

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELDERLY SYMPATHY PROGRAM IN
AN EFFORT TO INCREASE THE WELFARE OF THE ELDERLY IN
PAMEKASAN DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with data collection methods through observation, interviews, and documentation. The aim of this research is to look at the implementation process of the Simpati Elderly Program and the extent to which this program can improve the welfare of the elderly in Pamekasan Regency. The results of this research, if seen from policy implementation, show that the Simpati Elderly program is considered quite good. It's just that this program has shortcomings, such as communication and implementing policies to carry out regular health checks for the elderly. However, recipients of the elderly sympathy program still receive food assistance every day.

Keywords: *Policy Implementation, Sympathy for the elderly, Welfare of the Elderly*

A. PRELIMINARY

Pamekasan, an area with a high elderly population, through the Pamekasan Regency Government Social Service, launched a program for the elderly, namely a feeding program called the "Simpati Lansia" program. This program is one of the flagship programs of the Pamekasan Regency Government based on the idea of Pamekasan Regent H. Baddrut Tamam, S. Psi, M.H.P. which is regulated through Regent Regulations. The elderly sympathy program aims to provide respect, protection, and social security in the form of fulfilling basic needs in the form of food or nutrition in order to obtain a decent life.

The *Peraturan Bupati Pamekasan Nomor 41 Tahun 2021* concerning guidelines for providing social assistance and guidance for disabled elderly people elderly people who are alone, or elderly people who live with other elderly people or together with minor children or with children with disabilities.

Organizing the provision of food for elderly people alone, or elderly people who live with other elderly people or together with minor children or with children with disabilities, are very poor elderly people who are recorded in the Poor Family Data Base owned by the Regency Community Empowerment and Family Planning Agency Pamekasan and/or based on the findings or verification of the Village Head and District Head in the field according to the criteria for very poor elderly people determined by the Community Empowerment and Family Planning Agency of Pamekasan Regency (Pramono et al., 2015). The target of this program is not only elderly people living alone, but also elderly people who live

with other elderly people with minor children or with children with disabilities who are recorded in the database of Persons with Social Welfare Problems (*PMKS*) owned by the Pamekasan Regency Social Service and/or based on the results the findings or verification of the village head and sub-district head in the field are in accordance with the criteria for elderly people living alone as determined by the Pamekasan Regency Social Service.

The implementation of program to provide food to elderly people alone, or elderly people who live with other elderly people or together with minor children or with children with disabilities was implemented on June 15 2021 in Pamekasan Regency with a total of 758 elderly people in 178 villages and 11 sub-districts in 13 sub-districts proposed by village heads and sub-district heads to be recipients of food assistance from the regional government. From the data of 758 elderly people proposed by village heads and village heads, only 412 elderly people were eligible to receive food assistance.

To obtain data on elderly people with the criteria of elderly people living alone, elderly people living with other elderly people or with minor children, or with children with disabilities, the Social Service verifies and validates the data through the village government, sub-district government accompanied by Elderly Companions (Wijayanti & Prabawati, 2020).

Verification and validation (*Verval*) are carried out to ensure that the program is right on target and there are no duplicate recipients. So, from the village government's proposal in Pamekasan Regency, around 4,900 elderly people were recorded, and around 758 elderly people met the criteria for receiving food and drink assistance after going through several stages. However, according to *APBD* capacity, only 412 people were proposed as aid recipients in all sub-districts in Pamekasan Regency.

In implementing the Sympathy for the Elderly program, the Pamekasan district government, through the *Peraturan Bupati Pamekasan Nomor 41 Tahun 2021*, regulates in detail the implementation of the Simpati for the Elderly Program so that it is not only understood but provides clear guidance so that the policy can run well. The Pamekasan Regency Government carries out a series of activities which include, first: A set of regulations, namely follow-up regulations to the Simpati Elderly Program policy in the form of the *Peraturan Bupati Pamekasan Nomor 41 Tahun 2021* concerning Procedures for Providing Social Assistance and Guidance for the Incapacitated Elderly as implementing the provisions of Article 34 paragraph 3 of the *Peraturan Daerah Provinsi Jawa Timur Nomor 5 Tahun 2012* concerning Elderly Welfare.

This Regent's Regulation contains 9 chapters and 9 articles. The Elderly Sympathy Program as a policy from the Pamekasan Regency government was then transmitted by the Head of the Pamekasan Regency Social Service to the parties involved as field technical implementers. Likewise, Dept Pamekasan Social is responsible for maintaining consistent communication in accordance with the Regent's Regulation.

Through this Regent's Regulation, resources are prepared to drive implementation activities, including the Head of the Pamekasan Regency Social Service, the Head of Districts throughout Pamekasan Regency, the Head of the

Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama Pamekasan Branch who is appointed as a third party recipient of responsibility for organizing in the field, the formation of a team tasked with carrying out verification and validation data proposed by the village/ward, Social Volunteer staff to ensure services are on target, time, menu and quantity.

As a means of ensuring that the implementation of the Simpati Elderly Program, whose financial resources come from the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (*APBD*) and other legal and non-binding funding sources, runs transparently, well, and correctly, this program is publicized using the official website, media social, letters. The aim is none other than that the Simpati Lansia program continues to be monitored and controlled (Rangkoly, 2020).

The Pamekasan Regency Social Service as the organizer of the Simpati Lansia program also recruits elderly companions to provide services and supervision to the elderly. Apart from assisting the elderly, the Pamekasan Regency Social Service also involves Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama as cooks, where there are 23 cooks in 13 sub-districts and 25 people delivering food to 412 elderly people spread throughout the Pamekasan sub-district.

The *Simpati Lansia* program assistance takes the form of food and drink packages twice a day which is delivered by food couriers every morning and evening with the food menu given to the elderly adjusted to their needs. The food menu consists of rice, side dishes, vegetables, fruit, and mineral water. The nominal value for 2 meals a day for the elderly is IDR 40,000 per person per day.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

George Edward III emphasized that the main problem of public administration is a lack of attention to implementation. He said that without effective implementation the decision of policymakers will not be carried out successfully (Tachjan, 2016). There are four main issues for effective policy implementation, namely communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. Communication concerns how policies are communicated to organizations and/or the public and the attitudes and responses of the parties involved. Resources relate to the availability of supporting resources, especially human resources, where this relates to the skills of public policy implementers to carry out policies effectively. Disposition concerns the willingness of the implementer to carry out the policy. Bureaucratic structure concerns the suitability of the bureaucratic organization which is the organizer of public policy implementation.

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research with a descriptive approach carried out in Pamekasan Regency. The focus of this research is to determine and analyze the implementation process of the Simpati Lansia program in an effort to improve the welfare of the elderly in the Pamekasan district. The researcher explains the focus of the research by developing an analysis of policy implementation theory from Edward III. Data collection techniques use interview, observation, and documentation techniques and use data analysis techniques based on the views of

Milles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014) (Sahir, 2022), qualitative data analysis is divided into three activities, namely (1) Data Condensation.); (2) Data Presentation (Data Display); (3) Describe and Draw Conclusions (Drawing and Verifying Conclusions).

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This discussion is a brief explanation of the data and information that researchers have previously collected and analyzed. According to Edward III, the process of implementing the Simpati Elderly program in Pamekasan Regency is as follows;

Communication

The communication process in program implementation is realized through an outreach program. Socialization was carried out before the program started, the Pamekasan Social Service conveyed information to the field implementers, namely *PC Fatayat NU* Pamekasan, the Elderly Companion, the Head of the District Section, and recipients. However, the results of interviews with recipients showed that they did not receive clear information about their status as recipients. Some recipients didn't even know the name of the program they received and felt confused because the food was suddenly delivered. Communication between implementers and recipients does not appear to be running smoothly, causing a mismatch between the information conveyed by implementors and the recipients' experiences in the field.

In discussing this communication, there are perspectives from the implementor (Pamekasan Social Service) and program recipients. According to the implementor, the Simpati Lansia program provides great benefits for the elderly by helping meet their food needs. The Elderly Companion also added that this program allows him to see directly the condition of the recipients and listen to their complaints, including health problems that are difficult to access. This information can be reported to the village government for follow-up. However, from the perspective of the recipients, the perceived benefits are not that significant, some even call it normal.

Before the program starts, the implementers are tasked with socializing the program to the parties involved, such as the subdistrict head, village head/headman, elderly companions recruited by the Social Service, cooks, and 25 food delivery people, of course, and elderly recipients of program assistance. This socialization was carried out by the Head of the Pamekasan Social Service to communicate the existence of the *Simpati* Elderly program.

So when the Simpati Lansia program was implemented, the parties understood it while the recipients were aware of the existence of the *Simpati Lansia* program, moreover every month the assistants visited and checked each program recipient. There is an important point in discussing this communication, namely, regarding the perspective of the implementer and recipient. Based on the results of interviews with implementers, namely the Head of the Department and Chair of *Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama PC*, the *Simpati Lansia* program has great benefits for the elderly because it can help them to fulfill their basic needs, namely: food. Meanwhile, responses from program recipients revealed that they

were greatly helped in meeting their food needs, because so far they have often been helped by neighbors who have excess food to share.

Resources

Policy implementation will not be successful without support from the Regional Regulation. Through this Perbup, resources are prepared to drive implementation activities, including the Head of the Pamekasan Regency Social Service, the Head of Subdistricts throughout Pamekasan Regency, the Head of the *Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama* Pamekasan Branch who is appointed as a third party recipient of responsibility for implementing the policy field, formation of a team tasked with carrying out verification and validation of data proposed by the village/sub-district, and Social Volunteer staff to ensure services are on target, time, menu, and quantity. This is staffing created by the Pamekasan Regency Government to run the Elderly Sympathy Program.

Other important sources include the use of official websites, social media, and letters, as a means to ensure that the implementation of the *Simpat Lansia* Program runs transparently, well, and correctly, as well as data management systems or monitoring tools. The financial resources come from the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget (*APBD*) and other legal and non-binding funding sources.

One of the points in the resource is relevant information. In this case, program recipients are considered to need to know the purpose of the program they receive so that it does not cause confusion and it is easier for them to use the assistance they receive.

Next, regarding sources of funds, namely availability and allocation. The Chairperson of *PC Fatayat Nahdlatul Ulama* Pamekasan explained clearly that resources in implementing this program involve the ability of the implementer and the availability of funds. The ability of the implementer is very important because it influences the results of the program, even though the educational background is not used as a benchmark in the *Simpat Lansia* program. Implementors, who have been appointed as the Implementation Team in accordance with the Regency Regulation, are still required to understand the objectives and implementation procedures regardless of educational background. They must also be able to convey information and direct members through meetings or associations.

Program recipients are considered to need to know the objectives of the program they receive. However, the results of the interviews showed that the recipients did not know the purpose of the *Simpat Lansia* program, and did not even know the name of the program. Their questions about why they were chosen as recipients and whether there were other recipients were simply answered with "that's it" without further explanation.

Regarding funding, the Pamekasan Social Service explained in detail the total amount of funds for the *Simpat Lansia* program. The amount of funds for one portion of food is IDR 20,000 and explains that the source of funds comes from the *APBD* and CSR. The allocation of funds is fully regulated by the Pamekasan Social Service in accordance with Perbup No. 41 of 2021.

Disposition

The elderly companion said that at the beginning of the implementation, the

advice given to the implementers was that when the elderly recipients were delivered food, they should be given information about the food items provided and fed for further documentation. He added that food deliveries must be carried out every day twice a day, every morning and afternoon. However, this is different from recipients who want to have their food delivered only once but the portion is fixed for two meals. This is considered more effective and efficient. This can be considered a positive initiative because it can make things easier for implementers, but still not lose its benefits. However, based on the results of interviews with recipients, this was not done. This will be explained in the next point.

Then regarding the problem, what the implementers found was not related to complaints from elderly people about the food provided, but rather about other elderly people who were not registered as recipients. This means that this comes from outside the recipients. They feel that they also deserve assistance from the Simpati Lansia program, but they are not included in it. To respond to this, the implementor provides an explanation and understanding that although the procedure for determining recipients begins with recommendations from the village government and its staff, however, the final recipient data still comes from the Social Service so the implementor is only tasked with carrying it out according to that data. Apart from that, the implementers revealed that there were no other problems. By providing this explanation, it has been informed that the implementers know how they will behave when faced with a problem.

Likewise, the recipients did not feel that there were any significant problems during the implementation of the program. They also stated that they had no complaints about the food provided. However, the recipients said that those who often deliver food are delivery people who are not accompanied by elderly companions.

In terms of problems, implementers found that complaints did not come from elderly recipients, but from elderly people outside the recipients who felt they should get help. The implementor explained that the final recipient data came from the Social Service, and they only ran the program according to that data. The recipients themselves stated that there were no problems during the implementation of the program and had no complaints about the food provided.

This discussion underlines the commitment of program implementers in implementing the applicable guidelines. So in implementing the Simpati Lansia program, program implementers are truly committed to the existing provisions or guidelines. So that the program runs well, this commitment is carried out by means of regular monitoring through the Simpati Lansia program companion who was formed by the Pamekasan district Social Service.

Bureaucratic Structure

This bureaucratic structure speaks about the availability of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and the range of relationships between each actor in the organization. As a result of the documentation study carried out by researchers, the Pamekasan Regent's Regulation (Perbup) concerning the Implementation of the Simpati Elderly Program in Pamekasan Regency is the only written regulation that explains the procedures for implementing Simpati

Lansia which are published. Then, when the researcher conducted an interview with the Head of the Pamekasan Social Service regarding whether or not there was an SOP for the Simpati Lansia program, he said there was a written SOP, and all the techniques or procedures for implementing the program were explained in meetings with the sub-district authorities, elderly companions and field implementers.

The discussion regarding this SOP is still related to the statement made by the Chair of *PC Fatayat NU* Pamekasan which was explained previously, namely regarding the procedures for delivering food every morning and afternoon which is delivered by the delivery officer to the recipient's house. In line with what was conveyed by the recipient, food is delivered twice a day, morning and afternoon.

Apart from that, this point also talks about the accuracy of the program's targets. The Head of the Social Service said that in his opinion, the targets of the Simpati Lansia program were considered appropriate because before the recipients were declared participants, they were verified and validated by their elderly companion.

The elderly targets of the *Simpati Lansia* Program in the classification issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) are the elderly aged 60 to 74 years, the elderly aged 75 to 90 years, and the very old aged 75 to 90 year, very old) over 90 years of age, from four classifications. Meanwhile, from data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2008, the Simpati Elderly Program is included in the category of early old age (senescence), namely the group who are starting to enter early old age from 60 to 64 years old, elderly people are at high risk of suffering from various degenerative diseases aged over 65 years. As regulated in the *Peraturan Bupati Pamekasan Nomor 41 Tahun 2021* CHAPTER V Criteria for Beneficiaries of Social Assistance for disabled elderly, Article 5 paragraph (1) which reads: "Indigent elderly, aged 60 years and over"

Not all elderly people have the same opportunities as recipients of assistance in the Simpati Elderly Program. The target recipients of this assistance are selected based on the criteria as regulated in the Regent's Regulation.

E. CLOSING

The implementation of the Simpati Lansia program can be said to be going well because the elderly recipients of the program are right on target and benefiting. However, several obstacles encountered in the field include:

1) Communication

The lack of understanding regarding this food program by companions to the elderly has implications for the elderly not knowing the name of the program that the elderly are receiving.

2) Resources

Limited manpower, in this case, knowledge of the Simpati Lansia Program, can be an obstacle in the mentoring process, such as providing complete information about the Simpati Lansia Program or timely distribution of food to elderly recipients.

3) Disposition

Food distribution to the elderly is not based on the needs of the elderly's health

condition. Not all elderly program recipients are in good health, some may have special dietary needs related to their health condition, such as diabetes or hypertension.

4) Bureaucracy

Access to knowledge of the Simpati Lansia Program procedures is not truly understood by the elderly recipients. So the elderly recipients only receive assistance without knowing much about the procedures of the Elderly Sympathy Program.

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