku Provincial Government has made various efforts to address the problem of poverty, including continuing to disburse funds for aid and grants. However, Tualeka (2017) states that the poor in Maluku have long been closely linked to a consumerist culture, so providing aid injections is not considered the best solution to overcome poverty. Poverty is a chronic problem, so in overcoming it, an analysis of all components of the problem is needed to develop an appropriate, sustainable, and non-temporary strategy (Prawoto, 2009).

While the poverty rate in Maluku has been declining year after year, this downward trend still places Maluku as the fourth poorest province in Indonesia in the past five years. The issue of poverty encompasses many multidimensional factors, including education, health, and economics. In terms of education, the population in Maluku is still dominated by those with lower secondary education. However, various studies indicate that a higher level of education provides better job opportunities, thereby improving welfare. In terms of health, data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the Basic Health Research, and the Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) indicate that life expectancy in Maluku remains low, with poor nutrition, infant mortality, and morbidity rates that are relatively high, even exceeding the national average. This indicates that the health status in Maluku Province is still far from expectations, requiring continued improvements to improve public welfare. Furthermore, in terms of economics, monthly per capita expenditure in Maluku Province in 2022 was IDR 1,169,823.33, which is lower than the national average. Unemployment rates are quite concerning, placing Maluku in the fourth position for the highest open unemployment rate in Indonesia in 2022. Several issues outlined above require a study of poverty from a policymaker's perspective to determine what the Maluku Provincial Government has done to reduce poverty and the extent to which these programs and policies have impacted community welfare. Therefore, the objective of this study is to analyze the communication aspects in the implementation of the Maluku Provincial Government's policies to reduce poverty in 2023.

## METHODS

Aneta (2010) states that public policy implementation is one stage in the policy process that determines how a policy impacts the public interest and is accepted by the public. Therefore, when the planning and formulation stages of a policy have been carried out well but the implementation stage does not receive adequate attention and optimization, the results of the policy will be difficult to achieve. Ultimately, policy evaluation will show a mismatch between policy formulation and implementation, leading to results that do not meet expectations and can even become an obstacle for policymakers themselves. Furthermore, Rogahang (2023) also states that policy implementation is related to the process of delivering policies to the public so that they bring the benefits as expected. These implemented policies need to be continuously monitored and properly monitored to prevent negative impacts, especially on the poor (Van de Walle, 1990).

George Edwards III (1980) developed a model of public policy that is implemented and managed within a government system. Edwards III's theory combines analysis of various factors in policy implementation, involving interactions between the policy itself, the implementing institutions, and the existing social and political context. Furthermore, Edwards III (1980) outlined four key issues that need to be considered for more effective policy implementation: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. These four factors must operate simultaneously and influence each other. Regarding the communication factor itself, Edwards III stated that communication relates to the delivery of clear information to both policy implementers and target groups so that the intent, objectives, substance, and targets to be achieved can be understood. Suciana et al. (2022) explain that communication factors significantly influence the information received by target groups of policy recipients, so that the quality of communication determines the effectiveness of public policy implementation. When linked to the context of poverty, well-communicated policies will facilitate the implementation of poverty alleviation. Abas et al. (2021) also stated that the flow of information and communication requires attention from policy makers to avoid differences in understanding or multiple interpretations when translating the content of policies made at the central level into the perceptions of implementers at the regional level. Winarno (2008) also explained that effective policy implementation can be achieved through communication that includes clear and consistent implementation instructions.

In relation to poverty, public policies in various fields are crucial and must be well-formulated to successfully achieve the goal of reducing poverty. Several previous studies have shown that socioeconomic factors such as education, health, unemployment, price stability, and social security influence poverty. Sa'Diyah and Arianti (2012) revealed that education has a significant and positive influence on household poverty. Education is considered a factor capable of overcoming poverty. Esmara (1986) argued that education is

the most strategic step in efforts to overcome poverty issues. Regarding health, Dariwardani (2014) stated that poverty requires a policy approach related to health to reduce the burden of life for the poor, especially in urban areas. Developing public health will increase productivity at work. This will encourage increased work efficiency, where better physical and mental abilities go hand in hand with increased productivity, resulting in increased output. Regarding unemployment, Todaro and Smith (2015) stated that unemployment is closely related to poverty levels. If people earn income (earned from work), they can generally meet their needs. So if unemployment increases, it will be difficult for people to meet their needs and poverty will be common.

Furthermore, poverty also requires policy interventions related to price stability. Price stability policies are implemented to prevent price spikes, both inflation and deflation, which can disrupt the economy, reduce people's purchasing power, and lead to increased poverty rates. Previous research by Ardian and Destanto (2021) explained that one of the policies necessary for poverty alleviation is maintaining price stability and people's purchasing power so that all community needs are met. Price increases can reduce people's purchasing power and disrupt access to basic necessities, ultimately leading to high poverty rates. The final aspect related to poverty is social security, which is a form of government intervention in responding to the risks of vulnerability experienced by the community. Social security, also known as social assistance from the government, aims to improve social welfare in the context of poverty alleviation. Sinaga et al. (2022) stated that social security programs such as the Family Hope Program (PKH), basic food assistance, Cash Transfers (BST), Direct Cash Transfers (BLT), and the Pre-Employment Program have proven effective in reducing poverty rates.

The research method used in this study is a qualitative method by conducting in-depth interviews with several respondents from the Maluku Provincial Government, including the Education Office, Health Office, Manpower and Transmigration Office, Industry and Trade Office, and the Regional Development Planning Agency within the Maluku Province. Furthermore, the collected data and information will be analyzed using the Miles and Huberman approach, where the analysis procedureThe process begins by reviewing all data and information from various sources, written down in field notes. After reading, studying, and analyzing the data, the next step is data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Maluku Provincial Government has implemented various policies to reduce poverty through various socio-economic aspects. The research focused on policies in education, health, unemployment, price controls, and social security. In-depth interviews

with several agencies within the Maluku Provincial Government yielded information on the types of programs and policies implemented to reduce poverty, as shown in the following table.

**Table 1. Types of Programs/Policies of the Maluku Provincial Government in Efforts to Reduce Poverty Rates in 2023**

No.	Aspect	Policy Types
1	Education	Provision of educational funding assistance through Poor Student Assistance (BSM) and High-Achieving Student Assistance using the Smart Maluku Card (KMC).
2	Health	Equal distribution of health services and health insurance through BPJS membership which is integrated with the Ministry of Health's programs.
3	Employment	Job Training and Workforce Productivity Program based on competency clusters.
4	Price Stability	Organizing cheap markets, monitoring food prices and stocks.
5	Social Security	Empowering poor communities through productive economic business assistance for KUBE in the region.

From the types of policies mentioned above, the analysis of the implementation of poverty reduction policies in Maluku will be linked to the communication factor which is one of the keys to success in policy implementation.

#### **Communication Factors in the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Policies in Maluku in the Education Aspect**

The communication factor in poverty reduction policies in the education sector is implemented in stages, from the provincial level, districts and cities to schools that distribute educational assistance to students. The coordination that has been running quite well is possible due to the continuous improvements and refinements made by the Maluku Provincial Education Office, so that the targets of policy implementation can directly feel the benefits of the educational assistance provided. The provision of educational assistance, which is primarily intended for the poor, is in accordance with what is mandated in Government Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 48 of 2008 concerning educational funding, where Article 27 explains that regional governments, within their authority, can provide educational assistance or scholarships to students who are unable to afford it or who excel. This is what the Maluku Provincial Education Office is doing in an effort to reduce poverty in Maluku by ensuring that students who are unable to continue their education without financial constraints. The ongoing provision of educational financial assistance can be implemented well because it prioritizes the principles of effective communication and coordination between the Maluku Provincial Education Office and

institutions at lower levels. The Education Office continues to make improvements and innovations in terms of aid distribution, such as by collaborating with distributing banks and creating Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for BSM and KMC which include the flow of aid fund distribution, submission of accountability reports on the use of funds, and evaluations to relevant educational units if reports have not been followed up. Therefore, good communication between the Education Office at the provincial, district/city levels, schools, teachers, students, and parents/guardians is important in implementing policies in the education sector, as expressed by Septiani (2024) in her research that the implementation of education policies can run smoothly if policy makers, in this case the Education Office, communicate with teachers, students, and parents/guardians. Communication carried out in the form of coordination and socialization is an important factor in implementing a policy that is right on target. Edward III stated that the communication factor is related to the delivery of clear information to policy implementers and the target group of the policy itself so that the intent, purpose, substance, or targets to be achieved can be understood.

#### **Communication Factors in the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Policies in Maluku in the Health Aspect**

The Maluku Provincial Government has also implemented a poverty reduction policy in the health sector through equitable distribution of affordable, easy, and accessible health services for all levels of society, as outlined in the Maluku Provincial Health Office's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. It states that the Maluku Provincial Government is committed to providing affordable and high-quality health services to all people across the islands of Maluku Province. However, some people still lack information about health insurance membership, which would facilitate their access to free health services. The March 2023 Susenas (National Socioeconomic Survey) results showed that 34.6 percent of the population is still not registered for health insurance. The Head of the Maluku Provincial Health Office stated that the lack of public awareness and health promotion has prevented people from receiving accurate information about free health services. Communication plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of policies, including poverty reduction policies in the health sector. Therefore, the Maluku Provincial Education Office needs to further improve coordination and synergy between institutions in order to bridge information from policy makers so that it can be conveyed properly to the grassroots for the successful implementation of the policies that have been formulated.

#### **Communication Factors in the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Policies in Maluku in the Employment Aspect**

From an employment perspective, the Maluku Provincial Government, through the Manpower and Transmigration Office, has been working to reduce poverty by reducing

unemployment in Maluku by holding various job training programs. Good communication and coordination have been established between the provincial Manpower and Transmigration Office, district/city governments, and the private sector, but the policy itself, specifically job seekers, often provides negative feedback. There is a tendency for policy targets to be less than committed to participating in the training programs, resulting in underachievement in the workforce placement program. Each year, an average of only 40-50 percent of all participants in job training are absorbed. Therefore, the Manpower and Transmigration Office, as the policy implementer, needs to improve its communication patterns with target recipients to increase participants' confidence in the benefits of the program. Recruitment of participants must also be more selective, based on strong motivation, to truly select participants who are ready to commit to continuing their employment contracts.

#### **Communication Factors in the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Policies in Maluku in the Aspect of Price Stability**

Furthermore, implementing poverty reduction policies through price controls is equally important, as uncontrolled price increases will undoubtedly contribute to poverty. To control market prices and the availability of basic necessities, the Maluku Provincial Government has established a Regional Inflation Control Team comprising members from various regional government agencies and vertical institutions. The Maluku Provincial Department of Industry and Trade, as part of the policy-making team, is considered to have achieved sufficient communication, including communication between government agencies, business actors, and the public. The TPID (Regional Inflation Control Team) also regularly holds regional inflation control coordination meetings involving various agencies to identify contributing factors and discuss control solutions. This demonstrates that the success of the designed programs is undoubtedly due to prioritizing effective communication between various agencies. Good cooperation from the public is also crucial for optimal policy implementation. According to Edward III, clear, and transparent communication involving multiple parties plays a crucial role in ensuring a policy is understood, accepted, and implemented effectively.

#### **Communication Factors in the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Policies in Maluku in the Social Security Aspect**

The next aspect of poverty reduction policy is social security, or social protection, implemented under the direction of the Maluku Provincial Social Service, in collaboration with the Maluku Provincial Development Planning Agency (Bappeda). In relation to social security policies aimed at reducing poverty, communication is a crucial factor in ensuring the smooth distribution of aid to the community. Furthermore, this social security program targets vulnerable groups who often lack access to clear and accurate information. Therefore, the Maluku Provincial government requires strong communication skills to ensure the public understands how to access the programmed assistance.

Many Maluku residents, particularly those from vulnerable groups, still assume that aid often doesn't reach the right recipients. In fact, aid distribution often leads to horizontal conflict due to perceptions of injustice stemming from incomplete and comprehensive information, which is often fragmented and lacking any confirmation or clarity from the policymakers themselves, in this case the provincial government through the Social Services Agency. Therefore, structured cooperation and coordination between various institutions down to the village and neighborhood unit (RT/RW) levels are needed to counteract misinformation circulating regarding the distribution of social assistance. Village governments need to be more cooperative and responsive in acting as extensions of the provincial and district/city governments to help disseminate information. Village governments should also be more responsive in handling reports or complaints from the public and reducing miscommunication arising from limited information received. Thus, it can be said that the communication factor related to the social security policy in reducing poverty is considered suboptimal. In fact, the program's target groups, in this case community groups, rely heavily on clear information so that aid can be more targeted, policies can be implemented effectively and transparently, and can increase public trust in the Maluku Provincial government.

## CONCLUSION

Implementation of poverty reduction in Maluku Province in 2023 will be carried out through various policies targeting various socio-economic aspects such as education, health, employment, price stability and social security. Some concrete examples of these policies include the provision of educational financial assistance through the Poor Student Assistance (BSM) and the Outstanding Student Assistance using the Smart Maluku Card (KMC), equal distribution of health services and health insurance through BPJS membership integrated with the Ministry of Health program, provision of Job Training and Labor Productivity Programs based on competency clusters, organization of low-cost markets, monitoring of food prices and stocks, and empowerment of the poor through assistance for productive economic enterprises for KUBE in the region. In its implementation, several programs or policies are faced with various obstacles such as weak communication and coordination between agencies and a lack of public understanding of the programs offered. Policy implementation according to Edward III's theory, one of which is based on communication factors, has not been optimally implemented and applied in all regional government agencies/agencies. The communication factor in the implementation of poverty reduction policies in the aspects of education and price stability is considered quite good. For the health, employment and social security aspects, more attention and improvements are still needed so that the implementation of the poverty reduction policy in Maluku Province can be

achieved as expected. Based on the conclusions above, the Maluku Provincial Government in its efforts to reduce poverty rates needs to do several things, namely: (1) Strengthening coordination between agencies at various levels, starting from the provincial, district/city levels to the village level. Effective coordination and communication can prevent misinterpretation of program implementation in the field and facilitate the monitoring and evaluation process. (2) Compiling clear SOPs related to the division of authority and coordination flow and ensuring that the SOPs are updated annually because SOPs can serve as guidelines in regulating policy implementation in a structured, accountable and consistent manner. SOPs can also explain the authority of each agency at various levels and contain a chain of command that facilitates coordination between agencies and minimizes errors or deviations made by policy implementers.

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