

Policy Handling Covid-19 and Effects of Pandemic on Workers in Palembang City

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic not only caused health problems but also had an impact on policies taken by the central and local governments. The government has carried out various policies as an effort to prevent the transmission of Covid-19, one of which is by implementing Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). This research to describe the incidence of Covid-19, the policies for handling Covid-19 and the unemployment rate due to the effects of the pandemic on workers in Palembang City. The PSBB policy implemented has changed social activities in the community so that has an impact on increasing unemployment due to layoffs, restrictions on work activities and closure of business premises and triggers work stress as a psychosocial effect on workers during the pandemic.

Keywords

Covid, PSBB, unemployment



I. Introduction

Early in 2020 the world community was shocked by the new virus, namely the corona virus (SARS-CoV-2) and the disease called Covid-19 which has caused death rates to increase in various countries (Yuliana, 2020). The world has until now been faced with the problem of the spread of the Covid-19 virus which first appeared in Wuhan China based on a WHO report at the end of 2019 (Lisbet, 2020). After Covid-19 was declared a world pandemic by WHO. Indonesia is no exception as one of the countries experiencing this pandemic. Seeing the situation and conditions of the pandemic that is developing in Indonesia through Presidential Decree No. 12 of 2020, the Indonesian government has declared the Covid-19 pandemic a National Disaster (Atmadja, 2020)

The increase in the number of Covid-19 cases caused by the corona virus has occurred in a short time and requires immediate treatment. The corona virus can easily spread and infect anyone regardless of age. This virus can be transmitted easily through contact with sufferers. People who are infected with the virus will show signs of respiratory infections ranging from flu to more serious ones such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (Rusiadi, 2020). Currently Covid-19 is the world's main concern. The rapid spread of the disease is accompanied by the addition of cases that are still increasing, including in Indonesia, and the variety of clinical manifestations of Covid19 has the potential for the collapse of the health system. It is for this reason that governments in several countries have decided to implement lockdowns or total isolation or quarantine.

Facing an outbreak of non-natural disasters, namely Covid-19 that occurred in Indonesia, the government has implemented various policies as an effort to prevent the transmission of Covid-19, one of which is by implementing Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) which is a localized lock down modification according to the severity level at Province, Regency or City (Muhyiddin, 2020). This policy provides an understanding that maintaining a minimum distance of 2 meters, reducing direct contact

with other people and wearing a mask can reduce or even break the chain of Covid-19 infection. This policy has consequences in practice in the community, for example with the existence of self-quarantine, local lock down, which ultimately leads to changes in physical activity, ways of socializing, ways of learning, ways of seeking entertainment and limiting religious activities and activities that involve large numbers of people. This change in activity triggers psychosocial effects during a pandemic, namely stress which will have an impact on decreasing immunity or immunity to disease.

The Corona pandemic has an impact not only on health but also on the economy and education. Compared to other sectors, it is the economic sector that has the most attention. The impact of the corona pandemic in the economic sector also has an impact on the business and employment sectors. The Indonesian government has implemented a policy of working from home (WFH) since mid-March 2020. As a result, many offices, both government and private, have implemented the WFH scheme (Mungkasa, 2020). However, not all work can be done from home so that many workers still have to experience layoffs (Prilly, 2020). Reduction in labor causes the workload of other workers to become heavier and triggers work stress that causes people to feel uncomfortable and tense because of their work or workplace. In addition, this pandemic caused workers who did not have permanent jobs or who worked as day laborers to stop working. That, causing people's income to also decrease. When people's income decreases, regional and national income will also decrease, resulting in weaker economic growth.

This PSBB policy is implemented in several regions of Indonesia, one of which is Palembang, a metropolis and service city that also implements the PSBB policy. The purpose of this study is to describe the incidence of Covid-19, policies for handling Covid-19 and the unemployment rate due to the effects of the pandemic on workers in Palembang City.

II. Research Methods

Observation of data from the Palembang City Health Office, data from the Palembang City Research and Development Planning Agency (Bappeda Litbang), data from the Central Statistics Agency of South Sumatra Province and references from various sources.

III. Results and Discussion

3.1 Covid-19 in Palembang City

COVID-19 is a global health problem including Indonesia. This was initiated from the information of the World Health Organization (WHO) on 31 December 2019 there was a case of a cluster of pneumonia with a new etiology in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China and later expanded beyond China. On 30 January 2020, COVID-19 was set to become the public health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). On 11 March 2020, COVID-19 was designated as a pandemic (Susilawati, 2020).

In humans, this virus can cause respiratory infections from mild in nature such as colds to those of a severe and deadly nature such as SARS and MERS. Corona virus is currently developing and experiencing changes in variation which is then referred to as Covid-19 (Corona Virus Disease in 2019). Covid-19 began to appear at the end of 2019 and began to spread in January 2020 precisely in Wuhan City, China. The presence of this virus has successfully paralyzed all world activities from various sectors, ranging from education, business, politics, tourism and so forth. This condition does not only occur in Indonesia but

also affects all countries in the world. Until March 2020 Covid-19 had spread to 152 countries with a total number of 197,168 cases (Bramasta in Saleh, 2020)

Covid-19 is a new infection caused by the Corona virus which infects the respiratory tract. Diagnosis is made by looking at common clinical symptoms that occur including fever, dry cough, difficulty breathing until close contact with a confirmed patient or after traveling from an infected country (Fahri, 2019). The results of throat and respiratory tract swabs form the basis of diagnosis, and patient isolation is a management that must be done to prevent the spread of the virus. Covid-19 is an important concern in the medical field, not only because of its rapid spread and the potential to cause the collapse of the health system, but also because of the variety of clinical manifestations in patients, ranging from asymptomatic to very mild symptoms, to conditions of acute respiratory failure requiring the use of mechanical ventilation and care in the Intensive Care Unit.

Palembang City was first detected with a positive Covid-19 patient on March 23, 2020. The Covid-19 situation in Palembang City was based on data from the Palembang City Health Office after the implementation of PSBB 1 and 2, namely in June 2020 confirmed cases were recorded 1,009 with active cases 637 or 63, 1% and cases recovered 328 or 32.5%. The status of Palembang City underwent a change from the red zone to the orange zone and the New Normal policy was implemented. Then in August 2020 there were 2,441 confirmed cases with 746 active cases or 30.6% and higher than the national active cases 28.8%, while cases recovered from Covid-19 were recorded at 1,567 or 64.2% and lower than the cases recovered 66.8% nationally. Data obtained from the GIS Covid portal in Palembang City in January 2021 recorded a total of 4,633 confirmed cases and a total of 3,622 cases recovered.

3.2 Covid-19 Handling Policy

Palembang City has carried out two Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), namely the First PSBB which took place from 20 May to 2 June 2020, and continued with the second PSBB Phase which began on 3 June 2020 ending on 16 June 2020. Facing the Covid-19 pandemic, the city government of Palembang implemented a policy for handling Covid-19 (Palembang City Research and Development Agency, 2020) including:

a. Sports Activities

When PSBB implemented, sports are one of the activities that are excluded from the restrictions of public places or facilities and must be done independently only around the house. Based on the Regulation of the Mayor of Palembang (Perwali) No 14 of 2020 Article 15, sports activities outside the home can be carried out independently in a limited number and not in groups. A number of sports activities can still be done in the residential complex and park area of Palembang City, but still pay attention to the appeal to keep your distance and use a mask because after all the body needs to stay active in an effort to always maintain health. Associated with the Perwali, All sports activities outside the home that cause crowds in the public will be disciplined in the form of dissolution or firmer action by the joint apparatus of the Covid-19 Task Force.

b. Entertainment Activities

Palembang City has 188 entertainment facilities that contribute to Regional Original Revenue (PAD) and absorb a lot of workforce. During the PSBB period there was almost no activity in the entertainment venue because it was not operating and temporary closure. In accordance with Perwali Number 14 of 2020 Article 16 paragraph 1, Palembang City

Government has asked all business actors in entertainment venues to temporarily stop their activities in order to minimize the spread of the virus. The closure of entertainment venues has an impact on decreasing Regional Original Income and the emergence of layoffs. The government needs to provide incentives in the form of reducing local taxes and levies for business actors and providing social assistance to workers affected by the implementation of the PSBB.

c. Academic Activities

Academic activities or learning activities such as formal education and informal education. During implementation of the PSBB, activities at school or other educational institutions will be temporarily suspended. Educational activities are carried out online with the concept of learning from home, this is in accordance with Perwali Number 14 of 2020 article 6. The implementation of this policy may have a psychosocial effect on some students, namely stress due to the atmosphere at home because students do not go to school or play with friends and spend time at home alone. Likewise, some teachers may experience work stress because they are not ready for changes in how they work through online media and job demands that require technological skills.

d. Cultural Activities

Culture is a way of life that is formed from many elements (religion, politics, customs, language, art, etc.) and develops in a group of people or society. Culture is often considered to be inherited from generation to generation and so inseparable from human beings that many people tend to think of it as being genetically inherited. Types of activities that are included in cultural groups in Palembang City such as: Selection of 'Bujang Gadis' and 'Cek Ayu-Cek Bagus', Qubro Pilgrimage, Cultural festivals, Car Free Night at Jalan Sudirman and others. Regarding the implementation of the PSBB in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19, cultural activities are included in activities whose implementation is postponed until the end of the Covid-19 pandemic. The temporary suspension of art and cultural activities is in accordance with Perwali Number 14 of 2020 article 16. The suspension of cultural activities will have an impact on reducing / losing the income of art and cultural actors.

e. Religious Activities at Places of Worship

Religious activity is a form of well-planned and controlled business carried out by a person or a group in terms of instilling, implementing and disseminating religious values. Types of activities that are included in religious groups, such as carrying out religious services, congregation at places of worship, commemoration of religious holidays and others. Regarding the implementation of the PSBB, religious activities are not carried out in places of worship because they have the potential to cause the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, religious activities are directed to be carried out in their respective homes. In general, in the early stages of implementing the PSBB, the community carried out religious activities in their respective homes and along with the publication of the New Normal concept some people considered it permissible to perform congregational worship by implementing health protocols. However, there are still congregations in several places of worship that do not apply health protocols.

f. Social Protection and Social Cash Assistance

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused problems not only in the health sector but also in the social and economic sectors. Therefore, prevention and control efforts must be carried out by involving all stakeholders. Based on the data, specifically in the social sector, the assistance that has been provided in the form of Non-Cash Social Assistance / Food Materials and Cash Social Assistance in April 2020, the total budget distributed is Rp. 17,627,400,000 and the number of Beneficiary Families (KPM) is 88,137. The distribution of groceries has been carried out by the Social Service of Palembang City as many as 49,669 packages carried out in May 2020 assisted by related parties.

Cash Social Assistance is assistance provided by the Central Government and Local Governments in the form of Direct Cash Assistance from the Ministry of Social Affairs. The number of KPM is 15,684 or 44.29% of the total quota of 35,415 KPM. Social Assistance for the Family Hope Program (PKH) with the number of KPM was 54,293. Direct Local Government Assistance with the number of KPM was 49,669.

3.3 Unemployment Conditions

With the Covid 19 pandemic, the economy began to decline since the implementation of the PSBB had an impact on labor dynamics. The Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) is a percentage that indicates the number of unemployed. Open unemployment is workers who really do not have a job. Open unemployment is a very large number of unemployed people because they have not yet got a job even though they have tried to get a job. Meanwhile, the Labor Force Participation Rate (TPAK) is the percentage of the total workforce to the total population aged ten years and over.

Table 1. Open Unemployment Rate (TPT) and Labor Force Participation Rate (TPAK) in Palembang City and South Sumatra Province August 2018-2020.

Palembang city	2018	2019	2020
TPT	7.26	8.01	9.86
TPAK	60.41	60.97	65.41
South Sumatra Province	2018	2019	2020
TPT	4.27	4.53	5.51
TPAK	68.45	67.67	68.65

Source: BPS Prov. South Sumatra, 2020

TPT is an indicator used to measure labor that is not absorbed by business fields in the labor market and illustrates the underutilization of the labor supply. TPT also reflects the ability of the labor market economy which has not been able to create jobs for those who want to work but do not get it. The TPT in Palembang City in 2018 was 7.26. This means that out of 100 people in the workforce there are around 7 unemployed. In 2018-2019, TPT increased from 0.75, while in 2019-2020 it was 1.25. This is in line with the TPT in South Sumatra Province which also experienced an increase from 2018-2020. This shows that in this pandemic era the unemployment rate rose higher than the previous year.

The impact of Covid-19 in the economic sector has a more comprehensive impact. In addition to economic growth, the real form that can be seen from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is the incidence of layoffs or being laid off due to calls from the government to stay home or social distancing restrictions that limit people to work (Yamali, 2020). This activity of limiting people to work can trigger an increase in the unemployment rate. Unemployed are

people who have not done any activity that generates money. Unemployment is not limited to people who have not worked, but people who are looking for work and people who are currently working but whose jobs are not productive can also be categorized as unemployment. Including people staying at home, all of them to cut the spread of the covid-19 virus. According to Core Indonesia's projections, a significant increase in the number of open unemployed is not only caused by a slowdown in the rate of economic growth, but also due to changes in people's behavior related to the COVID-19 pandemic and social restriction policies, both on a small and large scale.

An increase in population can cause the unemployment rate to also increase. The increase in the unemployment rate is due to an increase in the number of people who cannot be absorbed by the available jobs. Another factor that can be the unemployment rate is environmental conditions in a country. With the coronavirus outbreak, economic activity has become weak and hampered. Many companies continue to carry out the production process but cannot be accompanied by income. Thus, the company cannot bear the costs of the salary or wages for each employee. The company, in the end decided to do layoffs. Employees affected by layoffs come from the formal and non-formal sectors.

Layoffs result in employees losing their jobs and can be said to be unemployed. It is said that they are unemployed because they are looking for a way out in the form of another job as an alternative to their previous job. Layoffs by the company for employees are carried out to reduce the amount of burdens borne by the company during a pandemic condition. Layoffs are carried out by several companies and to tens or even hundreds of employees. Based on data from the Ministry of Manpower (Kemenaker), a total of 212,394 workers from the formal sector were laid off, while 1,205,191 formal workers were sent home. From the non-formal sector, the Ministry of Manpower recorded that around 282 thousand people had no income. Meanwhile, based on BP Jamsostek data, The number of workers who were laid off and affected by layoffs reached 454 thousand people from the formal sector, and 537 thousand people from the non-formal sector. Moreover, the number of workers in the informal sector in Indonesia is greater than that of the formal sector, reaching 71.7 million people or 56.7 percent of the total workforce. The majority of them work in micro-scale businesses by 89 percent based on data in 2018. From this data, it explains that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, several business sectors have laid off their workers. Many employees or employees have lost their jobs amid the economic slowdown during the pandemic. The largest number of sectors that carried out layoffs were the informal sector, which reached 71.7 million people.

The problem of unemployment can be caused by several factors, such as the case of layoffs, causing a decline in household economic conditions. The problem of unemployment is indeed a complex problem, because it can be linked to several indicators. One of the economic indicators that affect unemployment is the economic growth of a country. If the condition of a country's economic growth has increased, it is expected that it will have an effect on reducing the number of unemployed. However, in the environmental conditions hit by the coronavirus outbreak, economic growth has decreased. This means that if the conditions for economic growth have decreased, it can affect the number of unemployed which has decreased. This means that if the conditions for economic growth have decreased, it can affect the number of unemployed which has increased (Indayani, 2020).

3.4 Pandemic Psychosocial Effects on Workers

The pandemic condition causes some people to feel overly worried or afraid and it is not uncommon to have suspicion and prejudice against people who have signs of Covid. This situation makes someone experience insomnia, headaches, and other physical disorders (Muslim, 2020). Based on the data available today, no party can confirm when the pandemic will end has the potential to cause anxiety (Yuwono, 2020). This is what is called stress, which is a psychosocial effect that occurs during a pandemic. Stress is an adaptive physical and emotional response to situations that challenge and threaten individual health. Stress is divided into 4, namely, stress due to health problems, stress due to work, stress due to the atmosphere of the house, and stress due to the uncertainty over the end of the current pandemic.

During the Covid pandemic, PSBB was implemented and workers worked from home. All offices and business premises or factories are closed. For workers who have activities at home, it is not a problem, but for workers in the service and production sectors who require to work at work locations will cause problems. Stress has now become a common problem in modern life, including work-related stress. Job stress is a dangerous physical and emotional response and can occur when the existing job demands exceed the work ability or control possessed by workers. Work stress becomes a risk to the health and safety of workers when the work carried out exceeds the capacity, resources and abilities of workers on a prolonged basis (Mintjelungan, 2016). In the short term, stress that is left alone without serious handling makes the individual depressed, unmotivated, and frustrated which causes the individual to work less optimally so that his work is interrupted (Jum'ati, 2013).

IV. Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic that entered Indonesia in early 2020 not only caused health problems but also had an impact on policies taken by the central and local governments. The PSBB policy implemented in Indonesia, especially in the city of Palembang, has changed social activities in the community so that it has an impact on the increasing unemployment rate due to layoffs, restrictions on work activities and closure of business premises and triggers work stress as a psychosocial effect on workers during the pandemic.

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