

Policy performance evaluation from the perspective of a simple input-output transformation theory: A study on the utilization of grant and social assistance funds in Kediri city

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Abstract: This study aims to evaluate the performance of public policies regarding the utilization of grants and social assistance funds (bansos) in Kediri City, employing the input-output transformation theory. Focusing explicitly on poverty alleviation and social protection policies, this research identifies the effectiveness and efficiency of policies in enhancing community welfare. The study employs a qualitative method, conducting an in-depth analysis of primary and secondary data, supplemented by interviews with policymakers and beneficiaries. The findings reveal that although grants and social assistance funds have substantially contributed to reducing poverty rates, their implementation remains hindered by various challenges, including inefficiencies, lack of transparency, targeting inaccuracies, and the politicization of aid, especially approaching regional head elections. Furthermore, the evaluation demonstrates that the input-output approach effectively elucidates the relationship between resource allocation (input) and policy outcomes (output). Nonetheless, this approach necessitates reinforcement through stringent monitoring and oversight mechanisms to enhance accountability and transparency. This research recommends developing a more comprehensive policy evaluation model through the integration of technology-based information systems, targeted human resource training, and institutional restructuring. The study contributes theoretically to public administration scholarship, particularly within social policy evaluation, and offers practical implications for local governments in managing grants and social assistance funds with greater effectiveness and accountability.

Keywords: Efficiency, Grants and social assistance, Input-output transformation theory, Kediri City, Policy evaluation, Poverty, Public policy, Transparency.

1. Introduction

Poverty remains a central issue in development and poses continuous challenges for various countries, including Indonesia. The Indonesian government has implemented numerous policies aimed at addressing this issue, particularly through social assistance programs and grants. Since the economic crisis of 1997-1998, social policy approaches have shifted significantly from indirect subsidy schemes to structured direct assistance programs, such as the Social Safety Net Program (JPS), Direct Cash Assistance (BLT), and the Family Hope Program (PKH). Nevertheless, the implementation of these initiatives continues to face significant challenges concerning transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the distribution of funds to target populations.

In the Indonesian context, especially at the local government level, grant funds and social assistance derived from the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) frequently attract public scrutiny due to their susceptibility to mismanagement and irregularities. Evaluation reports from the Supreme Audit Agency (BPK) and findings by the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) reveal structural issues in fund management, including unclear targeting, overlapping allocations, politicization of social assistance ahead of regional elections, and weaknesses within internal oversight systems.

This study is conducted in Kediri City, East Java Province, a region characterized by significant complexities in implementing social assistance and grant policies. Kediri City was specifically selected based on demographic characteristics and the community's high demand for social interventions by the government. This research aims to comprehensively evaluate the performance of social assistance and grant policies using the input-output transformation theory developed by Christopher Hood. This theory emphasizes that the effectiveness of public policies can be assessed through the transformation of inputs—resources such as budgets, human capital, and information—into desired outputs, such as improved social welfare, reduced poverty rates, and enhanced quality of life.

Moreover, this research also utilizes key paradigms in public administration, including Old Public Administration (OPA), New Public Management (NPM), and New Public Service (NPS). These paradigms provide valuable comparative perspectives in understanding the dynamics of public administration in Indonesia, particularly in terms of accountability and citizen participation. According to NPM, administrative efficiency can be enhanced through the adoption of private-sector management principles that emphasize results-oriented practices and resource efficiency. Conversely, the NPS approach emphasizes the significance of community participation in public policy management to achieve optimal outcomes.

Relevant previous research underscores the need for an in-depth evaluation of this issue. For example, Ratmono [1] revealed that weaknesses in internal controls and non-compliance with regulations constitute major factors contributing to fraud in social assistance expenditure. Similarly, Budiman [2] identified low transparency in grant reporting as a primary reason for limited accountability. From a theoretical standpoint, the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model developed by Tayibnapis [3] is also integrated into this research to provide a deeper understanding of the specific context surrounding the implementation of social assistance and grant policies in Kediri City.

Thus, this study aims to provide significant theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it seeks to advance a deeper understanding of public policy evaluation in local contexts by integrating public administration theories and policy evaluation models. Practically, the findings of this research are expected to offer substantive recommendations to local governments, particularly in improving the effectiveness of social assistance and grant policies. By identifying implementation shortcomings and offering recommendations based on thorough evaluation, this study aims to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the utilization of public funds to improve community welfare in Kediri City.

2. Theoretical Framework

The evolution of public administration studies has undergone various transformative phases, fundamentally influencing approaches to public policy and its evaluation. Originating from the classical paradigm of public administration, which emphasized a clear separation between administration and politics, initial theoretical orientations focused primarily on bureaucratic efficiency and rationality as fundamental aspects of governance management. Scholars such as Leonard D. White pioneered these ideas, subsequently developed further by Gulick and Urwick, who emphasized principles of organizational structure and administrative efficiency.

As societal and governmental complexity increased, this paradigm faced significant criticism and challenges, particularly from behavioral approaches introduced by Herbert A. Simon through the concept of bounded rationality. According to this perspective, public administration is viewed not merely as a static formal structure but rather as a dynamic organization influenced by individual behaviors and inherent limitations in decision-making processes. This paradigm facilitated deeper insights into administrative processes, recognizing their technical as well as sociological and psychological dimensions.

Subsequent developments led public administration toward paradigms more receptive to social and political environmental influences. New Public Administration (NPA) emerged in response to demands

for social justice, policy democratization, and broader public participation. More recently, the New Public Management (NPM) paradigm has shifted orientations towards efficiency, effectiveness, and outcome-based policy by adopting managerial principles from the private sector. This approach emphasizes performance measurement, accountability, and the application of information technology in public sector management. Nonetheless, NPM has attracted criticism for overly prioritizing efficiency while neglecting participatory democratic values.

As a counterbalance to these shortcomings, the New Public Service (NPS) paradigm highlights the government's role as a facilitator of citizen participation in policy-making processes. This approach perceives society not as passive consumers but rather as active partners in achieving policy goals. Consequently, the focus has shifted from mere efficiency towards public service delivery that is democratic, accountable, and value-driven.

Within the context of policy evaluation, various methodologies have been developed to assess public policy implementation effectiveness. Among these methodologies, this research employs the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) evaluation model developed by Daniel Stufflebeam. The CIPP model emphasizes understanding the policy context, the inputs or resources utilized, the policy implementation processes, and the products or outcomes achieved. Utilizing the CIPP model enables comprehensive policy analysis, encompassing planning stages through final outcomes, and accounts for both internal and external factors influencing policy success.

Nevertheless, this research specifically adopts the perspective of Christopher Hood's input-output transformation theory. This theory views policy as a system transforming inputs into outputs within a measurable and analyzable causal relationship framework. Inputs in this context include budgets, human resources, and community needs-related information and data, while outputs encompass public products or services resulting from policy implementation, such as the number of social assistance beneficiaries, types of assistance provided, and the level of community satisfaction with services received.

The input-output model offers distinct advantages through its simplicity while still providing clear insights into public policy performance. Evaluations using this model assess the extent to which provided inputs effectively generate outputs aligned with policy objectives. Within the scope of this research, the model is employed to evaluate the effectiveness of grant and social assistance fund utilization in Kediri City, emphasizing how resources allocated through the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) achieve objectives of enhanced social welfare and poverty reduction.

Additionally, this study utilizes policy performance evaluation approaches, assessing the extent to which policies achieve predetermined success indicators. These indicators include policy effectiveness in attaining targets, efficient resource utilization, beneficiary satisfaction, and the resultant social impact. Evaluations consider the relationship between inputs and outputs and examine external influencing factors such as socio-political conditions, local leadership dynamics, and stakeholder engagement.

Moreover, the theoretical framework also addresses governance issues in the implementation of grant and social assistance policies. Problems such as insufficient transparency, politicization of aid prior to elections, and weak oversight mechanisms are incorporated into the integrated input-output analysis. In this respect, the theoretical framework not only serves as an evaluative tool but also provides the foundation for formulating more accountable and sustainable policy recommendations.

By integrating contemporary public administration paradigms, the CIPP evaluation model, and the input-output transformation approach, this theoretical framework establishes a robust conceptual foundation for analyzing public policy performance. The framework is academically relevant and practically applicable within the context of local governance in Indonesia, which seeks to enhance public service quality through more effective and efficient management of grant and social assistance funding.

Therefore, the theoretical framework of this research is designed not only to elucidate the dynamics of policy implementation but also to provide analytical tools enabling policymakers to systematically identify weaknesses and formulate evidence-based strategies for improving social policies.

3. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-exploratory case study design. This approach was selected to gain an in-depth understanding of the practical realities surrounding the implementation of grant and social assistance policies by the Kediri City Government. As elaborated in the theoretical framework, the study is grounded in Christopher Hood's Simple Input-Output Transformation theory, where inputs comprising policy resources (such as budget allocations, regulatory frameworks, and human resources) are evaluated against generated outputs (beneficiary coverage, volume of distribution, and social policy impacts).

This theory provides a systemic analytical framework for comprehending policy transformation operationally and is integrated with the Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) evaluation model developed by Tayibnapis, to comprehensively examine contextual dimensions and implementation processes. By employing these two theoretical approaches, this research specifically concentrates on assessing policy effectiveness concerning the allocation and utilization of public resources aimed at enhancing social welfare.

The research employs a single embedded case study design, with Kediri City as the selected administrative region. This purposive selection is justified by the substantial proportion of grants and social assistance expenditure within Kediri City's Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) and empirical findings from auditing institutions indicating potential irregularities in the distribution of social assistance.

Data collection techniques involved three primary methods: in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interviews included both unstructured and structured formats, utilizing open-ended questions directed toward key informants such as the Head of the Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), technical officials, legislative members, and beneficiaries of grants and social assistance. Unstructured interviews aimed to gather rich contextual narratives, while structured interviews focused specifically on thematic data aligned with input-output evaluation indicators.

Observations were conducted to understand behaviors and practices of government officials during program implementation. Researchers carried out direct observation of assistance distribution processes, coordination meetings, and interactions between officials and community members. This method complements interview findings and enriches the understanding of actual conditions in the field.

Document analysis involved gathering secondary data, including APBD documents, budget realization reports, activity accountability reports, audit reports from the Supreme Audit Agency (BPK), as well as relevant policy documents and technical guidelines. These documents were analyzed to assess the alignment between policy plans and their practical implementation, comparing formal objectives with factual conditions.

The research instruments include interview guides developed from input-output indicators and performance evaluation dimensions. Input indicators encompass budget allocation, regulatory frameworks, human resource capacity, and policy control systems. Output indicators consist of the volume of assistance distributed, target coverage, beneficiary satisfaction levels, and short-term social impacts on poverty alleviation.

Research procedures were conducted through several stages: (1) mapping policy issues and relevant actors, (2) preparing data collection instruments, (3) executing field data collection, (4) continuous data analysis, and (5) formulating theoretical interpretations and conclusions.

Data analysis employed Miles and Huberman's interactive analytical model, comprising three key stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involved selecting and summarizing essential information pertinent to the research focus. Data were presented thematically to illustrate patterns, interrelations among findings, and indications of irregularities in implementation. Conclusions were drawn inductively through triangulation of methods and data sources to ensure the validity and credibility of the findings.

Data validity was ensured through methodological triangulation, source triangulation, and direct researcher engagement in field processes. Validity was further strengthened through prolonged

researcher engagement, peer debriefing sessions, and meticulous verification of supporting documents and data. These measures were designed explicitly to preserve the objectivity and integrity of the research outcomes, ensuring that interpretations accurately reflect the realities of the policies under investigation.

Through this methodological framework, the research aims to contribute conceptually to the advancement of policy evaluation grounded in input-output and CIPP theories, while simultaneously generating policy recommendations that are more accountable, participatory, and data-driven for the management of grants and social assistance funds at the local government level.

4. Results and Discussion

This study evaluates the performance of grants and social assistance (bansos) policies in Kediri City, employing an input-output model-based policy evaluation approach. The analysis indicates that policy implementation continues to encounter significant challenges concerning effectiveness, efficiency, beneficiary satisfaction, and resultant social impacts. The analysis is grounded in a theoretical framework derived from policy evaluation theory [4] input-output theory [5] and performance management [6] collectively providing a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics involved in local social assistance policy implementation.

4.1. Evaluation of Policy Inputs and Outputs

The data reveal that policy inputs—including budget allocations, human resources, and supporting infrastructure—have been adequately provided but not fully optimized. Although the number of beneficiaries has increased annually, policy outcomes are hindered by issues of targeting inaccuracies and irregularities in assistance distribution. The employed input-output model highlights the critical linkages between allocated inputs and the generated outputs, encompassing the types of assistance, number of recipients, as well as the timing and methods of distribution.

Findings indicate disproportional budgetary allocations across sectors, resulting in uneven implementation among programs. Additionally, human resources at the operational level display deficiencies in technical and administrative competencies, adversely affecting the quality of social assistance delivery to the community.

4.2. Effectiveness and Efficiency of Implementation

Policy effectiveness was evaluated based on the extent to which social assistance policies have achieved their primary goals, notably poverty reduction and improved community welfare. Results indicate that most output indicators have been achieved; however, these outcomes do not demonstrate a robust correlation with comprehensive social improvement. This is evidenced by Kediri City's moderate decrease in poverty indices for 2022, reflecting only a modest improvement in social condition scores (0.41 points).

Regarding efficiency, budget allocation and resource utilization have not been optimally executed. Inefficiencies are further exacerbated by the absence of technology-based distribution systems and real-time data management, delays in the assistance distribution processes, and weaknesses in internal monitoring and evaluation systems capable of providing timely feedback on program implementation.

4.3. Beneficiary Satisfaction

Beneficiary satisfaction represents a critical indicator for assessing policy performance. Survey results demonstrate that while most beneficiaries report general satisfaction, notable issues persist, particularly concerning the appropriateness of assistance types and distribution timelines. From an impact evaluation perspective, beneficiary satisfaction reflects public service quality and policy responsiveness to actual community needs [7].

4.4. Social and Political Impacts

The social impacts resulting from social assistance policy implementation reveal improvements in welfare among specific community groups. However, these improvements are unevenly distributed and tend to produce only short-term outcomes. Additionally, the study identified political interventions within assistance distribution processes, potentially diminishing public trust regarding policy neutrality and fairness.

Thus, reducing political influences in social policy implementation is imperative, achievable through enhanced transparency, accountability, and increased community participation in supervisory processes.

4.5. Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

A primary strategic finding highlights weaknesses in the existing monitoring and evaluation systems applied in grants and social assistance programs. Current monitoring practices are largely administrative, failing to capture real-time field dynamics effectively. Consequently, policy improvements proceed slowly and lack responsiveness to emerging practical issues.

It is recommended that digital-based monitoring systems be developed to facilitate more transparent, efficient, and participatory tracking and reporting processes.

4.6. Theoretical Discussion and Implications

The findings of this study support the perspectives articulated by Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman (2004), emphasizing the integration of policy evaluation throughout the entire public policy cycle. Furthermore, the input-output policy model proves effective in identifying resource-outcome gaps and underscores the importance of internal efficiency as a support for external effectiveness.

This research also reinforces earlier studies highlighting that key implementation challenges for social assistance programs lie not solely within budgetary constraints but also within policy system design, implementation governance, and political commitment toward long-term welfare goals.

4.7. Preliminary Conclusions

Overall, grants and social assistance policies in Kediri City have yielded positive impacts but have yet to achieve optimal effectiveness. There is an urgent need for comprehensive reform encompassing policy planning, implementation, and evaluation. Adopting data-driven approaches, strengthening implementation capacities, and actively involving communities represent critical elements for improving policy effectiveness and sustainability in the future.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to evaluate the performance of grant and social assistance (bansos) policies in Kediri City using the input-output theoretical approach and integrative principles of public policy evaluation. Employing a descriptive qualitative approach, this research effectively elucidated the realities of grants and social assistance policy implementation in practice, as well as identified the extent to which inputs utilized resulted in expected outputs and outcomes.

The key findings indicate that despite substantial institutional commitment and significant resource allocation, not all components within the policy system function optimally. The misalignment between inputs (such as funding, human resources, and time) and outputs (number and quality of beneficiaries) suggests the necessity for structural and procedural improvements in policy implementation processes. The evaluation model developed in this research integrates essential elements, including stakeholder participation, distribution process effectiveness, and efficient utilization of public budgets, by drawing on principles derived from input-output theory, systems theory, and the Balanced Scorecard approach.

The discussion findings lead to the conclusion that the effectiveness of social assistance policies is considerably influenced by coherence across policy implementation stages, transparency in management processes, and community involvement in oversight mechanisms. Consequently, the input-output theory underpinning this study proves highly relevant for systematically evaluating the relationship between

resources and policy outcomes. The empirical model generated from this study effectively explains the dynamics and challenges of policy implementation in a holistic manner and significantly contributes to strengthening policy evaluation practices within local public administration.

The theoretical implications of this study reinforce the significance of employing a multi-theoretical approach in evaluating public policy performance, particularly within the social welfare sector. Practically, the evaluation model proposed by this research offers a valuable reference for local governments to develop strategies aimed at sustainably enhancing the effectiveness of social assistance programs.

As a follow-up to these findings, future research is recommended to expand scope using quantitative or mixed-method approaches to longitudinally measure changes in community welfare levels. Continuous data-driven evaluation and active participation by civil society actors constitute crucial strategies in constructing policies that are more responsive, inclusive, and adaptive to socio-economic transformations within society.

Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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