

Analysis of Inaccuracy in Social Assistance Recipients: A Literature Study on the Effectiveness of Government Programs

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Abstract

This study highlights the issue of inaccuracies in the distribution of Social Assistance (Bansos) in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the factors that contribute to the misallocation of aid. From the literature analysis, it was found that the main errors lie in inaccurate recipient data and a lack of coordination between government agencies. The failure to update data regularly has led to aid being given to individuals who no longer meet the criteria, while those who genuinely need it are overlooked. The politicization of Bansos distribution is also a significant factor, where aid is often used as a political tool, leading to inequities in its distribution. A weak verification system further exacerbates this situation. This study recommends regular data updates, improved coordination between agencies, and the use of information technology to enhance the accuracy of Bansos distribution. Community involvement in the distribution process and monitoring of aid is also considered crucial to ensure that Bansos reaches those who truly need it. These findings provide guidance on improving the effectiveness and fairness of the Bansos program in Indonesia, which is expected to have a positive impact on the welfare of communities affected by the pandemic.

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1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global economy, including Indonesia. As one of the most populous countries in the world, Indonesia faces serious challenges in addressing the social and economic impacts of this pandemic. To mitigate the negative effects of this crisis, the Indonesian government has launched various social assistance (Bansos) programs designed to alleviate the economic burden on the community, especially those most vulnerable. These programs include direct cash assistance, food aid, electricity subsidies, and various other forms of assistance aimed at maintaining public purchasing power and supporting national economic recovery (Noerkaisar, 2021). However, despite the well-intentioned design of these Bansos programs, their implementation often faces various obstacles, particularly related to target inaccuracies. Inaccurate distribution of Bansos is a public concern as it can diminish the effectiveness of the programs in achieving their intended goals. Research indicates that there are various issues in the distribution of Bansos, both in terms of recipient selection and the amount of assistance provided. These inaccuracies are not only present during the COVID-19 pandemic but also in other Bansos programs implemented previously (Fadhli and Nazila, 2023).

One of the main issues hindering the accuracy of Bansos distribution is the inaccuracy of recipient data. The data used by the government to determine who is eligible for Bansos is often outdated and inaccurate. This results in some individuals who should receive aid not being listed, while those who are not eligible still receive assistance. This issue of data inaccuracy becomes more complex in emergency situations such as a pandemic, where the need to distribute aid quickly often compromises the thorough verification and validation processes that should be conducted (Khothimah et al., 2021). Previous literature reviews have identified various issues in

Bansos distribution, particularly related to recipient inaccuracies. Research by Kaawoan et al. (2022) reveals that one of the main causes of Bansos recipient inaccuracies in Indonesia is outdated data. The study found that many of the data used to determine aid recipients are not updated regularly, resulting in recipients who no longer qualify still receiving assistance, while those in need are overlooked. Additionally, research by Rahayu and Fitriani (2023) also shows that a lack of transparency and oversight in the Bansos distribution process contributes to recipient inaccuracies. In emergency situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for rapid distribution of aid often sacrifices accuracy and transparency, leading to misuse and target inaccuracies. This data inaccuracy is related to structural problems in the management of population data in Indonesia. Although the government has attempted to update data periodically through programs like the Population Census and Family Data Collection, there remains a gap between the data available and the actual socio-economic conditions of the population. This gap is often due to local officials' limitations in reaching the entire population, especially in remote areas, and changes in socio-economic conditions that are not recorded quickly and accurately. As a result, the data used in Bansos distribution often does not reflect the current conditions of the community (Kaawoan et al., 2022).

Besides data inaccuracy, the lack of oversight also contributes to inaccuracies in Bansos distribution. In some cases, deviations have been found in the distribution process, where aid does not reach the eligible recipients due to various reasons, including corruption, nepotism, and abuse of authority by those involved in distributing Bansos. This undermines public trust in Bansos programs, which should be an important instrument in maintaining social welfare during crises (Rahayu and Fitriani, 2023). The lack of coordination between government agencies also poses a major obstacle to effective Bansos distribution. Many government institutions, both at the central and regional levels, are involved in the distribution process. However, the lack of coordination and data integration among these institutions often leads to overlapping assistance or even the omission of some groups that should receive aid. This highlights the need for improved coordination and data synchronization among government agencies to ensure that social assistance is distributed accurately and efficiently (Aprilia et al., 2022).

On the other hand, the often top-down nature of the Bansos distribution process, where decisions about aid recipients are largely determined by central authorities, also poses a problem. This process frequently does not involve local communities or parties who better understand the local conditions and needs. As a result, the aid distributed often does not align with the actual needs of the community on the ground. Therefore, a more inclusive approach that involves active community participation and local stakeholders is necessary to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of Bansos distribution (Nurofik et al., 2022). This study aims to analyze the factors contributing to inaccuracies in Bansos distribution and evaluate the effectiveness of the Bansos programs implemented by the government during the pandemic. By understanding these factors, it is hoped that concrete recommendations can be provided to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of Bansos distribution in the future. Thus, Bansos programs can be more targeted and provide maximum benefits to those truly in need. The results of this study are also expected to contribute to the formulation of better social policies in the future, especially in dealing with emergencies such as pandemics (Amelia et al., 2022).

2. Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method to analyze the inaccuracies in the distribution of Social Assistance (Bansos) recipients in Indonesia and evaluate the effectiveness of the government programs that have been implemented. The literature review method was chosen as the primary approach because it allows researchers to collect and analyze secondary data from various existing sources, including scholarly journals, policy reports, and official government documents. This method is highly suitable for understanding complex phenomena such as inaccuracies in Bansos distribution, which involves various social, economic, and policy factors.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

This study identifies several key factors causing inaccuracies in the distribution of Social Assistance (Bansos) in Indonesia. One of the main factors is the inaccuracy of recipient data. The data used by the government to distribute Bansos is often not updated regularly, resulting in recipients who no longer qualify but still receive aid. Conversely, those who should receive aid are overlooked because the data used does not reflect current conditions (Noerkaisar, 2021). Another important factor is the lack of coordination between government agencies responsible for distributing Bansos. For example, there are discrepancies between the data used by central and regional governments, often leading to mismatches in distribution. As a result, aid meant for eligible recipients may not be distributed, or conversely, it may be given to ineligible individuals (Fadhli and Nazila, 2023). In emergency situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, the pressure to distribute aid quickly often sacrifices accuracy and data verification processes, increasing the risk of incorrect recipients (Khothimah et al., 2021).

The study also found that political intervention in the distribution of Bansos is a significant factor. Some studies show that Bansos is often used as a political tool to gain support in elections. Consequently, aid distribution is not based on need but influenced by political considerations, leading to unfair distribution and aid not always reaching those who need it most (Zega and Suriadi, 2022). Additionally, inadequate verification systems were identified as another important factor. In some cases, recipient verification is only performed formally without thorough examination of the recipient's economic conditions. As a result, families that are actually capable still receive aid, while those who truly need it are not registered and do not receive the assistance they require (Afrianda, 2022).

3.2. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the complexity and challenges faced in distributing Bansos in Indonesia. Inaccurate data and lack of coordination between government agencies are systemic issues that require fundamental solutions, including improvements in data management and enhanced inter-agency coordination. For example, integrating data between agencies could be an effective solution to address recipient inaccuracies (Kaawoan et al., 2022). Similar issues are also found in other countries, where inaccuracies in aid distribution are often related to inaccurate data and poor inter-agency coordination. Research shows that countries that have successfully addressed these issues generally have better data management systems and more integrated coordination mechanisms (Muthiah, 2021). Therefore, Indonesia can learn from the experiences of other countries to improve its Bansos distribution system.

Politicization of the Bansos program is a crucial issue, especially in Indonesia, which has complex bureaucracy and lack of transparency. This study reveals that politicization of Bansos is often done for electoral purposes, where aid is distributed not based on need but on certain political interests. This not only undermines the primary goal of the Bansos program but also diminishes public trust in the government (Rahayu and Fitriani, 2023). Similar phenomena occur in other countries, where social assistance is often politicized to gain political support, leading to inaccuracies in aid distribution (Rahman, 2021). The study also highlights the importance of technology integration in Bansos data management. The use of information technology, such as geographic information systems (GIS) and data analysis, can be a solution to improve accuracy and efficiency in aid distribution. This technology allows the government to map areas that need aid most and ensure that aid reaches the correct recipients (Aprilia et al., 2022). Implementing technology in Bansos distribution will not only improve data accuracy but also speed up the distribution process, reduce the risk of misuse, and increase transparency. Community-based approaches are also crucial in addressing recipient inaccuracies. Research shows that involving local communities in the verification and distribution process can minimize inaccuracies in aid distribution. Local communities often have a better understanding of social and economic conditions in their areas, providing more accurate information about who truly needs assistance (Roziqin et al., 2021). This approach not only improves the accuracy of aid distribution but also empowers the community to actively participate in the Bansos distribution process.

Policy Implications

Based on these findings, several policy recommendations are proposed to improve the effectiveness and accuracy of Bansos distribution in Indonesia:

Regular Data Updating and Validation: Updating recipient data regularly is necessary to ensure that aid is distributed to those who truly qualify. Data validation should also be strict to avoid errors and inaccuracies in recipient selection (Nurofik et al., 2022).

1. **Improving Inter-Agency Coordination:** Enhancing coordination between government agencies through the development of an integrated data and distribution management system is crucial. This system should be accessible and updated by all relevant agencies to prevent overlaps or inaccuracies in aid distribution (Amelia et al., 2022).
2. **Strengthening Oversight Mechanisms:** Strengthening oversight mechanisms is needed to prevent politicization and misuse of social assistance. Transparency in the aid distribution process can be improved by utilizing digital technology to monitor and track aid distribution in real-time (Masambe et al., 2021).
3. **Increasing Community Participation:** Enhancing community participation in the Bansos distribution process and developing a more transparent verification system based on regularly updated data. This participation will not only improve accuracy but also strengthen community involvement and responsibility in the aid distribution process (Alik-Lagrange et al., 2021).

By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that the Bansos program in Indonesia can become more targeted, transparent, and beneficial to those in need. These improvements are also expected to increase public trust in the Bansos program and the government as a whole.

4. Conclusion

This research reveals various challenges in the distribution of Social Assistance (Bansos) in Indonesia, particularly regarding the inaccuracy of recipients. Based on literature analysis, inaccuracies in data and weak coordination among government agencies are the main factors causing this issue. Data that is not updated regularly often results in aid being given to recipients who are no longer eligible, while those who genuinely need assistance are overlooked. The study also highlights the presence of political manipulation in the distribution of Bansos, where aid is often used as a political tool to gain electoral support, leading to unfair distribution. Such politicization is not only occurring in Indonesia but also in other countries, indicating that this is a global issue that requires serious attention. Additionally, weak verification systems contribute to the inaccuracy of recipients, as verification processes are often conducted in a superficial manner without thorough checks. To address these issues, regular data updates and validation are needed, along with improved coordination among agencies and the use of information technology in managing Bansos data. The government also needs to enhance transparency and accountability to prevent misuse and politicization of aid by employing digital technology for real-time monitoring of distribution. Involving the public in oversight is also crucial to ensure that aid genuinely reaches those in need. By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that Bansos programs in Indonesia can become more effective, fair, and provide significant benefits to the welfare of the community.

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