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# Regional Legislative's Political Communication under Supervision of COVID-19 Pandemic Control Program in West Java Province, Indonesia

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**Key words:**

*Political communication, government programs, COVID-19 pandemic, regional legislative institution, regional government, supervision function*

**Abstract**

*With the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic as world's biggest emergency, the Central Government and the Regional Governments in Indonesia released COVID-19 pandemic control policies. One of the areas most affected by COVID-19 was West Java Province; hence, the West Java Provincial Government took many policy decisions to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most important decisions was related to administering local government by the Regional House of Representatives (RHRs) as Regional Legislative Institution (RLI). The RHR enjoyed the right and liberty to make regional regulations, and monitor budgets. This study aimed to reveal the Regional Legislative Institution's political communication model in carrying out the supervisory function of the COVID-19 prevention program. With an interpretive subjective approach, and qualitative research design, a case study method approach was adopted. The data collection techniques used were interviews, observation, and reference studies. The results of this research revealed that the political communication of supervision of Regional Legislative Institutions in COVID-19 Pandemic Management was the implementation of the normative mandate of the supervisory function of Regional Legislative Institutions. These functions were executed to implement Regional Government Programs through the execution of their rights, obligations, duties, and authorities as members of the RHRs', Members of Fractions, Members of Commissions and Chiefs of the RHRs. This study devised two models, one on RHRs' political communication surveillance on the COVID-19 pandemic control program: second a model on the RHRs' Corrective Political Communication.*

**Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has paralyzed all public sectors and the entire government machinery in Indonesia. The Central Government released emergency health alerts and regulations while the Ministry of Health, Republic of Indonesia recommended people to wash hands regularly, wear face masks, practice physical distancing, and avoid crowds. In fact, all ministries struggled together to solve distinctive problems. This condition made the Government to declare the COVID-19 pandemic as state emergency and the pandemic control programs were officially handed over to National Agency for Disaster Management for coordination. The COVID threat has not only struck the public health, but all the sectors. Besides the public health sector, many other humanitarian sectors like education and economy sectors were also affected. The Government ascertained a few prerequisite conditions for both the Central and Regional governments to design dominant policies to overcome the challenges faced by these sectors.

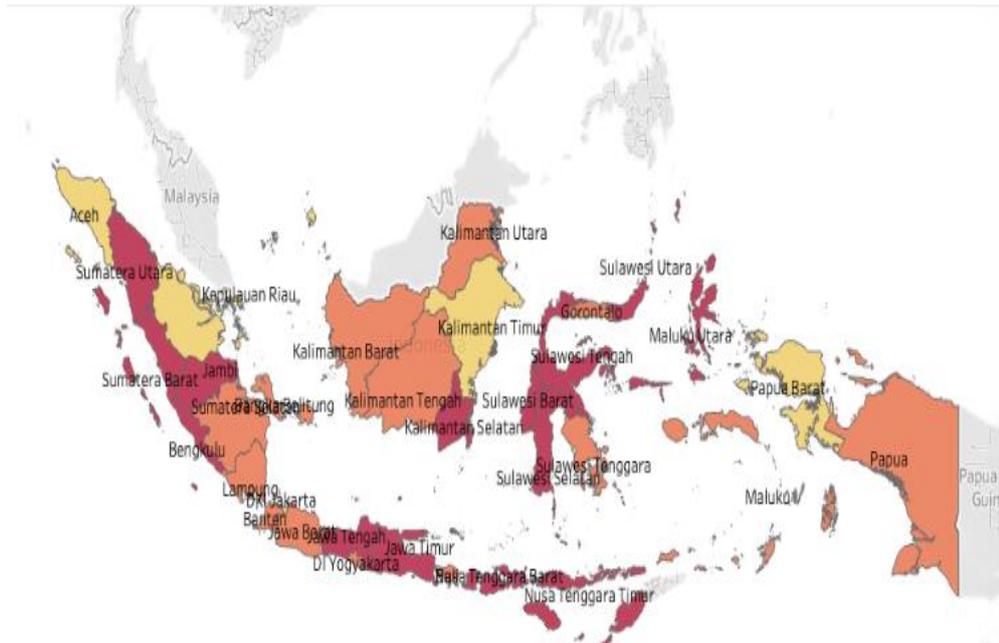
In order to overcome the impact of COVID-19, President Joko Widodo established a committee called COVID-19 Control and National Economic Recovery, also known as KPC-PEN ([Gusman, 2020, December 9](#)), which coordinated duties of two task forces: Acceleration of COVID-19 Control and National Economic Recovery. The establishment of this committee was made with the aim to curb the spread of COVID-19 and improve conditions in the health and economic sectors. Strict policies were regulated such as restrictions on community activities in public places, schools and colleges, and offices. There were travel restrictions and regulations issued to work from home. All these restrictions disrupted the economic activity. The Indonesian economy, which had grown 2.97 percent in the first quarter of 2020 suddenly fell to minus growth in the second quarter up to -5.32 percent. The Indonesian Statistics stated that Indonesia faced deflation twice in a row in the period between July-August, 2020. Since the beginning of the year to August, it was reported that inflation tended to fluctuate in 90 cities with a decreasing trend.

The Central Government allocated extraordinary budget during COVID-19 pandemic in the country. An approximate budget of IDR 677.2 trillion was allocated through a Presidential Decree Number 54 of 2020 concerning Changes in Posture and Details of the State Budget. However, it was revised by another Presidential Decree No. 72 of 2020 by increasing the budget to IDR 695.2 trillion. The budget was divided into six heads: health, social protection, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), business incentives, corporate financing, and funds for ministries/agencies and regional governments.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, since Jakarta was the epicenter of its spread, West Java was the first province where its Provincial Government immediately responded by regulating distinctive policy ([Ramdhani, 2020, June 27](#)). Prior to the detection of the first COVID-19 case in early February, a coordination meeting was held attended by several representatives from the regional apparatuses, hospitals, Indonesian National Armed Forces, and Indonesian National Police. In the meeting, it was decided to declare red alert for the West Java for COVID-19. A three-layer defense system was regulated, namely preventing, tracing, and treating. Twenty-three (23) laboratories were prepared to test PCR samples. The PT Bio Pharma provided a mobile container laboratory known as Bio Safety Level 3 (BSL-3). The West Java Provincial Government also regulated large-scale social distancing. When the Central Government issued further regulations for large-scale social distancing, the West Java Provincial Government issued the Governor Decree Number 46 of 2020 which contained social distancing guidelines and regulations how to handle COVID-19 cases in each district/city.

The decline in economic activities due to the COVID-19 also made it necessary to evaluate the impact of distinctive sectors at provincial levels. These impacts on the provincial economy were determined by at least four factors: Number of COVID-19 cases in the province; risk factors for natural

disasters; characteristic factors of economic problems; and fiscal burden factors. It was emphasized that the scale of economic and other problems in the region should be studied about these four factors if the pandemic continued (Sakri, 2020, August 7). Figure 1 presents the regions in Indonesia affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic.



**Figure 1.** Affected Regions in Indonesia by the COVID-19 Pandemic  
Source: (Sakri, 2020, August 7)

Figure 1 reveals that among 34 provinces in Indonesia, West Java was one of the provinces with dark red color showing its economy as the worst affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indonesia Statistics (Bebey, 2021, February 5) stated that West Java's economic growth (GRDP) in 2020 was contracted to minus 2.44 percent, which decreased from 5.07 percent in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 positively infected cases in West Java increased and spread so fast that it caused a huge impact on various sectors including implementation and budgeting of regional developments. The need was felt to frame policies relating to refocusing and reallocation of budgets and solving health and economic problems through the provision of social safety network. Efforts to control COVID-19 pandemic were being accomplished comprehensively through promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative efforts. These efforts also planned reconstruction and rehabilitation of sectors badly damaged by the COVID-19 pandemic which included economic recovery and a provision to build a social safety network. The implementation of these efforts is going to continue even in 2022-2023 development priorities in West Java, for which necessary budgetary and administrative adjustments would be made.

For instance, such policies of medium-term developments were subjected to change as a part of controlling and recovering from COVID-19 pandemic.

They are being carried out continually since the second quarter of 2020. These changes relate to West Java's development priorities as stated in the Amendment of 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan. This Plan was the result of a political communication among the strategic elements in West Java societies, particularly between the Provincial Government and the Regional House of Representatives (RHRs) of West Java as the Regional Legislative Council (RLC). Both institutions are houses of political groups. Their members work at regional levels, however, ever since the COVID-19 pandemic controls became national issue, such changes and amendments were recognized as governmental decisions and played an important role in dealing with national multi-issue matters ([Hikmat, 2019](#)). A previous study ([Nimmo, 2011](#)) had also revealed that these institutions are categorized as political actors comprising executive officers.

The RHR acts as the Regional Legislative Council (RLC), considered as a part of political superstructure within the Regional Government, as members of political infrastructure actors, namely politicians as delegates coming from political parties. They develop political communication in order to manage the Regional Government normatively through implementations of the RHRs' functions regulated in the Regional Government Law. These functions included making regional regulation, surveillance, and budgeting. One of these functions for urgent attention due to the COVID-19 pandemic was surveillance. Implementation of surveillance was a political communication effort by the RLC, while they routinely monitored regional medium-term development plans as well. During the COVID-19 pandemic in the West Java, the Provincial Government also focused on nine regional development priorities, particularly those associated with the development and recoveries of the COVID-19 pandemic affected areas. These nine regional development priorities were: (1) Education access to all citizens; (2) Decentralization of health services; (3) Economic growth of ummah-based innovation; (4) Development of tourism destinations and infrastructures; (5) Religious education and suitable places of worship; (6) Regional connectivity infrastructures; (7) Movements for village developments; (8) Various subsidies for lower economic societies; and (9) Innovations of public services and regional planning. These nine priorities were categorized as 'most urgent', so that amendment of West Java's 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plans can be termed as proper solutions for regional conditions and contribute to national condition improvements during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are quite several studies that specifically discuss the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, Cambridge University ([Press, 2021](#)) recorded 35,250 studies, DOAJ (The Directory of Open Access Journals) ([Doajplus, 2021](#)) recorded 41,955 studies, and the Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency, Ministry of Research and Technology (2020) recorded 470 research studies. To count research studies that discussed Communication Science in relation to COVID-19 Pandemic, Cambridge

University (Press, 2021) recorded 74,790, DOAJ (The Directory Of Open Access Journals) (Doajplus, 2021) recorded 127, and the Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency, Ministry of Research and Technology (2020) recorded 15 research results. Research studies that discussed political communication specifically in relation to COVID-19 pandemic, Cambridge University (Press, 2021) recorded 29,892 studies, DOAJ (The Directory Of Open Access Journals) (Doajplus, 2021) recorded 89 studies, and no studies were found in the Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency, Ministry of Research and Technology.

The communication studies related to the COVID-19 pandemic found at the Indonesian National Research and Innovation Agency, Ministry of Research and Technology (2020) included: Mario Antonius Birowo (2020) research with the title: *COVID Disease and Disaster Communication*, Supriyadi and Qowa'id's (2020) research titled: *The Influence of Social Media and Parent Supervision on Religious Moderation in The COVID-19 Pandemic Time*, Diplo Aldila's (2020) research entitled: *Analyzing The Impact of The Media Campaign and Rapid Testing for COVID-19 as an Optimal Control Problem in East Java, Indonesia*, and Gugun Geusan Akbar's research (2020): *Public and Government Response to Corona Viruses in Indonesia: A Content Analysis of Social Media*.

The title of these results reveals that none of these studies discussed Regional Legislative's Political Communication under Supervision of COVID-19 Pandemic Control Program in West Java Province, Indonesia, the topic of the current study. Studies that specifically discussed political communication in Regional Legislative Institutions also were not found. Therefore, the current research study that aimed to study Regional Legislative's Political Communication under Supervision of COVID-19 Pandemic Control Program in West Java Province, Indonesia should be seen as a novel study.

Having been a pioneer work, therefore, this study aimed to focus on problems related to how political communication and communication models from the West Java Provincial House of Representatives helped in supervising the COVID-19 Pandemic prevention program issued by the Regional Government of West Java Province. This study believed in the premise that Communication Science was a multidisciplinary science, therefore, all research in any field of science must be related to Communication Science only. This implied that all research in the world should be communication research. Although this view has not been accepted by many scientists. It would be a contribution of this study if it is acclaimed for its findings.

## Research Methodology

This study used a subjective interpretive approach with a qualitative method, thus making this study categorized as a descriptive case study. The case study is a research method that refers to such elements that discuss

how and why within the main research questions and examines contemporary (present) problems. Such an approach also provides fewer opportunities for researchers to control occurrences (cases) while conducting the research. This research, however, used analytical models to perform a normative analysis and to examine secondary data. The secondary data comprised laws concerning the RHRs' surveillance functions and documentary analyses. It also comprised strategic documents such as implementable policy products subject to the amendment of regional development priorities. The data collections techniques included documentation research, internet search, and focus group discussions among colleagues. The analyses commenced by carrying out data collection and performed intensively. Due to its qualitative research design, an inductive data analysis method was used to process the data. It required simplification, so that the data would be easier to be read and interpreted. Processes of organizing and sorting data into pattern of categories and basic units were also done.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *Policy On the Management of COVID-19*

The Law no. 24 of 2007 concerning Disaster Management mandates that the Regional Government must be responsible for any disaster that befalls upon the residents. This was also implied on COVID-19 pandemic and a few obligatory regulations were issued by the Central Government and the Provincial Government of West Java. The Provincial Government of West Java led by the Governor Ridwan Kamil and Vice Governor Uu Ruzhanul Ulum were very quick in taking responsibility on management of the COVID-19 pandemic. Various strategic regulations were issued in accordance with the authority of the Provincial Government as regulated in Law no. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government which was amended twice via Law no. 5 of 2015 and Law no. 9 of 2015.

Based on COVID-19 data, the West Java was among the provinces with highest numbers of patients after Jakarta. For this reason, the Provincial Government of West Java did not "intervene" in the affairs of the Central government, as during emergency such matters came fully under the authority of the Central Government. In compliance, therefore, the provincial government of West Java province "regulated" its own government affairs and made them mandatory and elective government affairs, concurrent to the Central government. The mandatory government affairs contained government affairs in both related and nonrelated primary services. The criteria for provincial authorities to determine the government affairs included: (a) government affairs which were located across regencies/cities; (b) government affairs whose users were across districts/cities; (c) government affairs whose advantages or negative impacts crossed regencies/cities; and (d) government affairs which used resources more efficiently accomplished by the Provincial Government.

To carry out the Concurrent Government Affairs, it was mentioned in Law no. 23 of 2014 that regional governments should have the authority to determine regional policies to implement the Government Affairs. This became the authority of the regional government mainly based on the norms, standards, procedures, and criteria that were standardized by the Central Government. However, regional government administrators prioritized implementation of mandatory government affairs related to primary services: (a) education; (b) health cares; (c) public works and spatial planning; (d) public housing and residential areas; (e) security, public order, and community protection; and (f) social realms.

Apparently, any kind of disaster management such as the COVID-19 pandemic, should be a part of primary services and categorized as mandatory government affairs, and which must be prioritized by the Regional Government. Therefore, based on the six types of basic services, it was very explicit that the efforts to manage COVID-19 should meet the criteria for those types of basic services. The COVID-19 pandemic did not only have relation with the categories of basic services for sectors like peace, public order, and community protection, but also for education, health, public works and spatial planning, public housing and residential areas, and social services. The domino effects due to the COVID-19 pandemic came to the fact that these situations were not only related to public health, but also other sectors of lives.

The Law no. 24 of 2007 concerning Disaster Management and a set of regulations issued by the Central Government determined regional government affairs to be synergized with the core meaning of regulations. The participation of Provincial Government of West Java in managing disasters was considered as an effort to implement the mandate of Law Number 24 of 2007 to protect the rights of the citizens affected by disasters. The rights that must be fulfilled and protected for those affected by disasters included receiving aid for basic needs like food, water and sanitation, clothes, healthcare, psychosocial services, shelters, and settlements.

The main objective behind the participation of the Provincial Government of West Java was to carry out mandatory government affairs and ensure that the rights of the people are protected. In order to execute the fulfilment of these rights, objectives of disaster management were identified as follows: (a) provide protection against disaster to all citizens; (b) implement the existing laws and regulations; (c) ensure the implementation of disaster management in a planned, integrated, coordinated, and comprehensive efforts; (d) respect local culture; (e) build public and private participations and partnership; (f) encourage the spirits of mutual cooperation, solidarity, and generosity; and (g) create peace in the context of society, nation and state.

To measure the institutional performance of the Provincial Government of West Java, [Poerwadarminta \(1991\)](#) suggested to formulate both

quantitative and qualitative parameters. Robbins (2017) stated the category of performance quantity was often defined as the number of performances which were produced in the units or cycles of completed activities. Quantitative performance of the Provincial Government of West Java should therefore be measured through the number of activities carried out by using guidelines by official legal products with the certain authority. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, several statutory and regulatory products were used as guidelines or references for countermeasures activities. These could be regarded as indicators of responsive and innovative quantity level performed by the Provincial Government of West Java as responses to maintain life sustainability for infected citizens and affected residents due to the COVID-19. These were also used as strong reasons for adopting the Central Government instructions, laws, and regulations.

The Provincial Government was quite accessible and resourceful in issuing laws and regulations for the province. Since the provincial laws and regulation were the top legal products in the distinctive province, the Regional House of Representatives (hereinafter referred to as DPRD) needed to be involved. Ridwan Kamil, the Governor of West Java, in a discourse proposed a regional regulation of COVID-19 management. However, it needed a long time in the political process to compromise with the DPRD. Moreover, the Provincial Government of West Java had already issued Regional Regulation No. 2 of 2010 concerning the Implementation of Disaster Management and West Java Provincial Regulation Number 14 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Health which were used as basic guidelines for producing other regulations on COVID-19 pandemic management.

In short, the Provincial Government of West Java was categorized as very responsive and innovative as it initiated and issued formal policies with various terms of regulations to face the COVID-19 challenges and uphold the authority of the Provincial Government. It is evident from the fact that less than a year the Provincial Government of West Java had issued at least 117 legal products in 2020. All these 117 legal products, whose core objective was to provide help to the citizens infected by the COVID-19 pandemic, included 22 regulations; 68 Decrees; 23 Circulars; and 4 Instructions from the Governor of West Java. It is certain that there would be more legal products when other formal policies in various forms of regulations would be issued by Regional Apparatus Organizations (hereinafter referred to as OPD) and Regional Owned Enterprises (hereinafter referred to as BUMD) in the Provincial Government of West Java area.

#### *Regional Legislative' Surveillance*

Political communication surveillance needs to be performed by the RHRs as the RLC to communicate either in the political superstructure or political infrastructure. The Chief and members of the RHRs can act institutionally

or personally as members to carry out political communication with both related state institutions such as Regional Government as superstructure political actors and citizens as infrastructure political actors. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia had very explicitly explained that in regional government there would be the Regional Government led by the Regional Head and the RHRs. Regarding position of the RHRs in the Regional Government, it is also stated in Law no. 23 of 2014 concerning the Regional Government.

The Regional Government is responsible to manage and execute the government affairs based on autonomic rules and assistant duties, and by following the principle of wide autonomy in accordance with the systems and principles of the Republic of Indonesia referred to in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. The Regional Government is the sole executor of government affairs in the region and has the authority in other autonomous regions. The RHRs are the regional representatives that play important role as part of the regional government administration. As the RLC, the RHRs' roles are manifested in three functions. First, the regulator manages all regional priorities relating to regional household affairs (autonomy) and central government affairs which are taken over by the regions to be implemented (co-administration). Second, it formulates policies and plans programs for various developments in the regions. Third, it finalizes budgets via regional budget planning. As representatives, the RHRs make themselves as a balanced power and conduct effective control over regional heads and all levels in the regional governments ([Suparnyo,2017](#)).

The roles of the RHRs included following functions: First, representation determines articulating concerns, demands, aspirations and maintaining the citizens' interests when policies are made, so that the RHRs always act "on behalf of the people". Second, advocacy can be performed by receiving comprehensive aspirations and preserving the aspirations via toughest negotiations and political bargaining. Third, administrative oversight is carried out by assessing, testing, or changing the actions of the executive council. RHRs have several authorities such as summoning and asking for responsibilities, conducting votes and interpellations, and even asking the heads of regional governments for responsibilities ([Absori, 2013](#)).

One of the most strategic functions and authorities of the Provincial House of Representatives was surveillance. The scope regulated in the Law of the Regional Government was to supervise the regional government administration and implement both regional and constitutional regulations. The surveillance function is manifested in several actions: (a) implementation of provincial and governor regulations; (b) implementation of other laws and regulations related to the administration of the Provincial Government; (c) continuous implementation on financial statement audits by the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia. In conducting surveillance on the continuous implementation on the results of the financial statement audits, the Provincial Regional House

Representatives had the right to receive reports of the audit results released by the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia. The Provincial Regional House Representatives can hold official meeting to discuss the reports of the financial statement audits. Therefore, the Provincial Regional House Representatives can ask clarification on the findings of the audit reports to the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia.

Conceptually, the surveillance function was based on the scope of checks and balances between governmental and parliamentary functions. To carry out administrative surveillance of the regional government, the RHRs' used personal instruments as members of both RHRs and political parties, and fractions as well. Surveillance can also be carried out by the RHRs as members of the commissions. Members of the Provincial Regional House Representatives have several rights: (a) submit drafts of Provincial Regulations; (b) ask questions; (c) deliver proposals and ideas; (d) have chances to be chosen and be elected; (e) defense themselves; (f) have immunity; (g) follow orientation and examine the duties; (h) follow the protocol; and (i) control budgeting and administration. Although the surveillance and authoritative functions were not directly stated in the statutes of the Provincial House Representatives' members, the rights to ask questions and have immunity can be categorized as efforts in supporting optimization of the surveillance functions.

Implementation related to the surveillance functions and authorities of the RHRs are stated in the Laws on the Regional Government which are mandatorily regulated via the Rules of the Provincial House Representatives proclaimed by the respective RHRs. Therefore, the implementing substances of the RHRs' surveillance functions and authorities at the level of province, city, and regency varied. In this study, the implementing substances of the Provincial House Representatives' surveillance functions and authorities refer to Rules of the Provincial House Representatives via Regulation No 1 of 2018 of the Provincial House Representatives of West Java concerning Rules of the Provincial House Representatives of West Java.

The RHRs do have complementary tools, like the RHRs' surveillance can be carried out in accordance with the Commissions' authorities: (a) ensure the implementation of regional duties of the government administrative affairs which become regional authorities and duties referring to the provisions of the laws and regulations; (b) conduct discussions concerning drafts of Regional Regulations; (c) discuss draft decision by the RHRs in accordance with scope of the Commissions' duties; (d) supervise the implementation of regional regulations in conformity with scope of the Commission's duties; (e) perform assistance to the chiefs of the RHRs in solving problems proposed by the Governor and/or the citizens to the RHRs; (f) accept, accommodate, discuss and execute aspirations of the citizens; (g) improve the citizens' prosperities; (h) conduct commission visits approved by the chiefs of the RHRs; (i) attend meetings concerning discussions and hearings; (j) submit proposals to the chiefs of the RHRs as the scope of the

commission's duties; and (k) provide printed reports to the chiefs of the RHRs relating the results of the commission's duty implementations.

The legislative surveillance can also be carried out in parts. These parts include members of the RHRs of West Java based on configuration of Political Parties in accordance with numbers of the legislators. The RHRs' surveillance in such factions is generally called political surveillance. In this context, the RHR members act as platforms of their political parties in carrying out their duties and functions. The platforms must be adapted to the constituent requirements which are being represented, particularly protect the citizens' interests in the electoral areas. These factions, as RHRs members, supervise the regional governments and deal with great attention for the citizens' interests in the electoral areas that they represent.

Surveillance carried out by the chiefs of the RHRs also play an important role in accomplishing success for the surveillance. In this regard, the dignity of the chief is very important as well as of all heads of regional governments. The chief of the RHR needs to interact actively and prompt the heads of the regional governments to show concern for such public services or administrative governments that are not working professionally. There was a case that a regional regulation was not working effectively. Eventually, the RHRs prompted representatives of the Regional Work Unit and surveillance results were sent back to the Regional Work Unit and reported to the head of the regional government to take suitable actions. The last surveillance process was an assessment of the heads of regional governments' performances in administrating the governments. These conditions are not easy to be realized, because there are still problems for the RHRs in carrying out political communication surveillance, including weak legal institutions that regulate authorities, duties and surveillance mechanisms carried out by the RHRs in conducting good governance. Legal institutions in the form of laws and regulations are discovered coincidentally, inconsistently, and in an unsettled manner, so that the implementations remain unclear ([Surur, 2010](#)).

The RHRs also play a role in administrative surveillance related to legislative duties that have been delegated to the regional governments to make decisions and implement these decisions on the board of legislative supervisors. Legislative surveillance is also associated with consequences of divided power principle: an executive, a legislature, and a judiciary ([Absori, 2013](#)). There are results of previous studies on the RHRs' optimized implementation of the surveillance functions that portrayed several problems such as less understanding about limitation and scope of the surveillance function; the RHRs' reluctance to carry out the surveillance seriously, systematically and continuously; limited resources leading to lower quality and incentives for the RHRs' members in executing the surveillance function; assuring to provide surveillance security network because legislative supervisors did not want to risk their or party's position

in the next general election; weak law enforcement contributing to the ineffectiveness of RHRs' surveillance functions.

*Regional Legislature's Surveillance Model during the Pandemic*

There are models that can be applied in the political communication of the Provincial House of Representatives' surveillance as the regional legislature towards Regional Government policies, such as supervising the policies relating to the COVID-19 pandemic control holistically consisting of development programs in a particular sector, partial or all sectors. The political communication model that can be applied was due to the analysis results based on realistic facts discovered in the fields related to background of policy changes. Factually, amendment of the 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan in West Java was due to the COVID-19 pandemic which caused an impact on changes to various regulations and policies of the Central Government. This automatically led to changes in regulation and policies of the Provincial Government.

The political communication surveillance model was implemented due to results of fact-based analyses of the Amendment of 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan in West Java. It comprised several stages of democratic surveillance. The first stage was of Decision and Measurement of Implementation Standards. This stage was also known as administrative program planning surveillance, in accordance with the Amendment of 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan in West Java. The administrative planning for COVID-19 pandemic control program in West Java prepared surveillance documents as follows:

- Document of the 2005-2025 Regional Long Term Development Plan in West Java.
- Document of the 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan in West Java prior to the amendment.
- Document of the 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan in West Java, after the amendment.
- Document of the 2018-2023 Regional Development Long Term Development Plan in West Java.

Further surveillance actions to the documents were required to be executed, because implementation of the COVID-19 pandemic control programs was carried out via the Regional Work Units. Therefore, a few documents of the planning program proposed by the Regional Work Units related to the COVID-19 pandemic control program became the focus in the surveillance. These documents included Regional Apparatus Strategic Plan Documents in West Java; Regional Apparatus Work Plan Documents in West Java; Target Performance Improvement Plan Documents; and other documents.

At this stage, the RHRs were required to ensure the accuracy of the COVID-19 pandemic control program. Each performance improvement plan

should produce outputs due to results of the COVID-19 pandemic control program that were being carried out. The outcomes can be used as consideration in completing the targets, so that these can facilitate program evaluation.

The Administrative Surveillance Method is defined as an indirect political communication because it is implemented before the RHRs conduct assessments. The RHR submits the documents to the Regional Government and the Regional Work Unit to authenticate validation of the plan documents. The document validation includes conformity between the plan documents and the implementation result document in the form of outputs. It also consists of plan and implementation documents of planning and output documents from the higher to the lower priorities. After indirect administrative surveillance is performed, the RHRs review documents which result from the validated plan and implementation documents. These documents would be used as guideline for the RHRs' direct political communication surveillance in the field.

In this process, direct surveillance is carried out to confirm the implementations of all plan documents to be checked concerning their suitability as well as any discrepancy between the programs and outputs, from the management system, for instance, or in the form of time targets, or as aspects of benefits, human resources, and among others. The next stage of activity is the implementation measurement. The RHRs' political communication surveillance is being performed when the COVID-19 pandemic control program plan is being implemented. The focus of surveillance is the confirmation of time and performance targets which aim to map problems of output achievements of time and performance targets. The results of the COVID-19 pandemic program mapping will bring up solutions of the problems called Corrective Action.

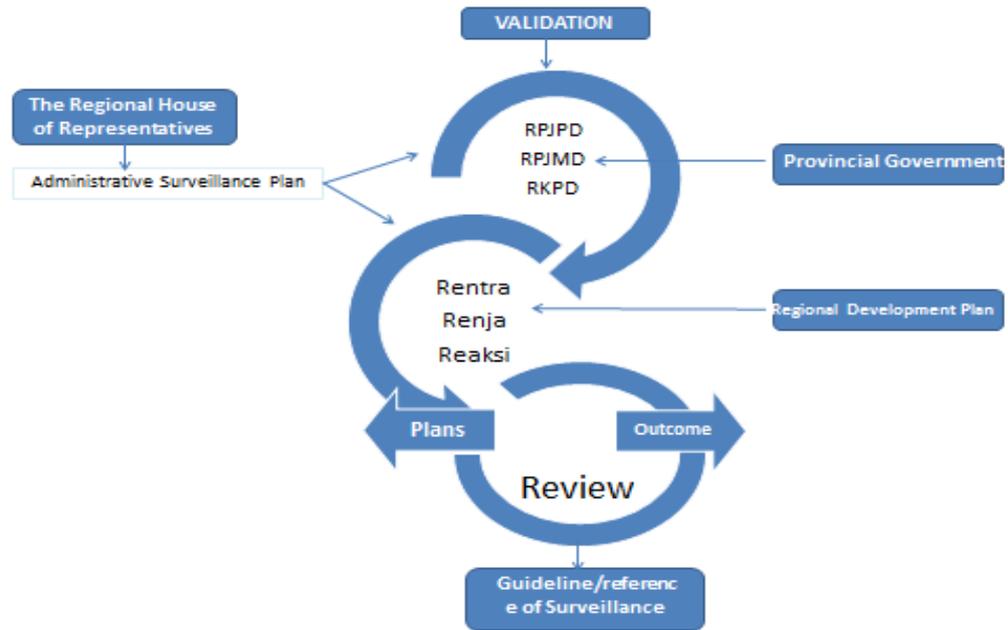
The surveillance method at this stage can also be applied with surveillance through client relations. The RHRs can conduct communications or interviews with their assistants, employees, or head of Regional Work Unit. They can enquire about COVID-19 pandemic control program such as work ability and the outcomes to be achieved in the target performance improvement plan. Such a surveillance aims to map problems while implementing procedures of the COVID-19 pandemic control program. Another method at this stage that can be used is the participatory surveillance. The participatory surveillance is applied to map several policies, decisions, or duties given by the leaders that support the COVID-19 pandemic control program. This mapping is required to formulate decisions in lower level of leaderships effectively in implementing the programs, so that the outcomes of the COVID-19 pandemic control program could either be measured or not.

The last stage is the comparison with evaluation stage. This political communication surveillance considers this as a critical stage. Conformity assessment is performed to analyze relation between the COVID-19

pandemic control program plans and the outcomes that have been achieved. The purpose of this program plan is to discover disparities between the plans and outputs. The disparities would become evaluation of problems to realize the COVID-19 pandemic control program outcomes (Reksohadiprodjo, 1992). The surveillance method used by the RHRs is administrative surveillance. The documents reviewed by the RHRs are plan documents and results/evaluations of the COVID-19 pandemic control program documents. The political communication surveillance can also be carried out with public interest surveillance. The RHRs could make the plans and implementations of the COVID-19 pandemic control program published in the Regional Government Website by using comprehensive language, so that the people can acknowledge the information. The publications can be in the form of live streaming, videos, texts, or infographics. These publications are necessary to increase communities' participation in evaluating the programs. Therefore, the citizens have become the targets of the programs who can deliver constructive criticism and offer suggestions for the improvement of the COVID-19 pandemic control programs in future.

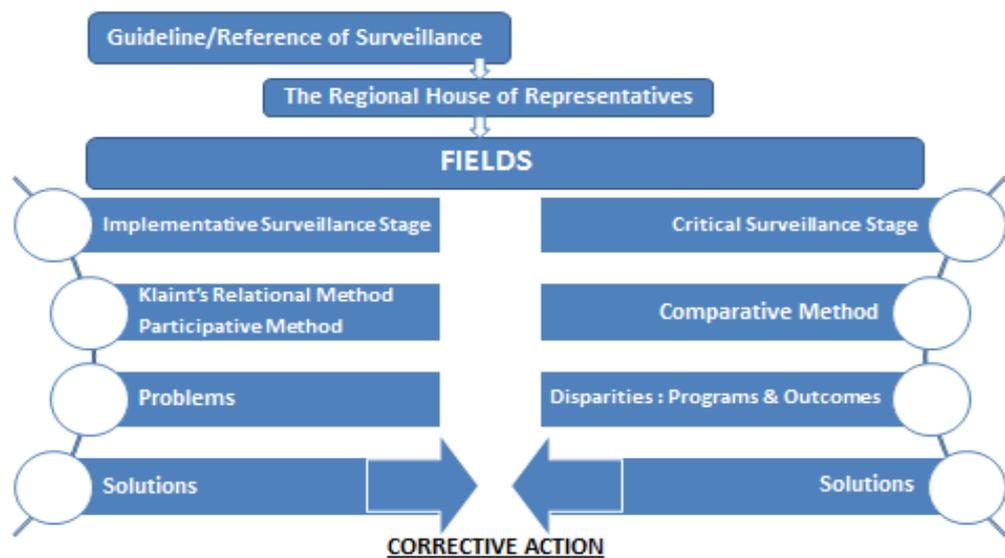
Surveillance to objects in all stages of the COVID-19 pandemic control program stated as above are carried out in the following manner: (1) production (standard procedures), (2) budgeting, (3) time, and (4) people with their activities. there are differences, deviations, or disparities found in each stage of the COVID-19 pandemic control program between the plans and outputs. In this condition, the Provincial House of Representatives can perform corrective communications as follows: (a) Change the standard (too high or too low); (b) Change implementation consideration; and (c) Change the way in analyzing and interpreting deviations (Handoko, 2001).

A descriptive political communication surveillance model can also be implemented by the RHRs to succeed the COVID-19 pandemic control program, such as the Amendment of 2018-2023 Regional Medium Term Development Plan in West Java elaborated in two Model presented in Figure 2 and Figure 3:



**Figure 2.** The Regional Legislative' Political Communication Surveillance Model during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Surveillance (Stage 1)

\***RPJPD** = Regional Long Term Development Plan; **RPJMD** = Regional Medium; Term Development Plan; **RKPD** = Regional Development Plan; **Renstra** = Strategic Plan; **Renja** = Work Plan; **Reaksi** = Target Performance Improvement



**Figure 3.** The Regional Legislative' Political Communication Surveillance Model during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Stage 2 & 3

Based on Figures 2 and 3, the RHRs' political communication surveillance model on the COVID-19 pandemic control policy can be labeled as the

RHRs' Corrective Action of Political Communication Model. Applying this model. It is expected to maximize the RHRs' surveillance function as regional legislative body that have authorities to propose Regional Regulations, Supervise, and plan budgeting.

## Conclusion

Based on the results and facts, the data, and the analyses mentioned in the study, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Political communication surveillance of the RHRs as the Regional Legislative Institution in the COVID-19 Pandemic Control Program comprises the implementation of the normative mandate of the RHRs' surveillance functions on the Regional Government Programs. This is achieved by maximizing the rights, obligations, duties, and authorities as the members of various positions such as RHRs, RHRs' factions, RHRs' Commissions, and chiefs of RHRs.
2. The political communication surveillance model of the RHRs on the COVID-19 pandemic control program is the RHRs' Corrective Action of Political Communication Model. This model has been applied to maximize the RHRs' surveillance function as the regional legislative body that have rights to propose Regional Regulations, Supervise, and Plan Budgeting.

## Recommendations

1. The West Java Provincial Regional House of Representatives (RHRs) must be more comprehensive in carrying out political communication in supervising the COVID-19 Pandemic prevention program by using the Model of the RHRs' Corrective Political Communication.
2. The West Java Provincial Government must provide wider access for the development of political communication in the supervision of the COVID-19 pandemic prevention program;
3. Researchers can follow up on Regional House of Representatives (RHRs) political communication research by further widening the focus of research on three functions of Regional House of Representatives (RHRs) in making regional regulations, monitoring, and budgeting, both for the COVID-19 Pandemic Management program and other provincial government development programs.

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