

THE DIFFUSION PROCESS OF THE VACCINATION PROGRAM COVID-19 IN ORDER TO INFLUENCE CHANGES IN PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The existence of the Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on various sectors of life such as the social, economic, cultural, health and political sectors. For this reason, the government has resolved the Covid-19 pandemic problem by issuing innovations in the form of a mass Covid-19 vaccination program. But unfortunately there is community resistance to the implementation of the program. The aim of this research is to provide an analysis of people's rejection of the Covid-19 vaccine. Research uses the theory of innovation diffusion. The research uses a qualitative descriptive approach, with a constructivism perspective paradigm, the respondents are the people of Depok city. Based on the results of the analysis it was found that there are 4 main elements that influence each other so that they can help increase the speed of innovation spread and adoption. The results of the study can be concluded that innovation in the form of Covid-19 vaccination can be effective by using the right communication channels and involving public figures, so that the messages conveyed are in accordance with the values that exist in society. The spread of innovation and adoption can go well because of the right public communication strategy. Based on the findings of this study, the authors recommend that the government be able to produce effective communication policies to reduce public resistance to the implementation of the Covid-19 vaccination.

Keywords: *Covid-19; Diffusion of Innovations; Covid-19 Vaccine; Communication Strategy*



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INTRODUCTION

The problem of the Covid-19 pandemic is not only a health problem, but its impact has damaged the order and aspects of people's lives, causing problems in various fields such as economic, social, political and cultural. The findings of the first case of Covid-19 infection in Indonesia on March 2, 2020 Depok residents who were suspected of being infected from Japanese citizens. After that, the Indonesian government on April 13, 2020 issued a Presidential Decree on the determination of non-natural disasters caused by the spread of the Corona Disease 2019 Virus (Covid-19). The Government of Indonesia issued Presidential Decree number 12 of 2020 as a result of the increasingly widespread transmission of the Covid-19 virus in Indonesia, causing many casualties (Fauzia & Hamdani, 2021).

The high spike in cases is due to the presence of a new variant, the "Delta Variant". The transmission rate of the delta variant can be 6 times faster than the alpha variant. The delta variant contributes to a fairly high mortality rate. so that the Indonesian government took strategic steps by issuing several policies such as implementing health protocols, regional restrictions, limiting community activities and accelerating the Covid-19 vaccination program (Prasetyaning Widayanti & Kusumawati, 2021).

The Covid-19 vaccination program is used as a solution to overcome the pandemic, the Covid-19 vaccine is a new vaccine believed to increase people's immunity. Vaccine administration is a top priority for the government to achieve herd immunity in the community. The main key is the availability of vaccines on a large scale so that they can protect vulnerable groups of society and can reduce the social and economic burden on the community (Mo et al., 2021). The government has carefully planned the Covid-19 vaccination program, such as conducting vaccine clinical trials, issuing a distribution permit from the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM), issuing halal certificates from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), and distributing vaccines to 34 provinces in Indonesia (Purike & Baiti, 2021).

There are many types of vaccines used by the Indonesian government including Sinovac, Sinapharm, Moderna, Astrazeneca, Pfizer, and other vaccines. The vaccine administration is given in stages with different targets, namely: The first phase is carried out from January to April 2021 with the main target of a health worker with a target of reaching 1.4 million. The second phase was carried out from January to April 2021 with the target of sasaran is professions that provide public services such as the TNI, POLRI, Banking, transportation officers, and other officers related to community services totaling 17.4 million people. There is a second period of priority target is the elderly group over the age of 60 years as many as 21.5 million people. From April to March 2022, the 3rd phase targeted for the vaccine is the target economic community of 63.8 million people. And the last Phase 4, still at the same period, the target and target of vaccination is the community of economic actors (Yuniarto, 2021). From the vaccination program expected to achieve herd immunity, the Indonesian government set a target of 67%-80% of the total population in Indonesia (Arina, 2021).

Based on a survey conducted by representatives of communication Science and Research, John Hopkins Center for communication programs survey involving 14 million respondents from May to the end of September 2021, the survey results showed that 34% of respondents who were unwilling to be vaccinated were caused by anxiety about side effects and were still waiting for a safe vaccine (Supriatin, 2021). Public distrust of vaccines is caused by several things, namely belief (religious) factors, doubting the safety and effectiveness of vaccines, receiving misinformation, considering the Covid-19 pandemic to be part of conspiracy theories, not trusting scientists and the government (Dewi, 2021; Oisina Situmeang & Situmeang, 2020; Shahreza, 2018).

Public doubts about the effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines have the potential to create resistant groups. The level of resistance to the Covid-19 vaccine reaches 30%. Such doubts can be eliminated through the delivery of clear and scientific information from the government. Resistant community groups are caused by their conservative mindset, low education, lower middle class, and rural groups (Universitas Amikom Purwokerto, 2021). For this reason, the socialization approach requires an educative, massive, and persuasive communication strategy. The success of the vaccination program depends on public trust in vaccines, for this reason, various efforts must be made (Pradicta, 2021).

According to Roger, diffusion research focuses more on changing attitudes or behavior, namely accepting or rejecting new ideas / innovations. There are four elements that explain the uptake of innovation behavior including: Innovation attributes, communication channels, adopter characteristics and social systems (Mo et al., 2021).

According to Hovland, communication is a process of changing one's behavior through messages conveyed by communicators. The right communication in the Covid-19 vaccination program is communication delivered from the central government to the lower level of society (downward communication), the success of the government in the Covid-19 vaccination program is the most important is the involvement and participation of the community. Thus, media communication is very important in the success of the Covid-19 vaccination program (Goddess, 2021).

In order to ensure the implementation of the Covid-19 vaccination program so that it can run well, the government carries out a communication strategy by educating the public through social campaigns about the Covid-19 vaccination program which is carried out intensively, massively and straightforwardly. It aims to make the public aware and willing to participate in the Covid-19 vaccination program. In socializing government programs using various communication channels such as mass media, online media and interpersonal communication. The interpersonal communication approach also has a very important role in disseminating information, considering that Indonesian society is very diverse with different levels of knowledge and culture, plus the number of rural communities is larger than urban communities, so the interpersonal communication approach is the right choice in building public awareness in the success of the Covid-19 vaccination program.

Based on research (Sutjipto & Pinariya, 2019), the introduction of new vaccines must pay attention to the main elements in the theory of innovation diffusion, namely: Innovation (the presence of new vaccines), time and communication channels. The characteristics of innovation include several things, namely: Relative Advantage suitability, level of complexity, possibility of trying, and possibility of being observed. In addition, in influencing the adoption process by involving the role of figures who can influence people's attitudes and behaviors (Sutjipto & Pinariya, 2019).

From a series of previous studies, there are similarities in the structure that the author did, namely using the Innovation Diffusion theory approach, focusing on the four main elements of innovation diffusion theory and the goal is to build public awareness of the importance of the vaccination program. The difference with previous research is in different objects of innovation. To build public trust and awareness is not easy, especially since the Covid-19 vaccine is a new vaccine. For this reason, a communication strategy is needed in conveying information, and an approach so that the public believes in the safety of the Covid-19 vaccine (Dewi, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODS

Research conducted using case studies, the case study approach can provide an in-depth picture of the diffusion process of the Covid-19 vaccination program. The study used a qualitative descriptive approach. Data collection techniques use interactive techniques. Data collection techniques include observation, content analysis, interviews and Forum Group Discussion (FGD). The research paradigm uses a constructivist perspective. Constructivism is a perspective that views an event as a symptom whose nature can change and has a relationship bond in the past, present and future (Farida, 2014).

The research was conducted with the people of Depok City, consisting of the general public, community leaders and health workers from the Depok Jaya Health Center. The source of the data came from interviews and Forum Group Discussion (FGD), with the people of Depok and health workers from the Depok Jaya Health Center. The research was conducted from August to October 2022.

Data sampling comes from the population of the object of study, qualitative research samples can be referred to as informants. Informants consist of primary informants, key informants and supporting informants. Informants are selected based on Purposive Sampling techniques. Purposive sampling technique is a technique where researchers determine sampling based on certain considerations (Tiana & Amalia, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data reduction derived from interviews and FGDs on the interviewees' perceptions of experiences, objects, events or relationships obtained. The author infers and interprets the information provided. That the Covid-19 vaccine is a new innovation in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic aims to break the chain of transmission and reduce mortality. The Covid-19 vaccination program is the government's strategy in dealing with the pandemic. The vaccination program is given en masse, the main purpose of which is to form herd immunity in the community (Herd Immunity) (Peng et al., 2021; Ryanto et al., 2022). In order for the Covid-19 vaccination program to be adopted by the community, the government issued various policies by providing free vaccines, requiring high-ranking state officials, TNI civil servants, POLRI and health workers to participate in the vaccination program and as roles program model. The Covid-19 vaccination program is also used as a requirement for people's mobility outside the home. So that this program seems to have an element of coercion so that people are willing to join the program.

The results of the study show that many people in Depok city are hesitant, afraid and reject the program. This is due to the many negative issues about vaccines. The Depok City Government uses mass media and social media in disseminating information and educating the public about the implementation of vaccination program activities. The pattern of public communication carried out by the city government has followed the pattern of communication applied by the Government. The pattern of public communication applied by the central government is by applying a centralized communication pattern (centralistic) and a dispersed communication pattern (Decentralistic). What distinguishes these communication patterns is the content of the message, the content and the expected impact.

Factors that can affect the success of the Covid-19 vaccination program vaccine, level of vaccine suitability, and communication patterns (narrative, message content, content and impact).

Discussion

Innovation Attributes (Covid-19 Vaccine)

The Covid-19 pandemic has a major impact on human life, the impact is not only on the health crisis. Almost every country experiences the same crisis, namely the occurrence of economic, social and political crises (Littlejohn et al., 2017). Each country takes policies by making new rules in adjusting to abnormal life. In an effort to resolve the pandemic, the Indonesian government implemented a mass vaccination program to fight the Covid-19 virus.

The vaccine development process goes through various clinical trials by ensuring that the vaccine used is completely safe for use. To increase public understanding of the Covid-19 vaccine, cooperation and support from various parties are needed, such as the media, government, religious leaders and community leaders.

In the context of research, the Covid-19 vaccine is the main innovation presented by the government in overcoming and overcoming the problem of the Covid-19 pandemic. According to Rogers, there are five attributes of innovation that can influence society towards existing vaccines. The first attribute is Relative Advantage, namely public perception of the benefits and advantages of the Covid-19 vaccine. One of them is that the government provides free Covid-19 vaccines, the formation of immune stems, getting many conveniences after participating in the Covid-19 vaccine. The second attribute of Compatibility is the suitability of the community to the Covid-19 Vaccine, conformity with the values believed by the community such as the issuance of a halal certificate from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and a distribution permit issued by the Food and Drug Control Agency (BPOM). This attribute has a major influence on the rate of adoption in society.

The third attribute is Complexity, which is a public perception of the complexity of procedures to get the Covid-19 vaccine, the government is very concerned about the implementation of the vaccination program so that the procedure for getting vaccinated is easy. Because the more complex the procedures applied will affect the slower the adoption rate. The fourth attribute of Trialability, in this attribute people get perceptions from two different experiences, namely direct experience and indirect experience. The perception of indirect experience is the experience when the public witnessed what happened to the first phase of vaccine recipients, for example in the news when the President, state officials and community leaders participated in the Covid-19 vaccination program. Society models the behavior of figures who are seen as providing value for themselves. Repeated reporting is one way to improve the attributes of Trialability. The perception of direct experience is when the adopter receives the first stage of Covid-19 vaccination, then from the first experience will determine the vaccination process in the next stages. The fifth attribute of Observability is when the perception of people who have not been vaccinated can see and monitor the condition of people who have been vaccinated against Covid-19. Innovation attributes can influence the community in adopting the Covid-19 vaccination program quickly.

Communication Channel

Communication channels have a function as a means of delivering information consisting of mass media, online media and interpersonal communication. Communication channels are one of the most important elements in determining the success of the Covid-19 vaccination program. The Depok city government in disseminating information on the implementation of the Covid-19 vaccination program through mass media and social media such as Whatsapp Group, Instagram, Twitter and websites. What is updated in this study is the use of social media and digital media based on internet technology, so that the dissemination of information and messages to the public It becomes faster and more effective because it has a very wide range. In addition, interpersonal communication also has an important role by involving the participation of community leaders (such as religious leaders, RT / RW administrators, and cadres) in providing socialization, counseling, and education directly to the community.

The public communication strategy implemented by the government to succeed the Covid-19 vaccination program uses two communication patterns, namely centralized communication patterns and decentralized communication patterns.

Centralized communication is driven by the Committee for COVID-19 Mitigation and National Economic Recovery (KPC-PEN) which is responsible for the messages conveyed. Narasi contains more general information. such as overview, program implementation, vaccine safety, the impact to be achieved, indirectly inviting the success of the program, and countering misleading news about the Covid-19 vaccine.



Narrative of information in communication patterns sentralization

Communicators in centralistic communication include:

- Committee for Covid-19 Mitigation and National Economic Recovery (KPC-PEN),
- Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture;
- Coordinating Ministry for Political, Legal and Security Affairs;
- Ministry of Health;
- Ministry of Finance,
- Ministry of Home Affairs;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Ministry of Transportation;
- Ministry of Communication and Information Technology;
- National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB)

The goal to be achieved is to increase public knowledge and participation in the implementation of Covid-19 vaccination.

Meanwhile, in the pattern of decentralized communication, there is no driving force in coordinating the dissemination of public information and socialization related to the implementation of the Covid-19 vaccine. Communicators in the pattern of decentralized communication are government elements who are not members of KPC-PEN or the Covid-19 Task Force both at the regional and national levels. Contentration in the form of information on the progress of the implementation of the Covid-19 vaccination in an agency/region, the content of messages regarding information on the vaccination schedule, technical registration of participants, to direct invitations to participate in the Covid-19 vaccination program.



Narrative Information pattern ddecentralized related j adwal vaksin

Communicators of dispersed communication patterns (decentralized) consist of:

- Ministry of Village and Regional Development 3T;
- Provincial Local Government;
- Regency/City Government;
- Village Administration;
- Phc;
- Hospital
- All other government agencies that are not members of the covid task force or KPC-PEN

The purpose of the spread communication pattern (decentralized) is information on the implementation of Covid-19 vaccination program activities.

Time Element or Adopter Characteristics

The discovery of new innovations takes time in their deployment. Time management has the goal of determining the timing of an innovation to accelerate the rate of adoption in the community.

To control the level of transmission and reduce the risk of death, the government issued a mass Covid-19 vaccination program policy. The Covid-19 vaccine is a new vaccine, so many people are afraid and doubt the safety and halality of the Covid-19 vaccine.

The measurement of time in the Covid-19 vaccination program can be seen from the decision-making process, which is when someone first learns of the Covid-19 vaccination program. In this condition, they decide the attitude of accepting or refusing the Covid-19 vaccine. The stages of the decision-making process are as follows:

- a. Knowledge stage, is the stage where someone gets information about the Covid-19 vaccination program and knows the benefits of the Covid-19 vaccination program.
- b. Persuasion stage, which is a stage of attitude formation, where prospective adopters begin to have interest and curiosity about the Covid-19 vaccination program, they begin to look for information about the Covid-19 vaccine, perceptions that can form positive or negative attitudes from the program.
- c. Decision Making Stage, a stage where a prospective adopter makes the choice of accepting or rejecting the program. From the interview results, prospective adopters consider the advantages and disadvantages obtained when adopting the program. For example, you can avoid the risk of transmission of the Covid-19 virus, get convenience after being vaccinated and side effects of participating in the Covid-19 vaccination program.
- d. Implementation stage, is the stage where an adopter carries out the decisions that have been taken. From the interviews, they received the Covid-19 vaccination program by digging up various information. The experience of participating in the Covid-19 vaccination program is the basis for participants' consideration to continue or stop. Where participants take part in the Covid-19 vaccination program to learn and provide an assessment of the program.
- e. Confirmation stage, at this stage an adopter looks for reference sources to strengthen his decision. This stage allows an adopter to accept the innovations he has tried and one day the adopter can change the decision he made. As an example from the results of interviews with resource persons to 2 vaccination recipients who are health workers: "I have done Covid-19 vaccination from the first stage and the second stage as well as the first booster and second booster, I have been vaccinated 4 times". Another case with the 3rd speaker who is a private employee: "Already vaccinated, but not complete because they have experience after the vaccine there are itchy body parts and glands on the neck become enlarged. For the time being it is not continued, but in another way to get the body's immunity by consuming herbs".

From the two examples, each resource person had different reasons as considerations for continuing, stopping adopting or rejecting the Covid-19 vaccination program.

Elements of the Social System

A social system is a group of individuals who interact with each other directly involved in solving a problem. The high level of transmission in the community due to the Covid-19 virus is a problem that must be faced together. In the social system there are two structures, including social structure and communication structure. Social structure can influence diffusion through values, norms, roles and hierarchies. Communication structure determines how a message flows through a social system. With President Joko Widodo's willingness to become a role model in the

Covid-19 vaccination program, it is very appropriate to do because the message will flow through social structures so that it can affect adoption.

CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 vaccination program is a process of implementing innovations developed in order to deal with the crisis that occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Currently, the implementation of the vaccination program is experiencing major obstacles in the form of resistance or public rejection of vaccine administration. This refusal occurred due to doubts and distrust of certain groups of people towards the effectiveness of the Covid-19 vaccine. In order to deal with the problem of community resistance that arises, the government needs to implement mass communication policies by utilizing various communication channels and opinion leaders. The findings of this study use the perspective of the innovation diffusion theory approach, which utilizes specific strategies to introduce the main innovation (Covid-19 vaccine). The findings in this study show that governments can leverage community leaders, communicators, communication channels, and introduce innovations based on the conformity of community values to vaccines. So far, when viewed from the theory of innovation diffusion, the author recommends mass communication policies to people-resistant groups related to Covid-19.

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