

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY ON THE USE OF THE MERDEKA FIELD IN SUKABUMI CITY

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## Abstract

Merdeka field is a public green open space that serves the functions as stipulated in Sukabumi Mayor Regulation No. 4 of 2017, namely as a venue for ceremonies, sports, education, and other activities of the Sukabumi City Government. However, in practice, there has been a shift in function, with the emergence of various activities, including community activities and informal economic activities that are not subject to regulation. This situation indicates a gap between the established policies and their implementation on the ground. This study aims to analyze the implementation of policies regarding the use of the Merdeka field in Sukabumi City, as well as the factors influencing this implementation. The method employed is a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing data collection techniques that include observation, interviews, and documentation. The theoretical framework employed is Merilee S. Grindle's policy implementation model, which encompasses both policy content and the context within which policy is implemented. The results of the study show that in terms of policy content, the intended benefits have not been optimally realized, there is a mismatch between the policy and conditions on the ground, low community involvement in decision-making, ineffective implementation by technical agencies, and resource constraints. Meanwhile, in terms of the context of policy, there is a diversity of interests among actors, weak implementation strategies, and low levels of community compliance due to minimal socialization and enforcement of regulations. This study recommends increasing massive and continuous dissemination of information regarding the policy on the use of the Merdeka field to the public; strengthening the capacity and number of field officers so that supervision and management of the Merdeka field can run optimally; and providing alternative economic zones for street vendors to maintain the function of public space by regulations.

**Keywords:** policy implementation, public space use, Merdeka Field

## INTRODUCTION

Green open spaces are an important element in urban areas (Laan & Piersma, 2021) that serves to improve the quality of the environment (Pastore et al., 2025) and urban life

(Gosal et al., 2024). Conceptually, green open spaces are areas where humans can interact with nature, creating a balance between urbanization and environmental sustainability (Sarofah & Herliana, 2023). As an important form of infrastructure for cities, urban green open spaces provide significant spatial guarantees for sustainable urban development, important ecological, social, and cultural functions, as well as important symbols of modernization and urban civilization (Huang et al., 2023) and contribute to improving the quality of life of urban communities (Paudel & States, 2023).

Based on Law No. 26 of 2007, green open spaces consist of two types, namely public green open spaces and private green open spaces. Public green open spaces are areas owned and managed by the city government for the general public's benefit, serving as a key urban element that defines a city. They function as community interaction spaces and play a crucial role in maintaining urban quality. These spaces are accessible to everyone for various activities (Salshabila & Sukmawati, 2021). One of the most common forms of public green open space is the city park, which is a green open space located in the city center, usually in the form of a green field surrounded by shade trees. City parks can also take the form of urban forests with traditional design patterns or more modern design developments (Gunawan et al., 2022). Functionally, a city park is a public green open space that provides a variety of complex activities within it, which are held openly to meet the needs of the public (Agustin et al, 2023) which provides various services and facilities that can be used and utilized by the public (Ma et al., 2024).

In the city of Sukabumi, the government has provided various types of public green open spaces, including city parks, which can be utilized by residents in their functions.

**Table 1.** Sukabumi City Park

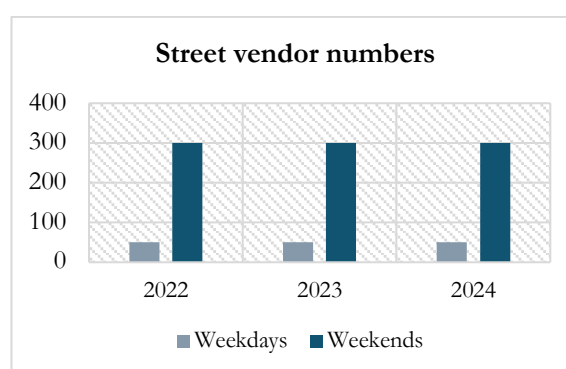
Name of Park	Area
City square	3.800 M <sup>2</sup>
Merdeka field	1.2 H

Source: Open data Sukabumi City, 2024

Merdeka Field has a much larger area compared to the city square, making it the main public space capable of accommodating various community activities on a large scale. Strategically located in the city center and revitalized in 2021–2022. Merdeka Field is designed

as an open space supporting social functions by Sukabumi Mayor Regulation No. 4 of 2017. The regulation states that the Merdeka field is a social facility provided for government and community activities, such as ceremonies, sports, education, and other Sukabumi city government activities. The available facilities include the main field, stands, tracks, a podium, sports areas, and parking.

However, there is a discrepancy between what the regulations mandate and what occurs on the ground. Despite restrictions on usage, various activities outside the scope of the regulation continue to take place, notably informal economic activities such as street in the field, especially since the reopening of Merdeka Field after its revitalization in 2022.



**Figure 1.** Number of street vendors in the Merdeka Field

*Source: Report by Merdeka field street vendor management*

Based on the figure above, it can be explained that there is no increase in street vendors every year. However, there is a significant increase between weekdays and holidays (Saturday-Sunday). This is influenced by the increase in the number of citizens/visitors who come to the park. The street vendors sell various types of merchandise, ranging from food, drinks, and rental goods whose presence covers areas that should be used according to existing regulations. This violation has a negative impact, namely limited public access to sports facilities. In addition, the irregular placement of merchandise has the potential to reduce the aesthetic value of the Merdeka field itself and can cause hygiene problems in the area. This condition creates a dilemma in the management of the Merdeka field as a public space in Sukabumi City. On the one hand, the Sukabumi City Government wants to use the park according to its function, namely as an organized social facility. However, on the other hand, the existence of street vendors reflects the needs of the community that are not well accommodated.

Previous studies on green open space policy implementation have primarily examined structured and controlled spaces. (Subiandani et al., 2023) emphasized the need for consistent communication and improved supporting resources to enhance environmental stewardship and visitor satisfaction in Taman Digulis, Pontianak. (Yusuf & Kurniawan, 2023) found that the provision of green open spaces in Alun-Alun Sidoarjo was successfully implemented across planning to maintenance stages. (Ramadhan et al., 2024) identified challenges in Bandung's public green spaces, particularly limited technical and operational resources, and a low understanding of policy objectives among implementers.

However, these studies did not address the complexities found in multifunctional public spaces where policy implementation is confronted with the competing interests of formal regulation and informal community needs. The case of Merdeka Field, where informal economic activities coexist with government-mandated functions, remains underexplored. This gap is significant because it reflects the realities of urban public space management where policy objectives often collide with the socio-economic practices of local communities.

Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by analyzing the implementation of the policy on the use of the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City and identifying the factors that influence its success and failure. This study applies Merilee S. Grindle's (1980) policy implementation theory, which emphasizes the dimensions of policy content and policy context, to assess how far the policy objectives have been achieved (Syakti et al., 2023).

## METHODOLOGY

The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative (Creswell, 2023). The descriptive qualitative approach is used to describe the social phenomenon to be studied, namely how the policy of using the independent field of the city of Sukabumi occurs in the field systematically and thoroughly, where the researcher acts as the main instrument in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data so as to produce a comprehensive conclusion. The data collection was carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation. (Creswell, 2023). To analyze the data, researchers utilized various features available in NVivo 12 Plus software (Hall & Steiner, 2020). These features include automatic coding to efficiently group data based on themes, data visualization through project maps to map the relationships between categories and subcategories, and query features that allow researchers to explore

the connections and patterns between themes that emerge in the data (Moncada, 2025). Utilizing these features helps make the analysis process more systematic, in-depth, and structured for exploring the relationships between themes (Allsop et al., 2022). The following is a list of informants in this research:

**Table 2.** List of Research Informants

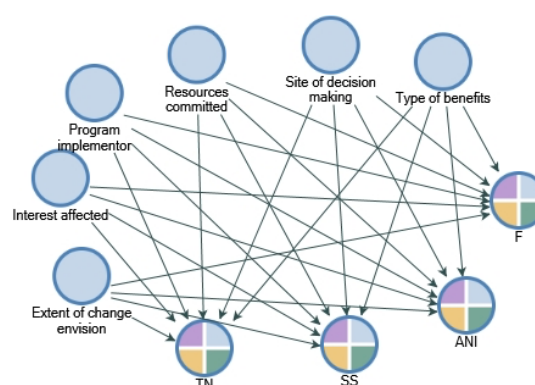
No	Informan code	Position	Reason	Interview date
1.	F	The Sukabumi City Public Works and Spatial Planning Office (DPUTR) City Parks Division	As a direct implementer of the policy and a party who understands the formal regulations for the use of independent field.	April 22, 2025
2.	ANI	Public/Users of Merdeka field	As a user and party affected by the policy implementation.	April 14, 2025
3.	SS	Public/Users of Merdeka field	As a user and party affected by the policy implementation.	April 14, 2025
4.	TN	Public Policy Observer of Sukabumi City	As an independent party who is able to analyze the effectiveness of policy implementation theoretically and practically.	May 9, 2025

Source: Researchers, 2025

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### a. Content of Policy

The content dimension of policy is one of the important aspects in analyzing the implementation of public policy. This dimension focuses on the substance of the policy formulated by policymakers.



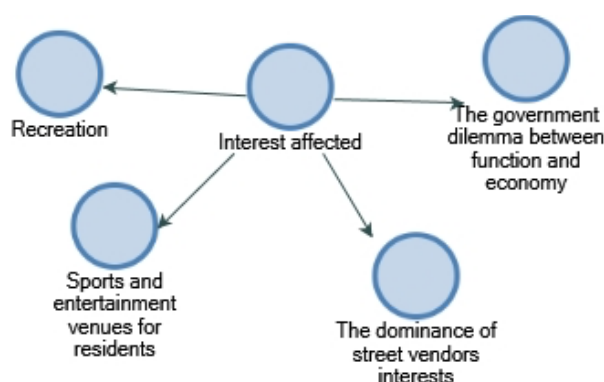
**Figure 2.** The relationship between informants and indicators in the policy content dimension

Based on the image above, it can be seen that the visualization illustrates the relationship between the indicators in the policy content dimension, as described by

Merilee S. Grindle and the informants. This image serves as a conceptual map showing the contribution of each informant to the six indicators in the policy content dimension, which serves as a reference for assessing the extent to which the policy content supports successful implementation in the field, including:

- **Interest Affected**

When implementing a policy, various interests are involved. These interests can influence the implementation of the policy. If a policy does not cause harm to any party, the implementation process will tend to be easier because there will be no resistance from parties who feel they have been harmed.



**Figure 3.** Interview analysis regarding interest affected

Based on the results of the above interviews regarding the aspects of interest that influence the use of the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City, researchers can analyze that its use is influenced by various interests. ANI and SS, who represent the community, said that they use the Merdeka Field for personal interests such as sports, recreation, and food. They also view the Merdeka Field as an important public space and one of the symbols of Sukabumi City, hoping it can be enjoyed comfortably by all residents. This means that the general public's interests are more focused on utilizing public spaces for social and recreational activities.

However, according to F and TN, other interests also influence policy implementation, namely the interests of street vendors. F also mentioned that initially, Merdeka Field was built as a city park that could be enjoyed by all without any fees. However, currently, there are many vendors utilizing this area for selling, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022.

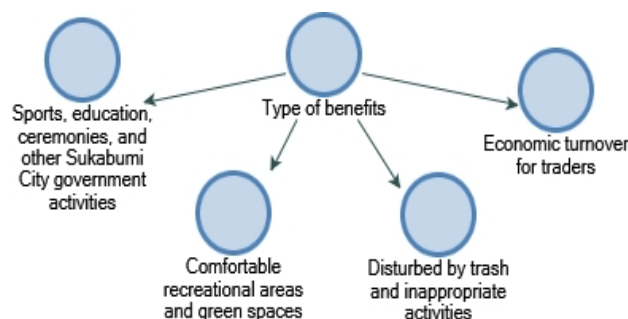
These informal economic activities are difficult to regulate, as vendors stand to gain significant profits when the area is crowded with visitors. This indicates that there are strong economic interests from certain groups that are also influencing the situation on the ground. TN also noted that the city government is caught between a rock and a hard place: on one hand, it wants to preserve Merdeka Field's primary function as an open green space and sports facility, but on the other hand, it cannot ignore the economic needs of the community that rely on Merdeka Field as a source of livelihood.

Thus, the implementation of policies regarding the use of the Merdeka Field is greatly influenced by the interplay of social and economic interests that coexist in its implementation. The impact of this situation is a mismatch between the functions of Merdeka Field as stipulated in the Mayor's Regulation and the reality on the ground. Merdeka Field has become a multifunctional space used not only for sports and ceremonies but also for economic and entertainment activities that are not always well-organized.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's theory, this situation indicates that policies are not only faced with official implementers and written rules but must also consider the interests of the community and informal actors. When too many interests are involved and not regulated, policy implementation becomes difficult to control. Therefore, the government must be able to balance existing rules with the actual conditions on the ground.

#### - **Type of Benefits**

In policy implementation, success can be measured by the benefits felt by the public. When the benefits of a policy can be felt directly and tangibly, public support will grow, making policy implementation more effective.



**Figure 4.** Interview analysis regarding type of benefits

Based on interviews with the four informants regarding the benefits, it can be analyzed that the benefits of using the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City are not fully to those stated in Sukabumi Mayor Regulation Number 4 of 2017 concerning the Use of Merdeka Field Sukabumi City in Article 1 paragraphs (1) and (2), namely as a space for sports activities, education, ceremonies, and other government activities of Sukabumi City.

In practice, Merdeka Field is also utilized by the community as a recreational space, and even as a place for economic activities by street vendors. As stated by ANI, the existence of Merdeka Field is highly beneficial as a green and recreational public space; however, this comfort is disrupted by the public's bad habits, such as littering, as well as the activities of vendors. A similar sentiment was expressed by SS, who acknowledged the benefits of Merdeka Field as a sports venue but complained about the disruption to aesthetics caused by the presence of street vendors, especially during weekends.

Meanwhile, F revealed that the ideal benefits of the Merdeka Field according to the regulations are quite clear, namely for sports, education, ceremonies, and other Sukabumi City government activities. However, it has not been managed optimally. F also stated that approximately 60% of visitors come from outside Sukabumi City, which suggests an additional function as a tourist destination. Meanwhile, TN highlighted the presence of stage performances and exhibitions that deviate from the original function established in the regulations.

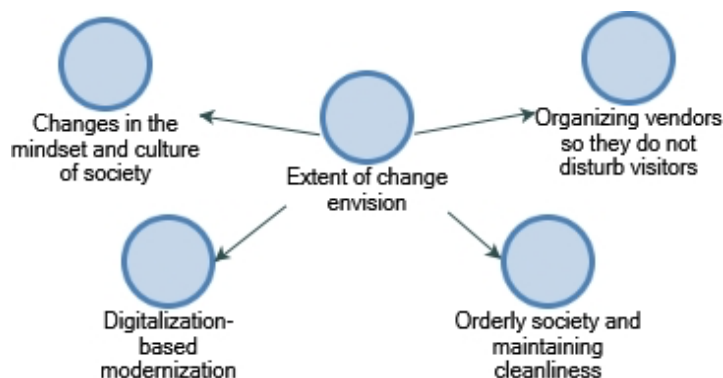
Thus, the benefits as stipulated in the policy cannot accommodate the needs and behaviors of the broader and more complex community on the ground. This creates conflicts of function and interest in public spaces, as well as challenges in terms of supervision and enforcement of regulations. However, if managed using a more participatory and adaptive approach, the diversity of these benefits could instead become an opportunity to reformulate policies to be more realistic and inclusive.

About Merilee S. Grindle's theory, the implementation of the Merdeka Field usage policy faces challenges because the benefits generated are not only singular as stipulated in the regulations but rather multiple and more complex. Therefore, a more participatory and flexible implementation approach is needed to address community needs and reduce conflicts of function and interest in public spaces.



### - Extend of Change Envision

A policy should not only aim for change but also clearly define the extent of change desired. The greater the change desired through the policy, the more difficult it will be to implement a program aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviors of the target group.



**Figure 5.** Interview analysis regarding extend of change envision

Based on the results of interviews with informants, researchers analyzed that there are various forms of change that they hope will occur in Merdeka Field, Sukabumi City. F emphasized the importance of changing people's behavior so that they use Merdeka Field by its designated function as stipulated in the regulations. He also hoped that residents would feel a sense of ownership of this public facility so that its maintenance and order could be collectively maintained. The same sentiment was expressed by SS, who desires changes toward a more comfortable, clean, and well-organized environment. She appreciates the facilities provided by the government, such as the UMKM area and parking lot, but highlights the importance of community awareness in maintaining the aesthetics and cleanliness of the area.

Meanwhile, ANI desires changes that are modern and integrated with digital technology. He emphasizes the importance of digitizing public facilities, including internet networks, to support community needs. He also hopes for proper space management for street vendors so they can continue selling without disrupting other users, such as those exercising or recreating.

TN, as a public policy observer, places special emphasis on the need for changes in cultural norms and public mindset. He also stresses that the success of managing Merdeka Field does not solely depend on the government's role but also on active community participation in maintaining the environment. The changes sought are not

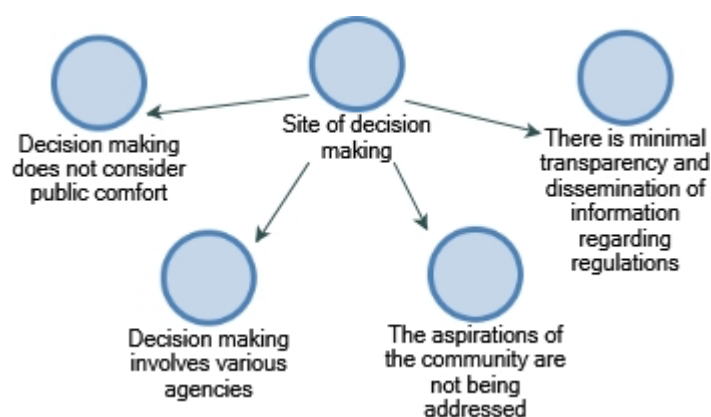
merely physical or infrastructural but also encompass social aspects such as discipline, concern for cleanliness, and adherence to rules.

Thus, the community desires Merdeka Field to be managed in a more modern and orderly manner. The hoped-for changes include developing it as a digital-based city landmark and reorganizing street vendors so they do not disrupt the function of public spaces. This reflects the need for more adaptive, comfortable, and contemporary spaces.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's theory, it shows that the level of change expected is quite high, encompassing various aspects (physical, social, and cultural), so its implementation requires strong coordination between the government and the community, as well as effective communication strategies. As a result, if these expectations for change are not managed well, a gap will emerge between the content of the policy and the reality of its implementation. The community may be dissatisfied with the current condition of Merdeka Field, while the government faces challenges in changing citizens' behavior and regulating the use of public spaces.

#### - Site of Decision Making

The more widespread the decision-making positions are in a policy, the more difficult it will be to implement. This often occurs in policies whose implementation involves many agencies.



**Figure 6.** Interview analysis regarding site of decision making

Based on the results of interviews with informants, researchers can analyze that the decision-making process in the implementation of the policy on the use of the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City has not been optimal, especially in terms of

transparency and community participation. ANI, as a member of the community/visitor, said that she did not know exactly what the rules for using Merdeka Field were and felt confused about whom to convey her aspirations to. This indicates a gap between policymakers and the community as direct users of the public space. He also emphasized the importance of socialization so that the community can understand the direction of the policy and voice their concerns. A similar view was expressed by SS, who hoped to be involved in the decision-making process. These views reflect the community's lack of access to the policy process and low public participation.

Meanwhile, F revealed that the management of the Merdeka Field involves various agencies, such as the Public Works Agency for repairs, socialization, supervision, security, and cleanliness, and the civil service police unit for arrangement and control. However, he also acknowledged that the regulation of street vendors (PKL) is a separate issue because violations and ineffective control often occur.

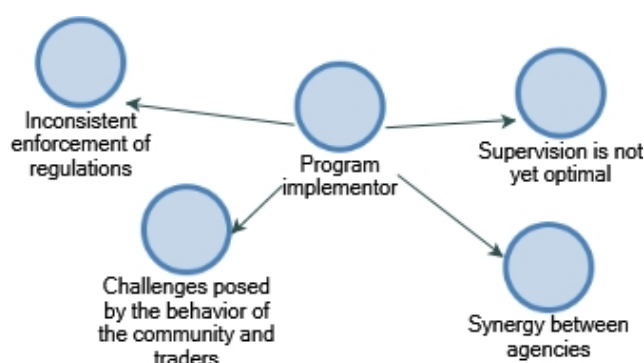
TN, as a public policy observer, stated that the presence of vendors, street performers, and street entertainment such as clowns adds to the discomfort of visitors to Merdeka Field. He suggested that policies regarding public spaces like Merdeka Field should comprehensively consider aspects of comfort, safety, and cleanliness by involving all elements of society.

Thus, the decision-making process in implementing policies for the use of Sukabumi City's Merdeka Field has not been fully optimized. The decision-making process remains centralized within technical agencies without transparency or public participation.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's theory, it is important to have clarity in the decision-making process, who holds the authority, and to what extent public participation is involved. In Merdeka Field, decision-making is spread across many agencies, but there is minimal coordination and community involvement, which becomes an obstacle to the effective implementation of policies.

#### - **Program Implementor**

In policy, one of the most crucial aspects is policy implementation. Therefore, when implementing a policy, it must be clear who the actors involved in the policy implementation process are.



**Figure 7.** Interview analysis regarding program implementor

Based on the results of the interviews above, it can be analyzed that the implementation of the policy on the use of the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City faces significant challenges in terms of the effectiveness and consistency of policy implementation. Several informants stated that the presence of officers or program implementers is still not optimal in carrying out their supervisory, maintenance, and enforcement functions. ANI mentioned that although there have been visible physical renovations, the aspects of comfort and aesthetics have not been fully realized. The hope is that supervision can be further enhanced to ensure that Merdeka Square remains comfortable for all users. A similar point was raised by SS, who highlighted incidents of student fights as an indication of weak supervision at Merdeka Field.

This raises questions about the presence of staff at the time of the incident, reflecting the absence or lack of responsiveness of policy implementers during critical moments. Meanwhile, from the program implementers' perspective, as stated by F, the program is carried out through collaboration between several agencies such as the Sukabumi City Public Works and Spatial Planning Office (DPUTR) and the civil service police unit. However, he also acknowledged significant challenges in the form of public behavior and vendors who often fail to comply with regulations.

F also mentioned inconsistencies between written regulations and on-the-ground practices, such as the presence of stages that are prohibited but permitted by leadership. This reflects a tension between formal regulations and informal policies or leadership discretion. TN, as a public policy observer, assessed that the implementation of the Regulation had actually attempted to be carried out based on the four main functions of Merdeka Field, but was not implemented consistently. He highlighted that the weak

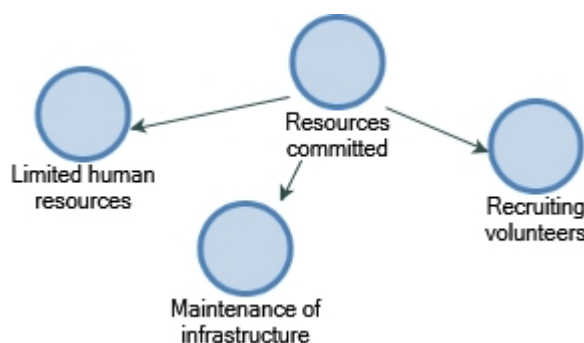
enforcement of regulations was caused by cultural challenges in society as well as the lack of firmness of the implementers in taking action against violations. According to him, consistency is the key for program implementers to carry out their functions properly.

Thus, program implementers in the implementation of the policy on the use of the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City have not been able to demonstrate consistent and effective performance. Although there is synergy between agencies such as the Sukabumi City Public Works and Spatial Planning Office (DPUTR) and the civil service police unit, supervision, and enforcement on the ground remain weak, as evidenced by incidents of student fights and the presence of unruly street vendors. The inconsistency between written rules and on-site practices, including informal policies such as allowing stages, indicates weak consistency in implementation. Challenges also arise from low public compliance and the lack of firmness among officials.

In policy implementation theory, Merilee S. Grindle emphasizes that the success of implementation depends heavily on the capacity, commitment, and authority of implementers in carrying out policies. To enhance the effectiveness of Merdeka Field usage policy implementation, it is necessary to strengthen the capacity and coordination of implementers, improve integrity in enforcing rules, and align written regulations with on-the-ground conditions to avoid conflicts of authority between agencies and ensure policies are enforced firmly and clearly.

#### - Resources Committed

The availability of the resources needed to implement policies will in itself facilitate their implementation.



**Figure 8.** Interview analysis regarding resources committed

Based on interviews with informants, researchers analyzed that the implementation of the policy on the use of Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City still faces various obstacles, particularly related to the number of officers and the availability of funds. F revealed that there are 24 officers consisting of 8 rangers (socialization, supervision, control, security) and 16 cleaning officers who work in shifts every day. However, this number is considered insufficient to handle the high volume of visitors, especially on weekends, which can reach around 8,000 people, as well as the increased volume of waste, which can reach up to 28 cubic meters.

This situation has overwhelmed the staff, especially due to the division of working hours and the limited budget, which can only be used to its fullest without additional funds for facility improvements. This is also supported by ANI, who stated that the existing facilities are good but require maintenance to remain well-maintained. A similar view was expressed by SS, who assessed that the infrastructure at Merdeka Field is good but still has shortcomings such as damaged floors, peeling paint, and insufficient trash bins placed appropriately. Activities such as renting bicycles and electric motorcycles are also said to accelerate facility damage.

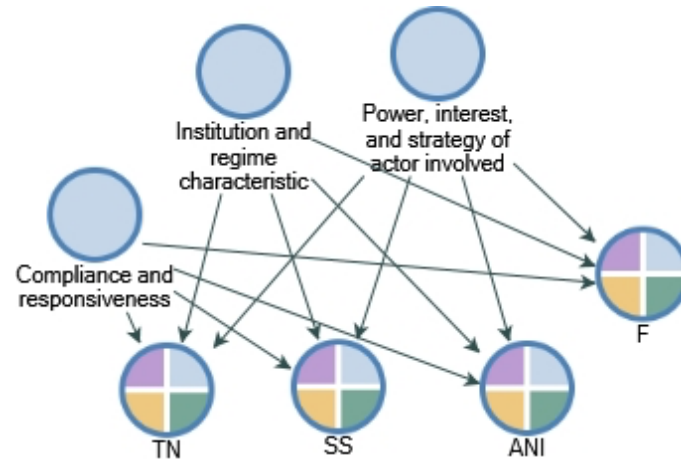
Meanwhile, TN revealed that the current number of staff is insufficient for supervision and public education. He suggested the involvement of volunteers to assist with on-site outreach, given the low public awareness of maintaining public spaces.

Thus, the limitations of human resources and budget are the main obstacles to implementing the policy for the use of the Merdeka Field in Sukabumi City. Although the number of staff and basic infrastructure are available, they are not yet commensurate with the volume of visitors and management needs on-site. This also impacts the suboptimal supervision, maintenance, and education of the public. Therefore, efforts are needed to increase the number of personnel, implement more flexible budget management, and involve the community through volunteers to support the effective sustainability of public space functions.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's theory that resources are a key factor influencing the success of implementation, policies cannot be effectively implemented if the available resources are human, budgetary, or infrastructural inadequate.

## b. Context of Policy

The implementation environment dimension is one of the crucial aspects in analyzing the success of public policy implementation. This dimension focuses on various external conditions that influence the implementation process.

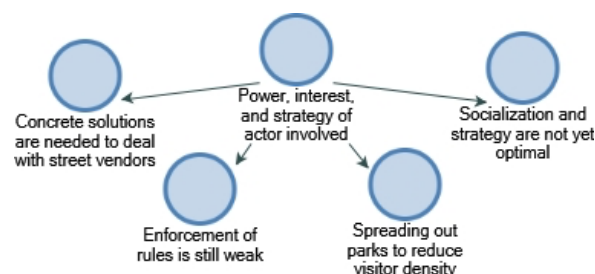


**Figure 9.** The relationship between informants and indicators in the policy context dimension

Based on the image above, it can be seen that the visualization illustrates the relationship between the indicators in the implementation environment dimension, as described by Merilee S. Grindle and the informants. This image serves as a conceptual map showing the contribution of each informant to the three indicators in the implementation environment dimension, which include:

### - **Power, Interest, and Strategy of Actor Involved**

The power, interests, and strategies of implementers will determine the level of success of the policies implemented. If a political force feels it has a stake in a program, it will devise strategies to win the competition that arises during implementation so that it can enjoy the output.



**Figure 10.** Interview analysis regarding the power, interest, and strategy of actor involved

Based on the results of interviews with informants, researchers can analyze that the implementation of the Merdeka Field usage policy shows a discrepancy between the formal regulations in force and the conditions on the ground. Most informants highlighted the weak enforcement of regulations by the authorities. ANI said that street vendors, which should be prohibited under the Mayor's Regulation, continue to operate. This indicates that the enforcement strategy implemented has not been effective and has not been accompanied by a communicative or solution-oriented approach that takes into account the reasons and interests of all parties.

Meanwhile, SS said that if the government has determined that Merdeka Field is only for sports activities and public spaces, then there should be no vendors operating in the area. However, the government's weak socialization and assertiveness have made the community unaware of the applicable restrictions, so the economic interests of the vendors continue without clear supervision.

F mentioned that there is a strategy being implemented as a solution to the issues at Merdeka Field, which involves constructing replicas of Merdeka Field in seven districts. This strategy aims to distribute the centers of activity so they are not concentrated in a single location. TN also noted that, in addition to weak enforcement of regulations, a major challenge stems from the community's culture, which remains indifferent to cleanliness and order. Therefore, he suggested the need for a more comprehensive strategy, such as imposing light penalties on the spot (e.g., push-ups for littering), enhancing education, and involving volunteers in monitoring community activities in public spaces.

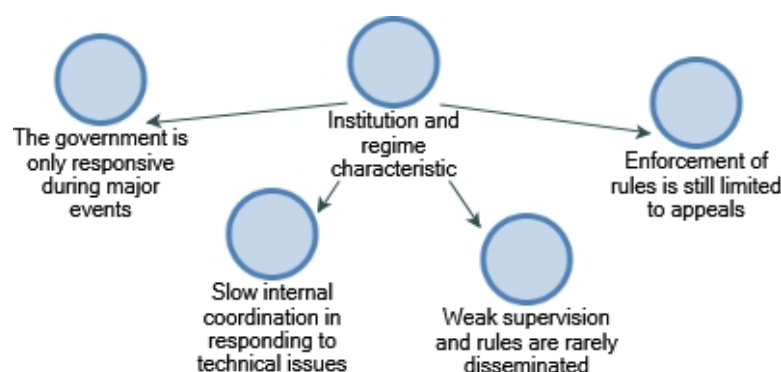
Thus, the implementation of the Merdeka Field usage policy still faces challenges in terms of the firmness of authority and diverse interests. Weak enforcement of regulations and insufficient socialization have caused the policy to be ineffective. Where the economic interests of traders are more dominant, the existing strategies are not yet fully solution-oriented. Therefore, a more comprehensive and participatory approach is needed to ensure the policy runs in accordance with its objectives without ignoring the social realities of the community.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's theory of policy implementation, power does not reside solely with policymakers but also with those involved in its implementation, including the community, interest groups, and technical implementers.



### - Institution and Regime Characteristic

The characteristics of an institution play an important role in a policy, as they determine the extent to which the policy can be implemented effectively, consistently, and by its original objectives.



**Figure 11.** Interview analysis regarding institution and regime characteristic

Based on interviews with informants, researchers analyzed that the implementation of the Merdeka Field usage policy revealed significant structural and institutional challenges in the implementation of Sukabumi Mayor Regulation No. 4 of 2017. ANI revealed that the government tends to be active only at certain moments, such as visits by officials or major events. This perspective highlights the weakness of institutional culture in maintaining consistent standards for public space management. SS also emphasized a similar point, namely the lack of oversight over public facilities. She added that rules that are not adequately socialized cause public space users to be unaware of the applicable boundaries, ultimately undermining efforts to organize the space.

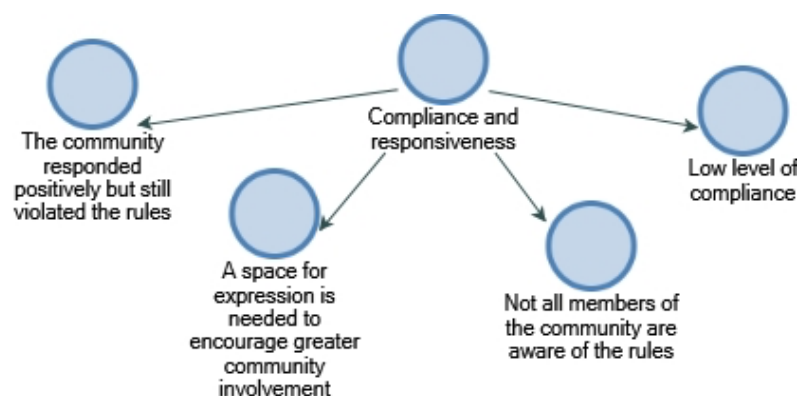
Meanwhile, F stated that internal coordination within their institution runs smoothly, particularly in addressing technical issues that arise on-site. Routine evaluations are typically conducted every three months. However, this statement is insufficient to address public criticism regarding the weakness of the oversight and maintenance system. TN acknowledged that the synergy between the public works and spatial planning agencies and the civil service police unit is good, especially on weekends. However, enforcement of regulations remains weak as it is limited to mere appeals rather than firm legal action. This indicates an institutional compromise between informal economic interests and public space order.

Thus, the implementation of the Merdeka Field usage policy shows that institutional characteristics do not yet support consistent and effective implementation. Inter-agency coordination is already in place, but it remains weak in terms of supervision, socialization, and enforcement of regulations. A work culture that is only active at certain moments and an approach that is more advisory than decisive indicates a weak institutional commitment to maintaining public order.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's theory of policy implementation, it emphasizes that the organizational structure, capacity, and work culture of implementing agencies greatly influence the effectiveness of policy implementation.

#### - **Compliance and Responsiveness**

Implementers must be sensitive to the needs of the target group so that the program being implemented can be successful and gain support from the target group.



**Figure 12.** Interview analysis regarding compliance and responsiveness

Based on the results of interviews with informants, researchers can analyze that in the implementation of the policy on the use of the Merdeka Field, the level of public compliance is still relatively low, largely due to a lack of awareness and a culture of discipline in the use of public spaces. The four informants described that while some members of the public comply with the existing rules, many others have not demonstrated behavior consistent with the provisions of Sukabumi Mayor Regulation No. 4 of 2017.

From the community's perspective, ANI stated that this non-compliance is not solely due to rejection of the policy, but rather the lack of participatory space and the government's less transparent approach. According to her, if the government involves the

community in a more open and active manner, a sense of ownership will be fostered, encouraging participation and compliance.

Meanwhile, F noted that there has been a positive response to Merdeka Field as a public facility, but many violations still occur on-site. While the response is positive, it does not automatically lead to compliant behavior without sustained intervention, such as education and supervision. SS provided a concrete example of personal compliance in using Merdeka Field facilities, but she also acknowledged that compliance is highly dependent on individual awareness. This reinforces the understanding that compliance levels are not yet uniform across all segments of society and remain heavily dependent on personal character, rather than a system that consistently instills and enforces rules. TN highlights cultural issues that he considers detrimental to societal discipline. He emphasizes that efforts to improve compliance must be carried out through massive and direct socialization, as well as the imposition of real sanctions for violators. This indicates that strategies relying solely on moral appeals are insufficient and must be supported by firmness and consistency in enforcing rules.

Thus, although there is a positive response to the existence of this public space, compliant behavior has not been uniformly established and still depends on individual awareness. To improve compliance, continuous education, community involvement, and firm and consistent enforcement of rules are needed.

When linked to Merilee S. Grindle's policy implementation theory, compliance levels and responses are key indicators in the implementation environment, where the characteristics of policy recipients (the public) and their interaction patterns with implementers significantly influence policy success.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The implementation of the policy on the use of the Merdeka field in Sukabumi City has not been optimal despite clear regulations and coordination between the public works and spatial planning agencies and the civil service police unit. This is due to a significant gap between the established rules and the actual conditions on the ground, where this policy faces various obstacles, including:

- Conflict of interest, particularly between the government's objective of maintaining the function of the Merdeka field by its intended purpose and the economic needs of the community who continue to conduct commercial activities in the Merdeka field area.
- Limited human resources, particularly field officers tasked with supervising and regulating activities in the field, resulting in suboptimal supervision.
- Weak enforcement of regulations, where the persuasive approach taken by officials is limited to appeals without strict sanctions, resulting in repeated violations.

The recommendations that researchers can give to the Public Works and Spatial Planning Office (DPUTR) of Sukabumi City as policymakers are as follows:

- Increasing massive and continuous socialization of the policy on the use of the Merdeka field to the public to create a better understanding and compliance with existing regulations.
- Strengthen institutional capacity in terms of supervision and management of the Merdeka field by expanding the participatory supervision system through community involvement as volunteers through open selection and basic training, so that they can act as active partners of the government in maintaining order and cleanliness, as well as educating visitors about the rules for using the Merdeka field.
- Provide a special alternative area for street vendors outside the Merdeka field area, so that economic activities can continue without disrupting the main function of public spaces. The layout of this area must comply with applicable regulations and be equipped with supporting facilities.

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