

# Public Services of Indonesian National Police in the Era of COVID-19 Disruption: Literature Studies

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## ABSTRACT

The challenges facing the police public service in the Covid-19 pandemic era are complex and dynamic. One of the issues that is evident is how members of the police must adapt in providing public services to the community. The initial findings of this study lead to the conclusion that in general the performance of police public services requires an adaptive pattern to deal with the disruption situation of the pandemic. The study is qualitative research following a literature study method. Data were taken from various articles, journals, and books relevant to the topic of study which could help answer the problem formulated in the paper. Literature studies in many countries have shown that the disruption of Covid-19 has had a psychological, mental, and technical impact on police public services. The study provides four recommendations regarding the pattern of Indonesian National Police (Polri) public services to anticipate future disruptive situations. First, the availability of mental health facilities in every Polri's hospital at the regional and central levels should be encouraged. Second, there is a need to increase the capacity and quality of human resources (HR), especially for units that are directly in contact with the public. Third, the ICT and big data infrastructure owned by the National Police should be improved at the regional and central levels. Fourth, it is necessary to accelerate the e-government and big data programmes in the internal environment of Polri to support better public service performance in the future.

**Keywords:** Public Service, Police, Disruption, Human Resource

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Human resource management is a very important core study in management science. The scientific management tradition started with the development of management studies, which refer to the importance of planning at the management stage itself. Human resource management is a concept that is commonly used to provide scope for analysis of the management process in the context of optimising the function and productivity of human resources.

The political reformation led to a transition in the pattern of coordination between the Indonesian National Army (TNI) and Polri. National consensus then divided the different tasks and functions between the TNI and Polri. Elements of state defence are organised by the TNI, while security is

the domain of the police [1]. This specialisation is not an easy process, as there was a long transition path starting from organisational change and then targeting the behaviour of members.

Political reforms in Indonesia in 1998 brought fresh air to the development of democracy in the country. However, political reforms also brought challenges to the police institution. On the other hand, political reform and a borderless society require police institutions to adapt to new challenges and problems, especially in the context of providing optimal services to the community.

The National Police Chief Listyo Sigit intends to implement several fundamental policies for the organisational transformation of the Polri. The work and action plans are contained in ten work programmes. **First**, the expansion of Electronic Traffic Law Enforcement (ETLE) and the prohibition of police ticketing. **Second**, vitalise Pam

Swakarsa. *Third*, remove the stigma of criminalising religious cleric. *Fourth*, introduce virtual police as part of the Polri's public service. *Fifth*, the resolution of hate speech cases. *Sixth*, cooperate with the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) in relation to corruption cases. *Seventh*, the equality of health services for police officers. *Eighth*, involve former terrorism convicts to prevent radicalism. *Ninth*, open the acceptance of ASN (State Civil Apparatus) for persons with disabilities. *Tenth*, the transformation toward a high quality public services of Police through predictive policing, accountability, and fair transparency programs [2].

The National Police Chief also plans four main organisational action plans: organisational transformation, operational transformation, public service transformation, and supervisory transformation. From these plans, it can be seen that organisational aspects and improving the quality of public services are priorities.

The ten programmes and action plans of the National Police Chief detailed above provide indications of two main issues, namely changes in organisational behaviour and the role of members of the National Police in the context of public services. The National Police Research and Development Center surveyed the performance of the National Police in 2019; in general, the survey made positive findings, apart from in relation to the Criminal Investigation Unit, whose performance was below 60%. The results of a 2019 survey of 34 Regional Police office showed that satisfaction with intelligence unit (Intelkam) was 86.46%, transport police unit was 81.80%, community development unit was 83.54%, public alert unit (Sabhara) was 79.71%, and criminal unit is 57.86% [3]. The survey indicates that criminal investigation is a function of the National Police, which the data show to be a function that must be improved, even though another unit, it is clearly seen that the intelligence and security functions and community development obtained very good scores.

The survey results also show that the National Police need to do considerable work to improve the quality and capacity of public services, but at least several times under the leadership of the National Police Chief in the reform era there have been attempts to improve such quality. The data from the survey also show that one of the factors causing the inadequate public services of the police is the shortage of personnel in the field. At present, the number of Polri members to members of the community is 1:750, although an ideal number

should be 1:350. In addition, there is the issue of divergence or unevenness in the number of Polri personnel between Regional Police, as revealed by the Assistant to the National Police Chief for Human Resources, Inspector General Arief Sulistyanto [4].

The heavy demands on Polri, especially in the reform era, have meant it has had to adapt the organisation quickly, which will certainly have an impact on the performance of personnel in the public services provided. Research conducted by Indrayanto et.al [5] includes an interesting argument that organisational change in the context of strengthening the commitment of police personnel requires management and organisational support. It is at this point that the National Police should initiate a change in its work patterns and organisational performance.

The increasing cases of Covid-19 have made it impossible for the National Police to provide face-to-face services. It is in this context that it needs to adapt to the 'new normal' conditions. There are two important issues in this context: first, how to ensure minimum service standards can be maintained; and second, services must be based on the new normal, which is a challenge for Polri organisations and personnel, who have to adapt to various new tools such as the use of Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, or other software.

## 1.2 Research aims and problems

Eventually, building a new organisational culture to deal with the pandemic will be one of the future tasks of the police. This paper aims to assess the extent to which the adaptation of the organisation and personnel of the Polri has been achieved, as well as provide policy recommendations to accelerate the improvement of the organisation and personnel. The paper also intends to provide policy recommendations to Polri's personnel to adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic situation in the context of service to the community. In addition, the paper also aims to answer the question of the nature of the internal adaptation of Polri's personnel to organisational changes and challenges in the Covid-19 era.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

Indirectly, the Covid-19 pandemic has provided a great opportunity to accelerate changes in Polri's information technology-based services, which have been initiated in recent years. However, on the other

hand, the incompetence of Polri personnel in the use of such technology and the inadequate IT infrastructure are challenges to the process. The divergence and differentiation of service quality between Polri rural and urban service locations is also another challenge. In the context of improving services, and organizational and personnel performance, research conducted by Shane [6] explains that:

*“The findings suggest a performance management model is more rational than the traditional command-control model and may increase consistency in police management by systematically collecting and reporting on streams of data to measure performance instead of relying on rote compliance”*

The development of IT and organisational challenges in the current era requires performance to be measured by results and impacts. If we refer to the view that explained above. The traditional system of command must be shifted in a more transformative direction towards a performance-based model. This has also become a challenge in itself, not only in the context of internal reform of the organisation and personnel, but also in the context of the external challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Grand theory in research is often referred to as a conceptual framework, or concretely defined as a broader form of a study discipline. This paper attempts to comprehensively analyse the transformation of Polri's organisation and personnel in providing public services in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic. In general, when discussing such transformation in the context of police management, the first requirement that must be met is the building of a mediative organisational transformation culture. as described by Shim et.al [7] “on the basis of understanding of the mediational role of organizational culture in the transformational leadership-commitment link, police performance can be ultimately enhanced”

The unprecedented events of the Covid-19 pandemic have led to many changes in behaviour, both personal and organisational, which cannot be separated from the organisation of the Polri. In general, research studies that are closely related to the various issues above are divided into several categories, with the most commonly found being studies on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the health, mental state, and psychology of police personnel. Furthermore, several studies also focus

on the impact of the pandemic on the general performance of the police, especially from the aspect of law enforcement, such as those conducted by Jennings & Perez [8], Jiang & Xie [9], Jones [10], and Matarazzo et.al [11].

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS

This is qualitative descriptive research based on library research data. Jackson et al [12] state that qualitative research is “Research is primarily concerned understanding human beings’ experiences in a humanistic, interpretive approach. Issues of research design differences between quantitative and qualitative research are traced with an emphasis on identifying diverse methodologies, including those focusing on analysis of text, and diverse forms of data collection along with criteria for evaluating qualitative research”

In other words, the main focus of qualitative research is more on understanding people by taking a humanistic and interpretative approach. In contrast to quantitative research, which focuses on generalising phenomena, qualitative research focuses more on studies that are not too broad, so can be studied in depth. This study will consider and explain the phenomenon of human behaviour in the context of adaptation to changes in work patterns and services as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, referring to the explanation above, methodologically a qualitative research approach will provide a better opportunity to understand the context and case studies that will be used as objects in the research. More specifically, the study uses a qualitative cause and effect method by considering the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on the pattern of adaptation of the Polri 's organisational services. Mahoney and Goertz [13] explain that cause and effect in qualitative research is more about explaining a phenomenon by observing the impact of a single case. Moreover, data in this study were taken from institutional documentation, institutional performance reports, and other documents. Documentation analysis techniques were also needed in the study so that the authors could conduct the analysis by referring to related data sources that were selected based on the topic of study.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *4.1 Adaptation, the police and the Covid-19 pandemic: studies in several countries*

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the need for personnel adaptation in the provision of public services. It has certainly presented challenges to the Polri, especially in the context of providing excellent services for people. Adaptation that has implications for the challenge of continuing to provide excellent service to the public. For example, the Work From Home (WFH) scheme which is being promoted, and coordination meetings which are usually held face-to-face or offline, are now commonplace through video conferencing, but at the same time not all the infrastructure in the regency and district level of police offices are available to accommodate this.

On the other hand, as a public service organisation, providing services with an online concept using ICT devices is another challenge for Polri personnel, especially in the context of police organisations in general and when considering the increasing demands of the community for excellent police services in all aspects. This is also related to the National Police Chief's action plan to realise an excellent, fast, and quality service.

An important study of the organisational climate and performance of the police was conducted by Lone et al. [14]. The study covered the investigation climate of the Norwegian police organisation. Norway, as a developed country in Northern Europe, has a relatively low crime rate, but crime still remains an issue. The article provides a comprehensive explanation of the importance of precise planning and clear organisational goals, which in general for police cases in Norway have an impact on the quality of investigations conducted by the police. Similar research was conducted by Alcadipani, Cabral, Fernandes, and Lotta (2020), who emphasised that police mismanagement of street level bureaucracy will also have an impact on the efficiency of the police's performance in handling the pandemic.

Research conducted by Frenkel et al [15]; Garbarino et al [16]; Q. Jiang [17] as related to the level of stress experienced by members of the police during the Covid-19 pandemic. Frenkel et al. assessed the level of stress and demands, and how to adapt to the circumstances and resources in the context of police officers in Europe. The study shows that in several European countries, three main tissues must be faced by police institutions in facing the Covid-19 pandemic: first, the

implementation of unambiguous regulations and the prioritisation of public complaints (services) through communication media; second, police logistics must be well prepared; and third, training should be aimed at increasing the ability to adapt to stress.

The study of Frenkel et al. is in line with research conducted by Jones [18], who concludes that there is a potential loss of legitimacy of the police institution caused by inadequate services provided by police personnel as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, the military pattern and the potential for problematic law enforcement conducted by the Nigerian police in responding to law enforcement during the Covid-19 pandemic, Aborisade on his research in the context of Nigerian Police emphasises the need for more intensive procedure enforcement training for police officers [19]. The same situation has also been confirmed by other research Curry et al [20], namely that there is the potential for abuse of law enforcement by the police during the Covid-19 pandemic. A different situation has been experienced by the British police; research conducted by Yesberg et al. [21] shows that public support for the performance of lockdown law enforcement in London has broad support and legitimacy from the public. This study provides more in-depth analysis of the factors behind a good level of legitimacy in relation to the performance of the police during the pandemic.

Janković and Cvetković [22] conducted a study of the public's perception of police performance in the pandemic era. They concluded that the police force does not appear to be fully prepared to adapt to pandemic conditions and that in the future it will be necessary to provide adequate training, prepare sufficient resources, and implement good planning, including study of the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of police officers, for the formulation, preparation, and anticipation of similar incidents.

The latest research on the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and the police is more focused on various research arguments that focus on the study of the health impact of the disease on members of the police, such as research conducted by Drew & Martin [23]; Hernández-Vásquez & Azañedo [24]; Papazoglou. [25]; Papazoglou et al [26]; Stogner et al [27]. Drew and Martin [28] studied the mental and physical health of members of the police during Covid-19 and its relationship with law enforcement. As members of the police force in the context of the pandemic, officers are

very vulnerable physically, and psychologically under pressure [29]; [30]; [31].

During the Covid-19 pandemic, police officers continue to serve their communities. Research by Grover et al [32]; Stogner et al [33], conclude that there is a correlation between law enforcement and the level of stress and mental health of police officers in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic [34]; [35]. also illustrate that in the era of Covid-19, members of the police as public servants are experiencing a crisis, either mentally or physically.

This study concludes that in the context of overcoming these problems, strong leadership is needed, which can have a positive impact on the work environment. Papazoglou et al [36]. also suggest that the most important issue for the police is the ability to adapt organisationally. With reference to the police in Peru, Hernández-Vásquez & Azañedo [37] explained that during the pandemic, they experienced the loss of many members, so two actions needed to be taken by the Peruvian government to overcome the situation. The first is to increase the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including providing training on how to optimise its use and implementing various preventative action policies. Studies conducted by Dai et al [38]; Huang et al [39]; Matarazzo et al. [40]; Walklate et al [41] highlight how police institutions are adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic. As front-line workers, the police are one of the institutions experiencing difficult challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In contrast to the research conducted by Laufs and Waseem [42], this study concludes that the Covid-19 pandemic poses unusual challenges to the world's police institutions. It attempts to analyse the short and long-term impacts of the situation. Four conclusions are drawn about the impact of the pandemic on the police: the relationship between the police and the community; the mental and physical health of members; internal organisational challenges; and challenges between organisations and their collaboration. Jones [43] conducted a more specific study on the impact of the pandemic on police institutions. There is a potential for the police to lose legitimacy, one example being the division of interests between the community and the police, with indications that the relationship between the police and the community is moving in a negative direction. In this context, better operational procedures are needed to build the legitimacy of the police after the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on police performance, especially law

enforcement, was investigated by Curry [44]; Jean [45]; Jennings & Perez [46]; Levin & Kashyap [47]; Njoku et al [48]; Perry et al [49], showing a significant impact on the weakening of the performance of police law enforcement, especially in areas such as those related to communication, resource management, law enforcement on health restrictions and crime.

In the context of the police in China, research conducted by Jiang and Xie [50] focuses on the role of the police in the pandemic era. They conclude that there are challenges to enforcing social order during Covid-19. On the other hand, a case study in Ireland made different findings [51]; a different response was taken by the Irish police by creating a special task force called Garda Síochána to implement mitigation policies against the spread of Covid-19. This is different from previous research, which has tended to consider aspects of the psychological and health impacts of police officers during the pandemic. This study describes how police institutions are directly involved in the Covid-19 mitigation process. The research not only describes the role of the police as a group involved in the Covid-19 mitigation process.

The study also demonstrates that working as a mitigation actor also has a psychological impact on the Síochána Guard. In this context, the government's role is needed to overcome this issue. Similar research was also conducted by Kumar [52]; Luong et al [53]. Taking the research setting of Vietnam, Luong et al. explain that the concept of community police is very effective in functioning as a frontline force to help medical officers overcome the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, and that Vietnam's ability to function as a group response police institution provides an example to the world about the country's effectiveness in overcoming the pandemic.

Some of the explanations above illustrate that the various challenges faced by police organisations in the era of disruption are relatively similar and homogeneous from one country to another, and that this is part of the aspect of improvement that must be made immediately by police institutions to anticipate the disruption that will occur in the future.

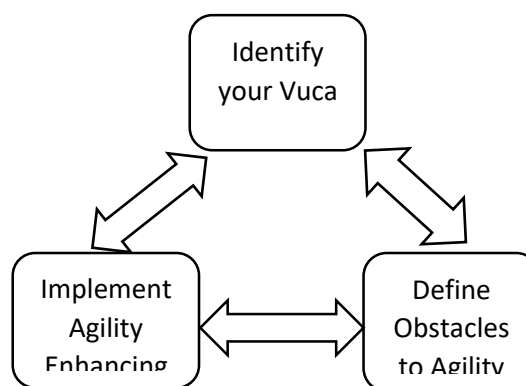
## 4.2 Police VUCA Management and Recommendations: Police Public Services in the Era of Disruption

Several recent studies are closely related to the relationship between police institutions and the Covid-19 pandemic. In general, these are divided on the basis of several issues, the most commonly found being studies on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the mental health and psychology of police personnel. Furthermore, several studies also focus on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the general performance of the police, especially from the aspect of law enforcement, such as research conducted by Jennings & Perez [54]; F. Jiang & Xie [55]; Jones [56]; Matarazzo [57].

In general, when discussing organisational and personnel adaptation patterns in the context of police management, the first requirement that must be met is to build a mediative organisational culture, as described by Shim et al. [58], "on the basis of understanding of the mediational role of organizational culture in the transformational leadership-commitment link, police performance can be ultimately enhanced". In line with the above concept, in theoretical terms, this research will use the VUCA (votality, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) management theory. Baran and Woznyj [59] explained that

*"Alongside these discussions of VUCA are various ideas about how executives should guide their organizations in dealing with turbulence and attempts to characterize how employees of all levels can best deal with increasingly frequent change or uncertainty. A prevailing idea that has emerged is that agility—at the person, team, and organizational levels—is necessary for effective management of VUCA".*

The VUCA management theory developed by Baran and Woznyj focuses on how organisations should adapt to an uncertain and fast-changing environment. By identifying the four aspects involved, Baran and Woznyj provide opportunities for each organisation to develop different organisational adaptation patterns depending on the VUCA analysis model obtained by each. The case study analysis model of Baran and Woznyj [60] is illustrated in **Figure 1**



**Figure 1** Model of VUCA Analysis

The VUCA analysis model provides an analysis of the adaptation pattern of the Polri in providing public services during the Covid 19 pandemic. This is in line with the argument of Baran and Woznyj [61], which states that "we provide three sets of interrelated actions that executives and key decision-makers can use to guide their organizations through turbulence: identify your VUCA, define obstacles to agility, and implement agility-enhancing practices."

Referring to the studies conducted in various countries, we present below some recommendations for Polri institutions to adapt in providing public services in the era of disruption in the future. These include:

1. Studies conducted in various countries show that mental and psychological health problems are the main reasons why public services are not being optimally provided by police institutions in many countries during the Covid-19 pandemic era. Therefore, we urge the availability of mental health facilities in every Indonesian police hospital at the regional and central levels, and that these facilities should be easily accessible to every Polri member, whatever their location.
2. The need to increase the capacity and quality of human resources (HR) through training and further education for members of the National Police, especially for units that are directly in contact with public services; for example, training in providing public services online (virtually) and training related to big data management for the benefit of the police public service.
3. Improvement of the ICT and big data infrastructure owned by the National Police at the regional and central levels.

4. The need for acceleration in the e-government and big data programmes in the internal environment of the Polri institution to support better public service performance in the future.

The four policy recommendations above need to be considered closely by the police in anticipating the impact of disruption and the uncertain future situation. To face such disruption, programme planning, and effective programme evaluation are the most important anticipatory steps of future disruptive events.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The preliminary study conducted in this paper certainly needs further exploration, accompanied by an analysis of the field data obtained. The impact of the C-19 pandemic has unavoidably changed the pattern of the public service provided by the police, which was previously mostly done through face to face; the pandemic has led to a significant change in the pattern of public services, from face to face to online. This change has also had a direct impact on the behaviour of the public and members of the National Police. Studies in many countries, as detailed previously, conclude that the C-19 pandemic has technical, mental, and psychological implications for the general and personal performance of police officers. Relatively the same thing is shown in the context of police personnel, especially those who have to work in the field. To overcome these issues in the future, the study makes four main recommendations. First, the National Police need to encourage the availability of mental health facilities in every Indonesian Police Hospital at the regional and central levels. Second, there is a need to increase the capacity and quality of human resources through training and further education for members of the National Police, especially for units that are directly in contact with public services. Third, the ICT and big data infrastructure owned by the National Police at the regional and central level need to be improved in order to accelerate virtual services. Fourth, there is also a need to accelerate the e-government and big data programmes in the internal environment of Polri to support future performance and to anticipate future disruption that may occur.

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