

Adaptive Collaborative Implementation of Urban Poverty Alleviation Policy in Bandung City, Indonesia NVivo-Based Evidence and Policy Novelty

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ABSTRACT

Urban poverty alleviation requires more than the adoption of local regulations and social assistance programs. It depends on how policy content is translated into field operations, how institutional actors coordinate across levels, and how beneficiaries experience the results of policy implementation. This article analyses the implementation of poverty alleviation policy in Bandung City, Indonesia, using a qualitative case-study design supported by NVivo. Data were obtained from interviews, policy documents, poverty statistics, and implementation evidence. The analysis used word-frequency queries, thematic coding, and matrix coding to examine three core issues: the content of implementation, the context of implementation, and policy effectiveness. To capture the complexity of policy implementation, this study moves beyond word-frequency outputs to provide in-depth thematic interpretations of bureaucratic challenges and actor interactions. The results show that the content dimension emphasizes benefit types, intended change, decision-making, implementing actors, and resources, while the context dimension highlights actor strategies, institutional characteristics, and compliance. The policy's effectiveness is constrained by data volatility, coordination gaps, and limited resource capacity. This article offers a conceptual framework for "Adaptive Collaborative Implementation" (ACI) to bridge the gap between policy design and grassroots outcomes, while acknowledging the need for future empirical validation of this model in other urban settings.

Keywords: Poverty Alleviation, Policy Implementation, Collaborative Governance, NVivo Analysis, Bandung City.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty remains a central challenge in public governance because it is multidimensional, dynamic, and closely connected to social vulnerability, economic insecurity, access to public services, and institutional capacity. In urban areas, poverty is often complicated by high living costs, informal employment, population mobility, spatial inequality, and pressure on public services. These characteristics require local governments not only to distribute assistance, but also to build integrated, responsive, and sustainable policy implementation systems supported by modern public administration and robust local governance dynamics [1], [2], [3], [4]. In the context of developing nations, modern governance requires a comprehensive understanding of state administrative systems to ensure local policies align with broader national frameworks [5]. Under decentralized systems, local governments are granted the authority to manage their own affairs, yet this decentralization introduces complex dynamics in executing social welfare initiatives [6].

Indonesia has made progress in reducing poverty at the national level. However, urban poverty continues to present specific challenges. Urban households face volatile income, rental and food-price pressures, and changing eligibility status that may not be fully captured by periodic administrative data. For this reason, the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policy must be evaluated not only from aggregate poverty rates but also from the quality of implementation, the accuracy of targeting, and the ability of programs to create sustained improvements in household welfare [7], [8].

Bandung City provides an important case for analysing urban poverty governance. In March 2025, the number of poor people in Bandung City reached 99.12 thousand people or 3.78 percent of the population, decreasing

from 101.10 thousand people or 3.87 percent in March 2024. At the same time, data on extreme poverty showed a sharp increase from 87,402 individuals in 2022 to 143,534 individuals in 2023 and 184,360 individuals in 2024. This creates an urban governance paradox: aggregate poverty indicators show improvement, while extreme poverty and vulnerability remain urgent in several subdistricts [9], [10].

The municipal government has responded through various policy instruments, including Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2020 on Poverty Alleviation and Mayor Regulation No. 23 of 2024 on the Regional Poverty Alleviation Plan for 2024-2028. These policy instruments emphasize reducing the expenditure burden of poor households, increasing household income, minimizing poverty pockets, strengthening social assistance and social security, empowering communities and micro-enterprises, and improving program integration, budgeting, targeting, monitoring, and evaluation [11], [9].

Previous studies on poverty alleviation in Indonesia have generally focused on program barriers, social assistance effectiveness, planning documents, and poverty indicators. Fewer studies have examined how the content of policy, the context of implementation, and effectiveness interact in a dense urban setting using systematic qualitative software evidence. This article addresses that gap by using NVivo-supported thematic analysis to identify dominant narratives, coding patterns, and implementation relationships in Bandung City [12], [13], [14].

Table 1. Key poverty indicators in Bandung City

Indicator	2023	2024	2025 / latest available
Number of poor people (thousand)	102.80	101.10	99.12 (March 2025)
Poverty rate (%)	3.96	3.87	3.78 (March 2025)
Poverty line (IDR per capita per month)	-	614,707	644,417 (March 2025)
Extreme poor individuals	143,534	184,360	P3KE data, latest used in the study

LITERATURE REVIEW

Poverty Alleviation and Urban Governance

Poverty is commonly understood as the inability to meet minimum living standards. Contemporary poverty studies emphasize that poverty is not limited to income or consumption; it also includes limited access to education, health, housing, employment, social protection, and political voice. The multidimensional approach is important for urban poverty because households may be located near economic opportunities while still experiencing insecure work, unstable income, and limited access to affordable services [1], [2], [15]. In Indonesia, poverty measurement by the Central Statistics Agency uses the basic needs approach. A person is classified as poor when per capita monthly expenditure falls below the poverty line, which consists of food and non-food components. This approach provides a clear statistical boundary, but implementation of poverty alleviation requires more than measurement. Local governments must ensure that data, targeting, service delivery, and empowerment programs correspond to the changing condition of poor and vulnerable households [8], [16]. Urban poverty governance requires a combination of social protection and empowerment. Social assistance can reduce short-term expenditure burdens, while empowerment programs can strengthen income generation, skills, micro-enterprise capacity, and access to productive resources. A policy that relies only on assistance risks creating temporary relief without building the capability of poor households to move out of vulnerability [17], [18], [19].

Policy Implementation and Effectiveness

Policy implementation theory explains why policies that appear clear in formal documents may produce different results in practice. Grindle's model is particularly relevant because it views implementation as a political and administrative process shaped by the content of policy and the context of implementation. Policy content includes interests affected, types of benefits, degree of change expected, decision-making location, program implementers, and resources committed. Implementation context includes the power, interests, and strategies of actors, institutional characteristics, and compliance and responsiveness of implementers [12], [13], [20]. Policy

effectiveness refers to the extent to which implementation produces intended outcomes and solves public problems. In this article, effectiveness is analysed through four dimensions: policy impact, targeting accuracy, public problem solving, and achievement of policy objectives. This framework is suitable for poverty alleviation because effectiveness cannot be measured only by program completion; it must be assessed through actual benefits, fairness of targeting, responsiveness to public problems, and the sustainability of improvements in household welfare [21], [22]. NVivo-supported qualitative analysis strengthens policy implementation research by making coding, thematic organization, and cross-informant comparison more transparent. Word clouds help identify dominant narratives, while matrix coding helps compare how different actors emphasize different dimensions of policy implementation and effectiveness [23], [24].

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative case-study design to understand the implementation of poverty alleviation policy in Bandung City. A qualitative approach was selected because the research problem concerns institutional processes, actor interaction, field-level responsiveness, and beneficiary experience. The case-study design allows the researcher to examine policy implementation within its real governance context [25], [26]. Data were collected through documentation, observation, and semi-structured interviews. Documentation included local regulations, planning documents, poverty statistics, program reports, and institutional documents related to poverty alleviation.

Participant Selection and Interview Procedures

Informants were selected through purposive sampling at the initial stage because they had authority, knowledge, or direct involvement in poverty alleviation. Snowball sampling was then used to identify additional relevant informants. This approach enabled the study to capture views from planning actors, implementing agencies, territorial officials, local community institutions, and beneficiary households [28], [29]. Specifically, the 15 informants comprised 3 officials from the Regional Planning, Research, and Development Agency (Bappelitbang), 3 officials from the Social Agency, 4 subdistrict and ward (Kecamatan/Kelurahan) administrators, 2 community leaders, and 3 program beneficiaries. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, lasting between 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian, audio-recorded with the participants' informed consent, and subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis [27], [28].

Data Analysis and Coding Reliability

Data analysis followed open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. NVivo 12 Plus was used to organize transcripts and documents, conduct word-frequency analysis, create nodes, perform matrix coding, and compare patterns across informant groups. The analytical process moved from identifying repeated words and statements, to grouping them into themes, and then to developing an in-depth synthesis of implementation content, implementation context, and policy effectiveness.

To ensure coding reliability and analytical trustworthiness, researchers conducted inter-coder agreement checks, where multiple researchers independently reviewed the NVivo nodes and thematic categories to resolve any discrepancies. Furthermore, member checking was performed by presenting preliminary thematic interpretations to selected key informants to verify the accuracy of the findings and ensure that their narratives were not misrepresented [23], [30], [31], [32].

Table 2. Data sources and analytical procedures

Component	Description	Analytical purpose
Primary data	Semi-structured interviews with government actors, territorial apparatus, community institutions, and beneficiaries	To capture policy formulation, coordination, implementation practices, and beneficiary experience
Secondary data	Regulations, planning documents, poverty statistics, program reports, and institutional documents	To compare formal policy design with implementation evidence

NVivo analysis	Word cloud, open coding, axial coding, selective coding, source classification, and matrix coding	To identify dominant themes, relationships among actors, and implementation gaps
Validation	Triangulation, member checking, audit trail, and peer discussion	To strengthen credibility, dependability, and confirmability

RESULTS

Urban Poverty and the Policy Setting in Bandung City

Bandung City's poverty problem shows an urban paradox. The city has relatively strong economic activity and a lower aggregate poverty rate than many districts and cities in West Java, but several subdistricts continue to experience extreme poverty and social vulnerability. The increase in extreme poor individuals between 2022 and 2024 indicates that poverty alleviation must be sensitive to spatial concentration, household vulnerability, and the risk of falling back into poverty [10], [4].

The formal policy framework provides a strong basis for implementation. Regional Regulation No. 4 of 2020 and Mayor Regulation No. 23 of 2024 define strategies for reducing expenditure burdens, increasing income, and minimizing poverty pockets. The policies also direct programs toward social assistance, social security, community empowerment, micro and small business strengthening, and other activities that can improve household welfare. However, the effectiveness of these policies depends on the accuracy of data, the consistency of coordination, the responsiveness of implementers, and the integration of short-term assistance with long-term empowerment [11], [9].

NVivo-Based Results: Word Cloud, Coding Matrix, and Thematic Patterns

The NVivo analysis was used to display the empirical structure of the data rather than relying only on narrative interpretation. While word-frequency queries provide a macroscopic view of the data, the core of this study relies on in-depth thematic interpretation to capture the true complexity of policy implementation.

The first NVivo word cloud for the policy implementation variable shows that the dominant words are policy, program, community, assistance, government, implementation, coordination, data, target, benefit, resources, and implementers. This pattern indicates that informants understood poverty alleviation primarily as a practical governance process involving programs, beneficiaries, coordination, and administrative data rather than as an abstract regulatory issue.



Figure 1. NVivo word cloud for the policy implementation variable

Table 3. NVivo-based results displayed in the article

NVivo output	Main empirical pattern	Interpretation for policy implementation
Word cloud: implementation variable	Dominant terms include policy, program, community, assistance, government, implementation, coordination, data, target, benefit, resources, and implementers.	Implementation is understood as a concrete program-delivery process involving beneficiaries, actors, data, and coordination.
Word cloud: Content of Implementation	Dominant terms include policy, program, implementation, community, assistance, benefits, coordination, interests, resources, implementers, decision-making, and degree of change.	Policy substance is assessed through benefits, intended changes, decision-making, implementers, and supporting resources.
Matrix coding: Content of Implementation	Coding is strongest among territorial and technical actors, especially subdistrict, social service, and village/kelurahan actors, while beneficiaries emphasize benefits and change.	Policy content is operationalized by implementers but evaluated through the lived experience of beneficiaries.
Word cloud: Context of Implementation	Dominant themes include government, coordination, supervision, strategy, local conditions, compliance, response, and community complaints.	Implementation success depends on actor strategies, institutional arrangements, compliance, responsiveness, and adaptive field coordination.
Matrix coding: Context of Implementation	The most prominent coding is related to power, interests, actor strategy, compliance, and implementer responsiveness.	Context is not neutral; it is shaped by actor interaction, bureaucratic authority, local problem solving, and the capacity to respond to changing needs.
Word cloud and matrix coding: effectiveness	Dominant themes include policy, program, community, assistance, services, health, education, targets, data, evaluation, problem solving, and change. Beneficiaries contribute strongly to all effectiveness dimensions.	Effectiveness is experienced through tangible benefits and access to services, but is constrained by data accuracy, targeting, procedures, and uneven sustainability.

Content of Implementation: Benefits, Change, Decision-Making, Actors, and Resources

The content dimension is a major component of the implementation process. NVivo results show that the content of implementation is represented by interests affected by policy, type of policy benefits, degree of change expected, decision-making location, program implementers, and resources used. The word cloud on this dimension shows the dominance of policy, program, implementation, community, assistance, benefits, coordination, interests, resources, implementers, decision-making, and degree of change.

Beyond these frequencies, thematic analysis reveals that the strongest content indicator is the degree of change expected. The interviews show that the intended change is not limited to reducing poverty statistics, but includes reducing household expenditure burdens, improving access to basic services, increasing productivity, strengthening economic independence, and improving quality of life. This finding is important because poverty alleviation will remain incomplete when it only distributes temporary assistance without creating a pathway toward household resilience.

The type of policy benefits is also important. Beneficiaries and territorial implementers emphasize food assistance, cash assistance, access to health services, education support, and reduction of household expenses. These benefits are meaningful for short-term protection, especially for vulnerable households. However, in-

depth narratives from informants stress that benefits must be connected to productive empowerment to prevent continuous dependence on social assistance.

Decision-making is implemented through a combination of city-level strategic decisions and local-level technical adjustments. Strategic decisions are made by the municipal government and related agencies, while subdistricts and villages/kelurahan carry out verification, coordination, information delivery, and complaint handling. This pattern shows that implementation combines top-down policy direction with field-level adaptation, which is the core of effective regional government management [33].

Resources remain a decisive issue. The policy requires financial resources, human resources, information systems, service infrastructure, and intergovernmental support. The qualitative narratives indicate that human-resource capacity is especially important for data verification, complaint services, and cross-sector coordination. Without adequate resources, even a well-designed policy may not produce the expected benefits.



Figure 2. NVivo word cloud for the Content of Implementation dimension

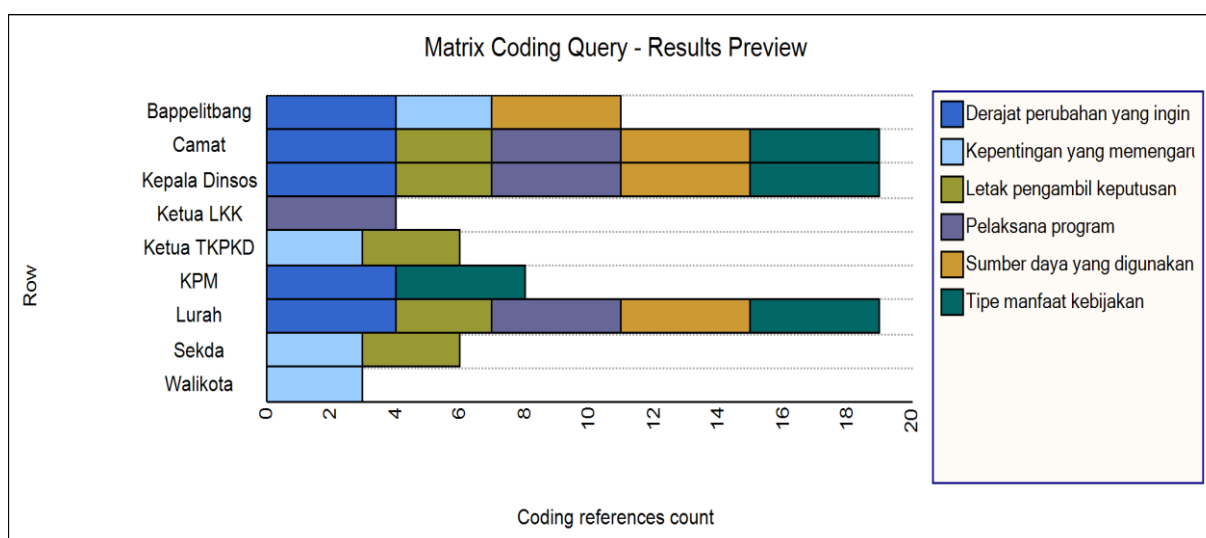


Figure 3. NVivo matrix coding for the Content of Implementation dimension

Context of Implementation: Leadership, Institutions, Actor Strategy, and Adaptive Compliance

The context of implementation shapes how policy content is translated into practice. The NVivo word cloud for the context dimension highlights government, program, community, policy, coordination, supervision, response,

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Effectiveness of Poverty Alleviation Policy

The effectiveness of poverty alleviation policy in Bandung City is reflected in four dimensions: policy impact, targeting accuracy, public problem solving, and achievement of policy objectives. The NVivo word cloud for effectiveness shows that informants frequently discuss policy, program, community, assistance, services, health, education, targets, data, evaluation, problems, change, and improvement. This indicates that effectiveness is evaluated through tangible benefits and service access rather than only through administrative completion.

The policy impact dimension shows that programs have helped reduce household expenditure burdens and improve access to basic services. Beneficiaries report that assistance contributes to daily needs, food security, health access, and education-related expenses. Territorial actors also view the programs as helpful in reducing pressure on poor households.

Targeting accuracy remains the most critical issue. Programs rely on social-economic data and verification processes, but field findings indicate that the data are not always up to date. Some eligible residents may not be included, while some listed recipients may no longer meet the criteria. This problem weakens effectiveness because poverty alleviation depends on public confidence that benefits reach the correct households.

The public problem-solving dimension shows that poverty alleviation must address more than immediate consumption needs. Assistance helps in the short term, but sustainable poverty reduction requires employment access, skills development, micro-enterprise support, affordable services, and strengthened social resilience.

The achievement of objectives has begun to appear in reduced poverty rates and better program access, but the persistence and increase of extreme poverty indicate that the objectives have not been fully achieved.

The NVivo matrix coding for effectiveness indicates that beneficiaries provide strong information across all four dimensions. This is important because policy effectiveness should not be judged only from the government perspective. Beneficiaries provide evidence of whether benefits are meaningful, whether targeting is fair, whether problems are actually solved, and whether the policy creates real change in household welfare.



Figure 6. NVivo word cloud for the policy effectiveness variable

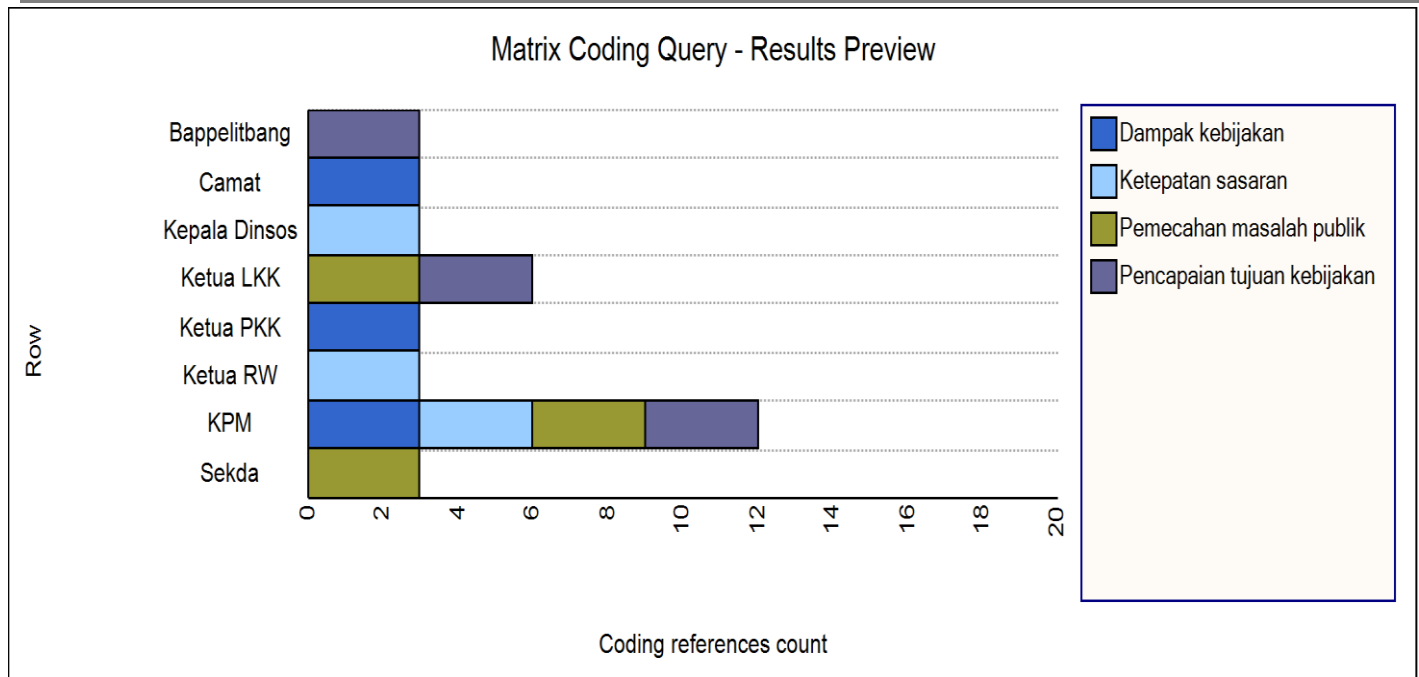


Figure 7. NVivo matrix coding for policy effectiveness

Table 4. NVivo-based interpretation of policy effectiveness

Effectiveness dimension	NVivo-based evidence	Main constraint	Required improvement
Policy impact	Assistance reduces expenditure burdens and improves access to basic services such as food, health, and education.	Impact tends to be short term when not connected to productive empowerment.	Link social protection with livelihood support, skills, micro-enterprise assistance, and income opportunities.
Targeting accuracy	Data, verification, and field checking appear repeatedly in interviews and coding.	Poverty data are not always dynamic; inclusion and exclusion errors remain possible.	Apply continuous data updating, community validation, and transparent complaint mechanisms.
Public problem solving	Programs respond to household needs and service access problems.	Administrative procedures, limited understanding, and technical field obstacles reduce effectiveness.	Simplify procedures, strengthen facilitation, and provide responsive local service channels.
Achievement of objectives	Poverty rate declines and program access improves.	Extreme poverty persists and increases in several areas.	Prioritize spatial poverty pockets and integrate assistance with long-term empowerment.

Existing and Recommended Implementation Model

The existing model of poverty alleviation implementation in Bandung City shows that policy has a formal regulatory basis and involves multiple actors. Programs are implemented through city agencies, subdistricts, village/kelurahan offices, and community institutions. However, the existing model still tends to be administrative and program-based. It has not fully integrated dynamic data validation, beneficiary complaints, empowerment continuity, and cross-sector collaboration into a single adaptive implementation system.

Based on the results, this article proposes an adaptive collaborative implementation model. The model begins with strategic inputs: local regulations, poverty alleviation plans, accurate data, budget support, and institutional commitment. It then strengthens the two implementation dimensions. On the content side, the model emphasizes

clear benefits, realistic intended change, integrated decision-making, capable implementers, and sufficient resources. On the context side, it emphasizes leadership commitment, actor strategy, institutional coordination, compliance, responsiveness, and community participation.

The recommended model contains six strategic actions: continuous updating and validation of poverty data; integration of social assistance with economic empowerment; strengthening of community-based verification and complaint handling; cross-sector collaboration among government, community institutions, private actors, universities, and civil society; improvement of service quality and simplified procedures; and monitoring and evaluation based on impact, targeting accuracy, problem solving, and achievement of objectives.

DISCUSSION

Bridging the Implementation Gap

The findings of this study demonstrate a significant gap between policy design (content) and practical outcomes (effectiveness) in Bandung City's poverty alleviation efforts. This gap is not unique to Bandung; it reflects a common challenge in public policy implementation where top-down designs encounter complex local contexts [38], [20]. However, in an urban setting like Bandung City, this gap is intensified by rapid demographic changes, spatial disparities, and bureaucratic silos.

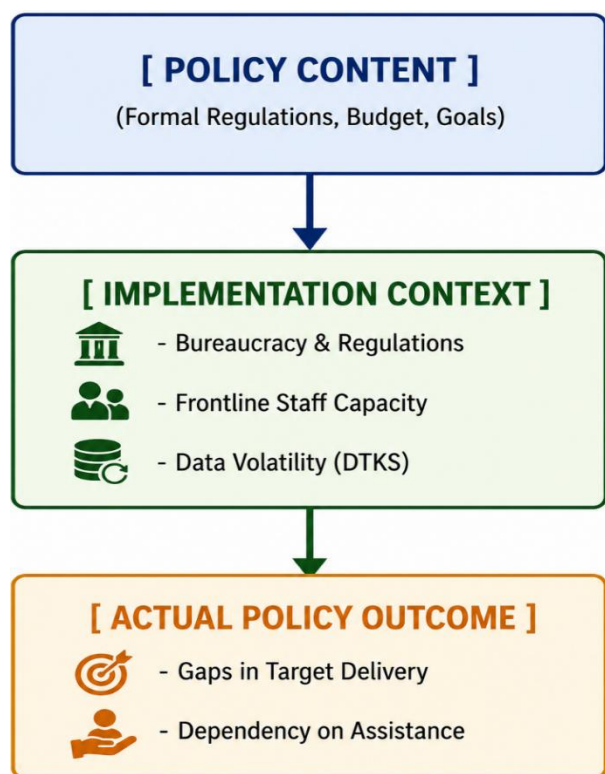


Figure 8: Conceptual Flow of the Policy Implementation Gap

The thematic analysis shows that while the content of Local Regulation No. 4 of 2020 is comprehensive and multidimensional, its execution remains highly sectoral and welfare-dependent. This combination shows that poverty alleviation effectiveness is shaped by both institutional delivery and lived experience [1], [10]. This finding creates a new empirical argument that urban poverty governance must pay attention to spatial concentration, data volatility, household vulnerability, and the mismatch between aggregate indicators and field-level poverty dynamics [10], [34].

The Role of Collaborative Governance

A critical factor shaping the context of implementation is the quality of interaction among actors. Public policy literature argues that complex social problems cannot be solved by government agencies working in isolation

[35], [36]. Policy content, such as benefits, resources, and intended change, becomes effective only when the context supports coordination, responsiveness, data updating, local adaptation, and community participation through a robust collaborative governance framework [37], [35], [36], [38].

In Bandung, the lack of effective collaboration across government departments and with non-state actors (such as NGOs, universities, and the private sector) limits the sustainability of poverty alleviation programs. For instance, vocational training programs managed by the Manpower Agency are rarely connected to the micro-finance initiatives of the Cooperative Agency or the social support systems of the Social Agency. This lack of integration reduces the likelihood of poor households transitioning from welfare dependency to economic independence. Additionally, involving village-level administrators and community-based organizations in the formulation of localized regulations can serve as a catalyst for socio-economic empowerment and worker protection [39].

This theoretical contribution helps explain why poverty policies that are formally complete may still face effectiveness gaps in the field, often due to inadequate e-government integration and internal governmental governance [20], [22], [40]. Ensuring that public complaints are processed digitally and that government operators maintain high standards of service delivery is vital for building public trust and keeping poverty databases up to date [41], [42].

Policy Novelty: "Adaptive Collaborative Implementation"

To address the limitations identified in Bandung City, this study proposes a new conceptual framework: Adaptive Collaborative Implementation (ACI). ACI integrates classic policy implementation theory with contemporary collaborative governance and adaptive management principles [37], [35], [36].

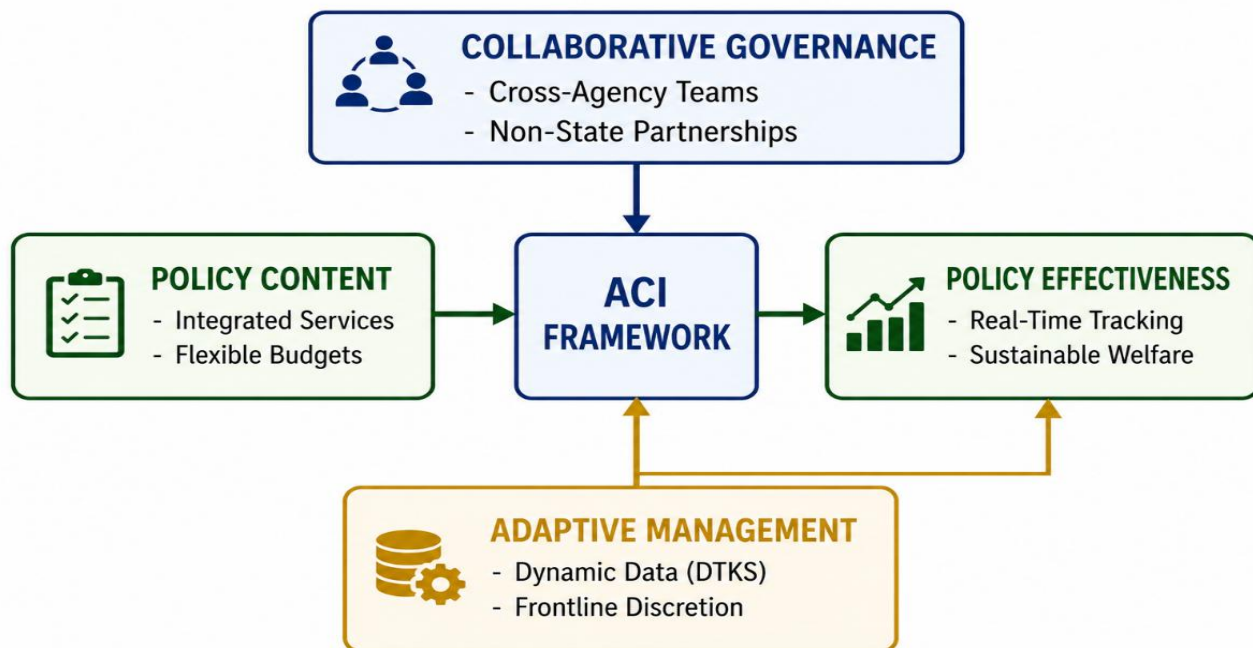


Figure 9: The Adaptive Collaborative Implementation (ACI) Framework

The ACI framework consists of three core components:

1. **Dynamic Data Integration:** Rather than relying on static, semi-annual database updates (such as DTKS), ACI utilizes local digital administrative systems to track household vulnerability in real time, allowing for rapid adjustments in program targeting [40], [43].
2. **Horizontal and Vertical Collaboration:** Establishing cross-functional teams that bring together different government agencies, subdistrict offices, and community leaders to coordinate interventions, replacing bureaucratic silos with shared goals [38], [39].

3. Discretionary Flexibility for Frontline Implementers: Empowering subdistrict and ward officers with structured discretion to make immediate, context-specific decisions when addressing urgent cases of extreme poverty, within a transparent accountability framework [44], [45].

By adopting the ACI framework, local governments can transform poverty alleviation from a set of rigid, fragmented programs into an integrated, responsive system capable of adapting to the dynamic needs of vulnerable urban populations.

Limitations and Future Research

While the Adaptive Collaborative Implementation (ACI) framework provides a promising conceptual model based on the Bandung City case, this study acknowledges its limited empirical validation beyond this single context. The complexities of urban poverty governance vary significantly across different regions, influenced by unique political, demographic, and administrative characteristics. Therefore, testing and adapting the proposed ACI model in other cities or regions is highly recommended. Such comparative research would strengthen the external validity and practical applicability of the framework, providing deeper insights into how collaborative governance operates under varying decentralized settings.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of poverty alleviation policy in Bandung City is characterized by a gap between a well-designed, multidimensional policy content and a highly fragmented, bureaucratic implementation context. The NVivo-based thematic analysis reveals that while basic social assistance programs are widely implemented, their overall effectiveness is heavily constrained by data volatility, coordination gaps across local government departments, and rigid bureaucratic procedures that limit the responsiveness of frontline implementers at the subdistrict and ward levels.

To improve the sustainability of poverty alleviation, local governments must move beyond welfare-oriented distribution toward integrated, collaborative systems. The proposed "Adaptive Collaborative Implementation" (ACI) framework offers a practical path forward by combining dynamic data management, cross-sectoral collaboration, and structured flexibility for frontline officers. Implementing these changes will help bridge the gap between policy design and grassroots outcomes, ensuring that poverty alleviation programs deliver meaningful, long-term improvements in urban household welfare. Finally, while the ACI model is conceptually promising, future research should rigorously test its empirical validity in other urban contexts beyond Bandung City to ensure its broader applicability and robustness.

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