

Implementation of Public Order Policies in the Handling of Homeless People in the City of Cirebon

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ABSTRACT

The number of homeless people in public spaces in Cirebon City indicates that the implementation of Local Regulation No. 13 of 2019 on Public Order has not been effective. The purpose of this study is to examine how the policy on handling vagrants in Cirebon City is implemented from the perspective of George C. Edward III's implementation theory, which includes communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. This study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews with the Public Order Agency (Satpol PP), the Social Services Agency, and the target group of the vagrancy policy. Additionally, field observations and documentation were conducted. The results of the study reveal that although coordination between implementing agencies has been carried out, it has not achieved all of its objectives. The main factors hindering policy implementation include limited resources, a lack of supporting facilities such as shelters, and poor vertical communication with the target group. Despite the good commitment of the implementers, the homeless population still does not fully experience the impact of the policy. The research findings suggest that while the policy has been implemented, its execution has not been optimal in some areas, and strengthening is required in the elements of resources, operational mechanisms, and social empowerment services. This research also contributes to public administration studies on the implementation of social policies at the local level and recommends improving policy integration and the provision of supporting facilities.

Keywords: Policy implementation; public order; vagrancy; public administration; social services

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INTRODUCTION

In the implementation of Pancasila, especially the fifth precept on social justice for all Indonesian people, which is regulated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 11 of 2009 concerning social welfare, the goal is to realize a decent and dignified life for all Indonesian people. However, field data shows that Law No. 11 of 2009 concerning social welfare has not achieved the optimal level of welfare for the Indonesian people. The number of people living in poverty in Indonesia continues to rise. According to the World Bank, based on the newly released international extreme poverty line for 2025, by 2024, 5.4% of Indonesia's population will be classified as poor, 19.9% will be classified as poor based on the common poverty line for lower-middle-income countries (LMICs), and 68.3% will be classified as poor based on the common poverty line for lower-middle-income countries (World Bank, 2025).

Policy implementation in Indonesia is often hampered by structural factors such as budget constraints, weak coordination between institutions, and community resistance, all contributing to the country's high poverty rate (Nugroho et al., 2021; Pramuka et al., 2025; Pramusinto & Quah, 2016). The handling of social problems, such as homelessness, which still exists on many roads in Indonesia, is an example of this phenomenon. Although national policies such as Law No. 11 of 2009 on social welfare and Government Regulation No. 31 of 1980 on countermeasures against homelessness and begging emphasize preventive, repressive, and rehabilitative efforts, their implementation at the local level is often ineffective

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(Rochmansjah & Saputra, 2024). This failure to achieve goals exacerbates social injustices for marginalized and other vulnerable groups (Afandiyeva & Aliyeva, 2025; Baah et al., 2019; Walker et al., 2019).

According to Government Regulation No. 31 of 1980 concerning the Prevention of Homelessness and Begging, "a person who lives in circumstances that are not in accordance with the norms of a decent life in society, does not have a permanent place to live, works in a certain area, and wanders in public places to maintain their survival" is defined as homeless. In Cirebon City, researchers observed this phenomenon, with some people still occupying sidewalks and public spaces on several city streets. This condition does not reflect public order as stipulated in the Cirebon City Regional Regulation. To address this issue, the Cirebon City Government issued Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, which states, "Everyone is prohibited from trespassing and disturbing public order or public peace" in Article 21. Through this regulation, local governments aim to manage the condition of homelessness and carry out social development efforts as part of the social welfare function at the local level.

Based on data from the Cirebon City BPS in 2023, the number of homeless people recorded reached 85 individuals. In this phenomenon, researchers found that some homeless individuals can be seen on street corners, shopping areas, and around public facilities in Cirebon City. This disparity between official data and actual conditions suggests potential differences in the data collection mechanism and the effectiveness of the implementation of regional policies related to the handling of homelessness. This situation also highlights that the phenomenon of homelessness remains a social problem that requires more attention in the context of the implementation of Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, especially in efforts to create an orderly, clean, and humane urban environment (BPS Cirebon City, 2023).



Figure 1 Drawing of Factual Conditions of the Existence of Homeless People in Urban Areas of Cirebon City

Based on the picture above, it can be seen that there are still homeless people active in the public spaces of Cirebon City. This condition shows that even though Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order has been enacted, practices in the field still indicate violations of social order provisions. This phenomenon highlights the challenges in policy implementation, especially in terms of supervision and rule enforcement.

Regional policies related to the handling of homeless people are still not functioning optimally (Schutt & Garrett, 2013; Stuart, 2014). Several obstacles, such as limited human

resources, a lack of budget, poor coordination between agencies, and weak enforcement of sanctions as stipulated in regional regulations, have been identified (Kamila Khaerunnisa & Rokilah, 2024). The effectiveness of policy implementation is heavily influenced by the local government's ability to manage social welfare programs in a directed, consistent, and participatory manner (Speer, 2012). The lack of understanding among the implementers and low community participation mean that the policies that have been made have not had a significant impact on reducing the number of homeless people in the region (Lindawati & Rahman, 2023).

According to Mahendra et al. (2020), the implementation of the program to handle beggars, homeless people, abandoned individuals, and street psychotics in Cirebon City has not been running optimally. The main obstacles are found in the areas of human resources, inter-agency communication, and inefficient bureaucratic structures. Although the study provides an overview of the implementation of social policies in Cirebon, it has not specifically examined how Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 is applied in the context of handling homelessness, nor has it explored the extent to which the effectiveness of these policies impacts the target community. This gap calls for a follow-up study that not only highlights the implementation of the program but also analyzes bureaucratic mechanisms and the factors that affect the success of regional policies in maintaining public order. To fill this gap, this study uses George C. Edward III's policy implementation theory as the basis for analysis.

The urgency of this research is underscored by the persistent visibility of homelessness in Cirebon, which not only contravenes local regulations but also signifies a failure in the social welfare system. Understanding why the policy is not working is crucial for the Cirebon City Government to allocate resources more effectively, improve coordination, and develop more humane and sustainable solutions. Without a detailed analysis, interventions risk remaining superficial, addressing the symptom (the presence of homeless people) rather than the systemic causes rooted in policy implementation failures. This research is therefore essential for informing evidence-based policy improvements.

This theory emphasizes four key factors that determine the successful implementation of a policy: communication, resources, implementing disposition, and bureaucratic structure. This study seeks to examine in depth how these four variables play a role in the implementation of Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 in Cirebon City, as well as how this policy contributes to the government's efforts to deal with the problem of homelessness.

In terms of theory, this study aims to enrich the literature on the implementation of public policies, especially regarding repressive regional social policies with a humanitarian aspect. From a practical perspective, the findings of this study are expected to help the Cirebon City Government improve the implementation process of Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2019 to be more efficient, fair, and sustainable. This research can also serve as a reference for other regions in developing methods for implementing public order policies that align better with the social dynamics of urban communities.

Previous studies in various regions in Indonesia show that research on the implementation of policies to handle homelessness generally focuses on the administrative and technical aspects of the policy. For example, research conducted by Haryo Bharoto and Nursahidin (2020) shows that the implementation of programs to handle beggars, homeless people, displaced individuals, and street psychotics in Cirebon City has not run optimally due

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to limited resources, weak coordination between agencies, and ineffective bureaucratic structures. However, this study has not specifically examined the implementation of Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, which is the main legal basis for handling the problem of homelessness in the region.

METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen because the research aims to understand in depth the process of implementing the policy of Cirebon City Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, specifically in the context of handling homeless people. The main goal of the research is to understand, explain, and find the meaning of phenomena that are systematically studied through a scientific approach (J. W., 2018).

This study applies a data collection method that includes interviews, observations, and document analysis. The observation was carried out to collect information directly regarding the implementation of the policy of Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order. Interviews aimed at studying the experiences and perceptions of agencies such as the Social Services, Satpol PP, and homeless people in Cirebon City. Document analysis was conducted to help understand the policy of Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019. To test the validity of the data obtained, a data triangulation approach was used to increase the validity and reliability of the findings. The triangulation of this data was carried out with interviews involving the Social Services, Satpol PP, and homeless people in Cirebon City. The collected data was then analyzed, interpreted, and supplemented with additional information to strengthen the research results.

With this methodology, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the implementation of the policy of Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order is understood, implemented, and responded to by various parties in handling homeless people in Cirebon City. The research aims to produce humane countermeasures recommendations to create sustainable order.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

This research was obtained through interviews with Herbinawan, an informant from the Civil Service Police Unit (Satpol PP), and Heru, an informant from the Cirebon City Social Service, on December 22, 2025. These two agencies are involved in the implementation of public order control and handling, as well as interviews with homeless individuals who are the target of the policy outlined in Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order in Cirebon City. Field findings show that the policy has generally been implemented, but based on the results of the interviews, there are still a number of obstacles in its implementation that have the potential to hinder the effectiveness of the policy.

According to interviews with homeless people as informants, it was found that they had never been disciplined by the Cirebon City Pamong Praja Police Unit. The informant revealed that, while in Cirebon City, they had never been involved in the control activities carried out by the Pamong Praja Police Unit. The informant is originally from Cilacap Regency and has moved and settled in Cirebon City since 1990. This finding aligns with Herbinawan's statement

from the Cirebon City Pamong Praja Police Unit, which stated that control activities are carried out based on community reports, routine patrols, and regional regulation enforcement operations. However, in its implementation, the control still faces obstacles such as limited personnel and inadequate budgets, which impact the suboptimal implementation of homeless control in Lemahwungkuk District, Cirebon City.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency of Cirebon City in 2023, the number of homeless people was recorded at 85 individuals, while information from the Cirebon City Social Service showed that 13 homeless people were recorded and received social coaching in 2023. This significant difference in numbers indicates a disparity in data between agencies, likely influenced by differences in data collection mechanisms and criteria for identifying homeless individuals. According to interviews with the Cirebon City Social Service, the implementation of public order plays a role by providing social protection and rehabilitation in the form of physical, mental, and spiritual guidance, as well as coordination with the Cirebon City Pamong Praja Police Unit. Although social coaching and rehabilitation have been carried out, field findings still show the presence of homeless individuals in several areas of Cirebon City. This condition suggests that, in addition to data synchronization issues, the implementation of public order policies still faces challenges in terms of data collection, coordination, and the effectiveness of field control efforts.

Overall, the results of this study show that the implementation of the policy outlined in Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, particularly in handling homelessness, has been carried out through social control, coaching, and rehabilitation activities in accordance with the authority of the relevant agencies. However, various obstacles in its implementation still prevent the policy from being fully effective, both in terms of the response of the homeless and the implementation mechanisms by law enforcement officials. This condition highlights the empirical reality of the implementation of public order policies in Cirebon City.

Discussion

Implementation of Public Order Policy in Handling Homeless People in Cirebon City

The phenomenon of homelessness in Cirebon City often triggers attention to find out the extent to which public order policies are implemented as regulated in Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order. Regional law enforcers such as the Cirebon City Pamong Praja Police Unit as an agency that plays a role in policing and the Social Service as an agency that provides social protection and social rehabilitation. In this case, Satpol PP and the Social Service coordinate in implementing Law Number 11 of 2009 which regulates the efforts of the government as well as local governments and the community in providing social welfare for Social Welfare Service Providers (PPKS) as the basis of national law and Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order at the regional level. Based on this phenomenon, this study uses the implementation theory according to George C. Edward III to measure the extent of coordination between Satpol PP and the Cirebon City Social Service in implementing Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, especially in handling homeless people in Cirebon City.

Communication

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Based on the results of interviews with Satpol PP and the Cirebon City Social Service, it shows that communication between policy implementing agencies in handling homeless people at the city level has been running relatively well. Satpol PP carries out regulation as part of the enforcement of Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order, then coordinates with the Social Service to follow up after the regulation through social coaching and rehabilitation. These two agencies are also routinely involved in cross-sector coordination meetings that discuss Social Welfare Services (PPKS) such as abandoned children, psychotics, and homeless people.

Nevertheless, the findings of interviews with vagrants show a different condition. The homeless man interviewed by the researcher stated that he had never been disciplined by the Pamong Praja Police Unit or received coaching or rehabilitation from the Social Service. This fact is similar to the phenomenon of many homeless people who still occupy several public spaces in Cirebon City. These findings indicate that although communication between implementing agencies is relatively ongoing, policy communication has not fully reached the policy target group.

This gap shows that there is a vertical communication gap, namely between policy implementers and target targets. In Edward III's perspective, policy communication is not only interpreted as coordination between policy implementers, but also includes the extent to which policies are understood, felt and accepted by target groups. When homeless people as policy targets are not touched by the control and coaching process, then policy communication can be considered to have not run effectively and comprehensively.

Resources

The resource aspect is a factor that greatly affects the uneven coverage of policies. Based on the results of interviews with Satpol PP and the Social Service, it was revealed that the two agencies lacked resources and lacked special budgets in social control and development. This limitation has a direct impact on service capacity, both in terms of the frequency of coaching and the scope of targets.

The findings of interviews with homeless people who have never been disciplined or rehabilitated reinforce the indication that limited resources cause policies to be selective and have not reached all homeless people in the field. This is also in line with the findings of Satpol PP which shows that control cannot be carried out comprehensively and sustainably, due to the limitation of manpower and post-control facility support.

In addition, the lack of halfway houses and rehabilitation facilities at the city level further narrows the handling space. In the context of Edward III's theory, the limitations of human resources, budgets, and facilities directly hinder the effectiveness of policy implementation, so that policy objectives are not fully achieved in the target group.

These findings are in line with the results of research conducted by Bharoto et. Al (2020) stated that the main factor that affects the successful implementation of public order policies is the availability of resources, both in terms of budget and the number of implementing employees. The limited resources cause the implementation of the policy not to run optimally as stipulated.

The similarity of the results of this study shows that the resource aspect is a crucial factor in the implementation of public order policies. Thus, the findings in Cirebon City reinforce the results of previous research that without adequate resource support, public

policies tend to experience obstacles in the implementation stage, even though normatively they have a clear legal basis.

Disposition

In terms of disposition, both Satpol PP and the Social Service show a fairly high commitment in carrying out their respective roles. Satpol PP continues to carry out regulation as law enforcement, while the Social Service continues to provide guidance even without special budget support, even forming a Rapid Reaction Team (TRC) to handle Social Welfare Service Needs (PPKS). However, the statement of homeless people who have never undergone regulation or rehabilitation shows that the commitment of the implementers has not been fully converted into a real impact on all policy targets. In other words, there is a gap between the good intentions and attitude of the implementers and the results of policy implementation in the field.

A positive disposition is an important requirement, but it is not enough if it is not supported by adequate resources and structures. Although the executor's disposition is relatively good, there are other limitations of supporters. Causing the implementation of the policy to not be felt equally by homeless people as policy targets

Bureaucratic Structure

In handling homeless people in Cirebon City, the agencies involved such as Satpol PP and the Social Service have formally shown a clear division of duties. Satpol PP plays a role in the scheduled regulation in accordance with the applicable SOPs, while the Social Service through the Social Rehabilitation Division is responsible for coaching (Wardani & Kurniawan, 2025; Wiranata et al., 2025). However, this structure is not equipped with an operational mechanism that is able to reach all homeless people.

Although the division of tasks is clear, the bureaucratic structure has not been fully supported by adequate facilities and programs. There is no shelter available at the Cirebon City Social Service and has not held a comprehensive post-empowerment program at the city level. The intensive rehabilitation and skills training program is still under the authority of the West Java Provincial Social Service through the Bina Karya Nursing Home in Bandung.

According to Edward III, a bureaucratic structure that is not supported by adequate operational procedures and facilities will cause policies to run partially and inconsistently. This condition is reflected in the implementation of the policy of handling homelessness in Cirebon City which has not fully reached the target group as a whole.

Recommended Strategies

Based on the results of the research, the dimensions of disposition in the implementation of Regional Regulation Number 13 of 2019 concerning Public Order in Cirebon City have been carried out in accordance with applicable regulations. The implementing apparatus demonstrates commitment in carrying out their respective duties and functions, where the Cirebon City Pamong Praja Police Unit plays the role of enforcing regional regulations, while the Cirebon City Social Service carries out the function of social protection and rehabilitation for homeless individuals. The synergy of these roles shows that the attitude, understanding, and commitment of the implementers toward the policy are aligned with the objectives of the regulation. Therefore, in this dimension, a strengthening strategy is needed in the form of maintaining commitments, improving the coordination of human values

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in governance, and ensuring consistency in the implementation of tasks so that the policy continues to be executed both professionally and humanely.

However, in the communication dimension, weaknesses are still evident. This can be seen from the presence of homeless individuals who have never been disciplined or received social coaching, indicating that policy delivery has not fully reached all target groups. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen communication through persuasive and preventive approaches on a sustainable basis, increase the intensity of field socialization, and harmonize communication between policy implementers to ensure that the information conveyed is consistent and not fragmented.

In the dimensions of resources and bureaucratic structure, policy implementation also faces obstacles. The limited number of implementing personnel and inadequate budgets have an impact on the optimization of homeless handling. Additionally, the unavailability of halfway houses at the city level means that handling is referred directly to the West Java Provincial Social Service, potentially causing overlapping authority and prolonging the rehabilitation process. Therefore, the recommended strategies include strengthening resource allocation, increasing personnel focused on social development, and establishing halfway houses at the city level to create a more effective and integrated bureaucratic structure.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the implementation of Regional Regulation No. 13 of 2019 in handling homeless people in Cirebon City is still functioning administratively but has not been effective substantively. Although coordination between the Cirebon City Civil Service Police Unit and the Cirebon City Social Service has been established and supported by the implementing disposition, the policy has not fully reached the target group. Based on the theoretical framework of policy implementation by George C. Edward III, the main obstacle lies in weak vertical communication between policy implementers and the target group, which is reflected in the findings where homeless individuals claim to have never been disciplined or received coaching. This condition demonstrates that the policy has not been adequately conveyed, understood, or accepted by the target group. Another obstacle is the limitation of resources, including the number of personnel, budget support, and supporting facilities. Additionally, the bureaucratic structure has not been supported by operational mechanisms and sustainability programs, such as halfway houses and post-rehabilitation empowerment. As a result, policies tend to stop at the control stage without promoting sustainable social transformation. Thus, this study emphasizes that the implementation of public order policies in handling homelessness at the regional level requires inclusive communication, adequate resources, and the strengthening of an adaptive bureaucratic structure that is integrated with a social protection approach.

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