

Healthy Living Community Movement Policy as an Effort to Eradicate Poverty in Medan City

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ABSTRACT

Poverty reduction efforts should also include improving access to health services and environmental conditions. Medan Mayor Regulation No. 61 of 2021 on Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) aims to improve the quality of life through a healthy lifestyle and reduce healthcare costs. The GERMAS policy has been implemented to improve the quality of life. However, the challenge is to change people's behavior and implementing the GERMAS policy in Medan City is quite tricky. This study used a descriptive qualitative method combined with a literature review. Data collection strategies were obtained from observation and literature review. Data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing were used as data analysis procedures. The results showed that the Medan City Government's GERMAS policy aims to increase productivity and reduce the financial burden of unhealthy living habits. The policy aims to reduce maternal mortality, improve nutrition, and alleviate poverty. However, its implementation is inefficient due to insufficient cross-sectoral coordination, limited resources, and low public awareness. To improve, the government should focus on innovation, community development, healthy lifestyles, and collaboration between government sectors.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a condition that explains the unmet basic needs of a person or group (Setyawati, 2013). Basic needs in human life include food, shelter, Health, and basic education. There are two ways to measure poverty, namely multidimensional poverty measurement, which considers the dimensions of poverty humanely and comprehensively, and dimensionless poverty measurement, which solely looks at poverty from an income perspective (Gopal et al., 2021). Poverty in any individual or group can have an impact in various ways. The main impact produced by poverty is family welfare, especially prolonged poverty will have an impact on the next generation (Segal & Niles, 2008). In addition, poverty can also affect the development of a region (Azhari & Faridatussalam, 2023). The Community Development Index (HDI) of a region includes economic growth, Health, and education based on poverty levels (Saiful & Jumading, 2023).

The identification of factors that affect poverty includes education, Health, household living conditions, and unemployment (Lestari et al., 2021). In this study, the author focuses on Health as one of the factors that affect poverty. Poor Health can also prolong poverty by limiting one's ability to work and earn a living (Smith & Mazure, 2021). It affects a person's ability to have good Health and is caused by low income, limited access to health services, inadequate nutrition, and exposure to environmental hazards (Howell, 2018). Most poor people still lack access to adequate health services because poverty can make it difficult for poor people to obtain health services (Purwitayana, 2012). In addition, diseases that endanger public Health can spread through inadequate environmental conditions (Ginting, 2020). Therefore, efforts to reduce poverty also need to be accompanied by efforts to increase access to health services and improve environmental conditions to improve the overall Health of the community.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Currently, Health is one of the important aspects that receive more attention from each local government. This is because public welfare can be realized if public Health is guaranteed (Aulele et al., 2017). In addition, Health can affect various life problems, such as quality of life, high morbidity rates, and high medical costs (Maharani, 2021) (Hikmah & Hikmah, 2020). This means that good Health will increase people's productivity, reduce the burden of health costs, and encourage economic growth. In line with this, Medan Mayor Regulation No. 61 of 2021 on Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) in Medan City is one of the efforts to address health issues in Medan City. This policy is intended to make efforts to improve the quality of life of the people in Medan City through a healthy lifestyle and reduce costs due to health services. With this policy, it is expected to improve the welfare of the community by living a healthy life, increasing productivity, and reducing financial burden.

In this regard, the author is interested in analyzing the implementation of the Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) policy as an effort to alleviate poverty in Medan City. This is because Health is one of the

components of realizing community development and advancing a region. Health has a direct link to determining the quality of life and the financial burden of the community, which leads to measuring a person's poverty level. Every region in Indonesia has implemented the GERMAS policy to improve the quality of life of the people in each region. The Medan City Government itself considers that investment in Health is very important for the development of human resources in Indonesia (Pemekomedan.go.id, 2017). However, there are challenges in implementing the GERMAS policy in Medan City, namely changing people's behavior to make a healthy lifestyle a culture for every aspect of life. In addition, the Medan City government also considers that the implementation of the GERMAS policy has been quite long, and Medan City is one of the regions that has needed to be on time to implement the policy.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses descriptive qualitative methods in conjunction with a literature review. This strategy is frequently used to answer research questions about the "who, what, and where" of subjective events or experiences (Doyle et al., 2019). This strategy is adaptable and not tied to a specific method, allowing researchers to draw techniques from different qualitative designs (DeMarco, 2023). This study looks at how the Medan Mayor's Regulation No. 61 of 2021 on Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) will increase quality of life and lower public health service expenditures.

Data gathering strategies were gathered from observation and a review of the literature. The author of the research object conducts observation by direct observation. Books, documents, online media, and previous research on the research topic are used to conduct literature studies. Data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing were used as data analysis procedures. Furthermore, data triangulation was used to eliminate bias and boost research trustworthiness (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2016).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Efforts to Alleviate Poverty through the Healthy Living Community Movement in Medan City

The implementation of the Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS) is a national initiative in Indonesia that aims to promote healthy behaviors to improve quality of life and reduce the incidence of disease (Pangalila et al., 2019). GERMAS encourages people to cultivate healthy behaviors and is supported by government health policies (Cahyani et al., 2020). The program involves various activities, such as the promotion of balanced nutrition, physical activity, and routine health checks (Rahmawaty et al., 2019). In Medan City, similar efforts can be made to implement GERMAS, such as improving healthy behaviors, increasing public awareness of the importance of health, and providing access to health services and information. This can be achieved through community engagement, education, and collaboration with local authorities and health organizations. By mobilizing communities and leveraging existing resources, GERMAS can be a powerful tool in fighting poverty by improving the overall health and well-being of

communities (Yuziani & Sofia, 2023; Pertiwi et al., 2021). In addition, GERMAS policies can reduce healthcare costs and increase productivity, ultimately lifting people out of poverty (Cox et al., 2018).

To implement the GERMAS policy to alleviate poverty in the community, the Movement aims to help reduce healthcare costs for individuals and families, thus preventing them from falling into poverty due to medical expenses. By emphasizing education on nutrition and health, the Movement can help individuals make informed choices that can lead to better health and productivity outcomes, ultimately contributing to poverty reduction. In addition, the Movement can also create economic opportunities by promoting local food systems, creating jobs in the health and wellness industry, and supporting small businesses that provide healthy products and services to the community. Overall, the community healthy living movement can play an important role in poverty alleviation by addressing the underlying factors that contribute to poor health and limited economic opportunities.

The success of the GERMAS policy implementation program can be seen through several indicators and by looking at the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), which is one of the programs assessing the health of a mother included in the GERMAS program. Success in reducing maternal mortality rates shows the ability of a region's health services and can be a measure of the success of maternal health programs (Sutarno et al., 2023). Increased physical activity in the community can be a sign that GERMAS has an impact on the prevention of non-communicable diseases (Nurrohmah, 2021). This is also related to the nutritional status of the community, which can be seen from the quality of food obtained, such as vegetables and fruit (Susanti et al., 2021). However, it should be noted that the success of the GERMAS program can be assessed through various indicators, depending on the target and focus of the program.

However, based on the research by the researcher, the researcher needed help finding the real implementation of the GERMAS policy, so that it could not find how the GERMAS program was implemented. This is because the GERMAS program has yet to be implemented optimally. In its implementation, the Medan City government should be able to coordinate across sectors to be involved in the success of the GERMAS program in Medan City. This has yet to be realized by the Medan City government because there is no direct order from the authorities. In addition, the socialization and advocacy of the GERMAS policy in Medan City has not run perfectly and only in some areas. This has led to the failure to deliver messages to the community on the importance of maintaining health to increase community productivity and reduce the financial burden caused by health costs.

Implementation of the Healthy Living Community Movement Policy in Medan City

The Healthy Living Community Movement policy is one of the central government's efforts to help the level of public health in Indonesia. Various regions have implemented the policy through health programs that support its implementation. GERMAS is a national movement initiated by the President of the Republic of Indonesia to encourage healthy living by changing unhealthy

behaviors and habits by encouraging people to adopt a healthy lifestyle (Pangalila et al., 2019). The implementation of the GERMAS policy has been analyzed in various studies. It was found that although the program has been implemented, there are still limitations in the application of good governance, such as the lack of participation from various sectors, transparency of information, and accountability of the actors involved (Auryn et al., 2023). In its implementation, it is necessary to look at various challenges stemming from resource allocation, communication, bureaucratic structure, disposition, and environment (Cahyani et al., 2020). To support the realization of a healthy society, it is important to emphasize good governance in the health sector (Auryn et al., 2023). The emphasis can be placed on improving the quality of service in health programs (Afifah et al., 2022).

However, another study explained that the GERMAS policy has a wide scope, causing difficulties in effective implementation (Zulfikar et al., 2012). Cross-sectoral collaboration, information transparency, and optimal accountability of actors involved in the program are needed to reduce challenges in program implementation (Shabrina, 2016). In addition, it is important to empower the community through health education, skills development, and creating an environment that supports healthy living practices (Widhianto, 2015). Several factors can influence the success of GERMAS policy implementation, namely education, resources, inter-organizational communication, characteristics of implementing agents, and economic, social, and political conditions (Aulia, 2022). To create a healthy lifestyle, it is necessary to involve the mass media in educating and promoting healthy and diverse food and clean and healthy living (Widyastomo, 2022). To support the education process in the community, socialization, such as a balanced diet and early detection of diseases based on perceived symptoms, are important in terms of public health checks (Pradhita et al., 2023).

The Medan City government is also implementing the GERMAS policy through programs that support the realization of a healthy lifestyle. The Medan City government uses mass media as the main step to widely socialize the healthy living community movement to the community and advocate for GERMAS health promotion with the enactment of Medan Mayor Regulation Number 61 of 2021 (Persepsi.co.id, 2023). In its implementation, the Medan City government has also made efforts to increase education on balanced nutrition, exclusive breastfeeding, increasing sports activities, and providing healthy canteens in schools. Other efforts made by the Medan City government in addressing poverty through GERMAS can involve various activities, such as socializing the importance of a healthy lifestyle, health counseling, providing access to health services, skills training, and community economic empowerment programs. In addition, cross-sectoral cooperation and active community participation are also key in efforts to overcome poverty through GERMAS. However, the GERMAS implementation policy in Medan City has not been fully implemented, and one of the policies that have not been fully implemented is related to increasing sports activities in schools, facilitating the organization of community sports, and providing healthy canteens in schools

(Persepsi.co.id, 2023). In addition, the people of Medan City only sometimes support the success of the GERMAS program as a healthy living community movement in Medan City.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the Medan City government still needs to implement the GERMAS policy optimally. This can be seen from the need for more explanation through the media and research related to the implementation of the policy. Furthermore, the implementation of the GERMAS policy in Medan City cannot be seen through programs that support the successful implementation of the policy due to the absence of optimal programs to support the success of the GERMAS policy. Through research that various researchers in various regions have conducted, the author tries to compare the implementation of the GERMAS policy in other regions with Medan City. Some examples of GERMAS implementation in other cities in Indonesia include training and socialization of physical fitness tests, counseling on healthy lifestyles through physical activity for the community, and socialization of the national movement for mental revolution to cultivate a green, clean, and healthy environment. GERMAS policy implementation generally involves various parties, including the government, health institutions, and the community itself (Nova & Sinulingga, 2021; Tohidin, 2019). It can be concluded through other studies that the participation of all levels of organizations and transparency of information about the program can support the successful implementation of the GERMAS policy. In addition, the role of the community directly in raising awareness of everyone is also one of the factors driving the successful implementation of the program.

Challenges Faced by the Medan City Government in Eradicating Poverty through the Healthy Living Community Movement

In implementing the GERMAS policy, the Medan City government faces various challenges in alleviating poverty through the Healthy Living Community Movement (GERMAS). Some of the challenges include limited resources, lack of public access to health services, and low public awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. In addition, factors such as high unemployment and lack of access to education also complicate poverty alleviation efforts. To overcome these challenges, the Medan City Government needs to work together with various parties, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and the community itself. In addition, there is a need for education and training programs to improve the skills and knowledge of the community in managing health and the family economy. Thus, efforts to alleviate poverty through GERMAS are expected to run more effectively.

The Ministry of Welfare of Medan City is making efforts to face the challenges of alleviating poverty through the Healthy Living Community Movement. One of the efforts proposed by the Medan City government is the Community Health Programme (PKM). PKM is a program that aims to help the community overcome dependence on public assistance provision and obtain health services by providing health care for free or at the cost of care if needed. The program aims to help the community overcome dependency on public

assistance and obtain health services by providing health care free of charge or at the cost of treatment if necessary and improve the quality and usability of health services in Medan City. Furthermore, the program also assists in the development of the public health service system.

Based on the author's analysis of the challenges and obstacles in the implementation of the GERMAS Programme in Medan City, the policy still needs to be considered clear even though the Medan City government has issued a policy to make the policy fit the needs of problem-solving in Medan City. This policy is made as if it needs to address the problems that exist in Medan City, namely, to overcome health problems in an effort to alleviate poverty in Medan City. The poor people in Medan City still have not received a solution for a prolonged life. Supposedly, the GERMAS policy was issued to minimize this. However, this policy still experiences many obstacles originating from resources, access to health services that seem to be complicated, counseling and socialization to the community about healthy lifestyles that are only done in some areas, and the Medan City government cannot maximize facilities that support a healthy lifestyle in Medan City.

The role of the government itself covers all aspects of life, such as social, economic, and environmental. Creating the welfare of the community and ensuring its future depends on the government. Therefore, the government needs to continue optimizing its work in Medan City to address health issues through the GERMAS policy as well as efforts to alleviate poverty. Efforts that can be made include facilitating the need to generate healthy patterns and lifestyles in the community, direct community development and empowerment, creating innovations that support the implementation of the GERMAS policy, and building cooperation between government sectors that can be related to the implementation of the GERMAS policy.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medan City Government created the GERMAS policy as a government effort to increase productivity and reduce the financial burden of the community caused by unhealthy living habits. This policy is expected to reduce maternal mortality, increase physical activity, improve community nutrition, and participate in a poverty alleviation effort. However, the implementation of the GERMAS program could be more efficient to implement. There are several inhibiting factors in the implementation of the GERMAS policy, such as cross-sectoral coordination that has not been achieved due to the lack of direct orders from the authorities, limited resources, lack of public access to health services, low public awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and the Medan City government's efforts to communicate GERMAS to the public. Therefore, it is crucial for the government to continuously improve the Medan City government's efforts in addressing health issues through GERMAS policies and initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. Creating innovations that support the implementation of the GERMAS policy, directing community development and empowerment, encouraging the need to create healthy patterns and lifestyles in the community, and fostering collaboration between government sectors that

may be relevant to the implementation of the GERMAS policy are some of the efforts that can be made.

FURTHER STUDY

Suggestions for further research on Exploring Strategies to Increase Community Participation in the Healthy Living Program to Maximize the Impact of Poverty Alleviation in the Context of Medan City.

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