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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PURPOSEFUL AND ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP: Characteristics of Jokowi's Strategic Policies to Fight the Covid-19 in Indonesia

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Abstract

The pandemic of the Covid-19 has become a strategic surprise that called leaders of the world to make purposeful and adaptive decisions. In a pandemic characterized by VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity), the uncertainty and unpredictability of changes are the most visible characteristics. A good leader will be known from his/her capacity to handle this uncertainty and unpredictability with his/her strategic decisions to find creative solutions. The objective of this study is to make an observation on Jokowi's political decisions during the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Did he represent characteristics of a purposeful and adaptive leader to find creative solutions amidst the pros and cons of the people during the Covid-19 pandemic? Academic literatures on his strategic decisions such as the Large Scale Social Restriction, establishment of the Covid-19 Task Force, provision of health service centers, establishment of information centers, military/police mobilization, provision of socioeconomic protection, and his political decisions will be the sources of information on which the discussion about his leadership will be built. He presented himself as a leader who carefully consider the goals/targets, ways/methods, and means of achieving the targets. He showed the courage to make strategic decisions, was creative in problem-solving, and was always present in the midst of humanitarian disasters. His leadership is characterized by clear purpose to keep people's well-being in the time of crisis with an flexibility to choose creative solution to the problem.

Keywords: pandemic, leadership, purposeful dan adaptive, Covid-19, Jokowi

Introduction

Since its appearance at the end of 2019 in Wuhan, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) has become a very serious global threat with multidimensional impacts. The pandemic caused by the transmission of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) has become a strategic surprise because it so rapidly appeared and spread with severest impacts on various dimensions of human life, resulting in an economic crisis, social change and other massive devastating impacts¹. This surprise is strategic because the pandemic called people to work together to unite all forces synergistically, to reduce the transmission and impact of the virus, and then to enter into a new normal that is so different from the era before the Covid-19. This shock invited all inhabitants of the world to take strategic steps to bring greater and more equitable well-being to all.

Indonesia is one of the countries with high transmission and death rates. It has been clear that Indonesia was so vulnerable with unprepared health-structure for such a pandemic. Some factors contributed to the vulnerability in the infection control especially in urban areas with high-density residences². The Indonesian government has made strategic decisions to overcome the spread of the virus and its impact. Some efforts have been made to improve health services for the affected people, to provide preventive and educational efforts, to set up restriction of public activity, to ensure the social and economic protection, vaccination, mitigation and adaptation to the new normal. In the 2021 Performance Report entitled *Indonesia*

Resilient Indonesia Grows 2021, which was released on October 20, 2021, the President Joko Widodo (well-known as Jokowi) emphasized the importance of a field leadership, strategic policies, consolidation of the teamwork, and urgency of immersion into the affected area. In the process of achieving the world-recognized result, critical voices continued to be heard regarding the performance of Jokowi's leadership. Jokowi's political decisions serve to be a mirror to know the focus on the goals, the courage to make decisions, the creativity in solving problem, and the presence of a leader in the midst of humanitarian suffering which are key characteristics of a purposeful and adaptive leader.

This research focuses on studying the political decisions of the Jokowi's government to handle the Covid-19 pandemic. A systematic review will be the design for this study. The discussion will be based on some journal articles on Jokowi's leadership during the pandemic. It will provide a balanced consideration on his political decisions to come to the objective of this study to answer the question: "Did Jokowi's leadership represent characteristics of a purposeful and adaptive leader during the Covid-19 Pandemic?" This research was carried out in a qualitative method with a literary study approach. It will reconsider Jokowi's political decisions, pros and cons evaluation on his decisions, and at the end the conclusion about purposeful and adaptive characteristics of his leadership. Data analysis was carried out by inductive analysis starting from general data, which then converges on more specific concluding data.

A Leader in the Midst of a Pandemic

Major crises that have occurred in the world, such as the Covid-19 pandemic in the last three years, require dexterity and accuracy in decision-making by a leader. They are manifested in a strategic decision which includes *ends*: what we should do, *ways*: how we should do it, and *means*: what we should do it with³. In other words, a decision-making must carefully consider the goals/targets, ways/methods, and means of achieving them. Furthermore, a leader is expected to be able "to change people's paradigms, create visions, motivate followers with internal resources, instill the idea that everyone can contribute to shared goals, lead them, and directly influence the flow of events and outcomes"⁴. A leader should be highly motivated to achieve and reorganize new economic and political systems in a transformative new era after the crisis⁵.

The uncertainty and unpredictability of the changes are two characteristics of a crisis⁶. Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus introduced the acronym VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) which was then used to describe the sociopolitical and economic changes that so rapidly occurred. The changes came so quickly and brought about massive impacts. The unpredictable mutations and the rapid spread of SARS-CoV-2 have created anxiety and fear to the people. Many people were afraid of being exposed to the virus, for which no cure or prevention has yet been found. The monstrous Delta variant had claimed numerous victims. The Omicron variant spread quickly, though it didn't cause as numerous death impact as Delta. One

could not predict the speed of transmission and the level of the danger before the variant would have come. This rapid and unpredictable spread caused a multidimensional impact. It has paralyzed the economic pillars due to the cessation of the production process. The economic situation got worse due to the loss of jobs, especially in non-formal sectors, and the stop of mass production and distribution. The problems were so complex that they often led to ambiguity in the social life. Strategic decisions brought about pros and cons, while involvement of every individual in the society was not easy to pursue. In the midst of this ambiguity, a society needs leaders who are able to build synergy and unite all forces in the society to find the solutions for the crisis.

A society needs a captain as well as a conductor who shows the direction and orchestrates all forces in a web of cooperation. Without firm leadership, the situation will get worse and ironic things will appear which do not only harm the society but also weaken the fighting force of the people. When so many healthcare professionals were risking their lives to treat and heal those who are exposed to the Covid-19, many people in fact ignored health protocols. The economic demands of the family were the reason for various protests and violations of the ban on public mobility. Moral and legal problems emerged as well. When the government decided to provide social assistance to the affected families, the minister of social affairs who was responsible for the distribution of the social assistance committed corruption since he abused it for his own interests. The price of

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) and antigen tests which at that time were urgently needed both for treatment and for the community activities bounced because they evolved to be trading commodities for some politically powerful people in this country. In this delicate situation, the presence of a strong leader is always needed.

In a chaotic pandemic, a leader must have courage to take creative solutions. A rigid adherence to regulations, complicated bureaucracy, submission to the orthodoxy of religious understanding, as well as political interests among the leaders impede a responsive and correct decision-making. On the other hand, there is a great danger that in a pandemic such as the Covid-19, leaders are hesitant to make decisions, either because they do not understand the severity of the situation and the magnitude of the losses caused by the pandemic for the society or because of their personal concern about reputation.

The most obvious problem for a leader is the unpredictable changes that may arise in a pandemic. This situation is surely stressful for those who must take decisions. Leaders fall into the trap of decision inertia when they don't make decisions that they should make in their responsibility as a leader and then shift the responsibility for decision-making to other parties, or postpone decision-making to another time. The situation is unclear because the unpredictable changes prevent leaders from making rapid and appropriate decisions to overcome the crisis. An excessive anxiety about their own accountability is a primary cause of decision inertia. A leader is afraid of

making wrong decisions, being attacked by political opponents, with the consequence that he/she might lose his/her credibility. To maintain the political power is more important than to make purposeful decisions in a time of emergency because bearing any responsibility upon their shoulder in the midst of a crisis will always expose them to risks, and risks are to be avoided. Because of that anxiety, a leader focuses his/her effort more on maintaining his/her popularity than making any important and necessary decisions. He/she is afraid of being criticized or attacked by groups of opponents. He/she, in fact, is afraid of losing his/her political power. To distribute groceries and relief materials is a populist way of the leaders who sought only popularity and sympathy from the members of the society, while they did not make structural and strategic decisions and actions to overcome the problems.

To avoid excessive anxiety that prevents leaders from making necessary decisions, they need to ask about what goals they actually want to strive for, what impacts they hope to happen as a result of their decisions, and the probability of their decision to overcome the problems. These questions help them to be sure that every decision is taken for the common good, which is expected to have a positive impact on overcoming a crisis. If they consider their decision significant to bring people out of the crisis, then they can be sure that a decision must be made, whatever the risk will be. It remains to be realized, however, that any decision in a crisis will always lead to criticism and dissatisfaction. Sometimes their decisions cannot be carried out as has been

planned before, because the changes may come unexpectedly. In such a situation, political decisions alone are not enough. Leaders should provide themselves with the agility and creativity in personal communication with all parties in the society. They need to unite themselves with the suffering society. People won't ask so much about what they said or did, but what impact their presence have to overcome the crisis. At this point, the integrity of a leader is examined: is he/she pursuing only his/her personal and political interests or is he/she fighting for the common good, which is the main goal of every leadership.

Bred Meyer argued that there are two possibilities in decision-making by leaders in a major crisis⁷. The first possibility is that a leader underestimates the emerging crisis and does not make the necessary steps to resolve the crisis. As a result, the crisis will get worse and multidimensional losses will squeeze the society even more. A leader who ignores or belittles a crisis usually denies the existence of a threatening crisis, fails to make early precautions, and ignores the voices of those who demand responsive and appropriate decisions.

The second possibility is that a leader takes serious steps to overcome the crisis. This serious step can be taken with liberal choices, namely by continuing to provide freedom in public choices, or illiberal choices which usually kills democratic freedoms, violates human rights, and hampers the freedom of expression. There are leaders who take serious steps by limiting the public freedom, even they use undemocratic power in the

name of crisis and show irrational reactions to their critics.

Jokowi's Strategy against the Covid-19

The Covid-19 pandemic has become the severest challenge of Jokowi's presidency and forced him to adaptively change the priority of his second presidential term from 2019 to 2024. His aspiration to dramatically accelerated the development of the infrastructure especially in the east part of Indonesia to secure his legacy as a transformative president seems to be unachievable⁸. The Covid-19 has treathened his ambitious plans and his capacity to lead the nation to deal with the pandemics, its public health and economic consequences.

Immediately after the announcement of the first case of the Covid-19 in Indonesia, there was a rapid increase of positive cases and a high death rate. The impact on the economic sector was so serious when nearly fifty percent of the Indonesian economy encountered difficulties. Many workers have been laid off and there were fewer job-opportunity due to production and business stoppage. Restrictions on public activities have caused the disruption in the supply chain, reduced production and consumption activities in the society, increased unemployment and corrected the rate of economic growth⁹. Access to basic social services was increasingly difficult to obtain. Economic centers such as markets, malls, shops were closed while center of health, consumption and education were also unable to provide maximum services¹⁰.

Ideally, a leader should take serious steps while upholding public freedom. In a crisis characterized by VUTA, such a choice cannot always be made, but it is always a priority to strive for. At the level of the leadership structure, a leader is expected to have the courage to make responsive and appropriate strategic decisions. No single decision, of course, could satisfy all elements in the society. Any leader understands that every decision will be a target of criticism or even rejection from their political opponents. Such a situation could be observed in Indonesia's sociopolitical dynamics during the pandemic. There were always pros and cons to Jokowi's political decisions as the head of state who was responsible for leading the nation to overcome the pandemic and rebuild Indonesia in an all-new situation.

In fact, he made decisions that were considered detrimental to the community or against the wishes of the community. In the earliest stage of the pandemic, Jokowi seemed to highlight his belief in the nation's strength in dealing with the spread of the Covid-19. Various expressions implied that belief. It was said that the Covid-19 would not survive in Indonesia which has a hot climate. Indonesia is rich of local spices to fight the Covid-19. It was also said that Indonesia would be spared from Covid-19 thanks to the prayers addressed to Allah. These statements were considered contrary to the statements of the scientists who work in the world of health. He refused to implement lockdown in the country and focused all effort especially on economic endurance. It was only on March 2, 2020, that Jokowi officially announced the first

positive case in Indonesia. This case was believed to be the first officially announced case, while scientists were convinced that there had been earlier transmissions in Indonesia before that announcement. Since testing and tracing had not gone smoothly, the earlier cases were not recorded. Within one month after the first case, almost 1.800 cases across 32 districts have been confirmed with 117 deaths.

The government did not well anticipate the speed of mutation and spread of the Covid-19. In the first eight months of the pandemic, negative evaluations or statements emerged especially from the academics, observers, researchers, and experts regarding Jokowi's leadership model¹¹. There was too strong self-confidence that the Covid-19 would not have severe impacts. Socio-economic considerations seemed to be put above academic and scientific considerations about the huge danger that would be brought by the Covid-19. Jokowi and his government were busy to maintain economic stability, providing more space for production and market activities. No strategic decisions have been taken so that all elements of society could systematically move to stem the transmission of the Covid-19. The absence of these early anticipatory steps had a major impact when in many places there was an explosion of contagion. Hospitals and treatment centers were full. People died when the supply of oxygen in many hospitals could no longer meet the needs. It was clear that Indonesian health's structure was unable to overcome a dramatic situation of the pandemic.

When the situation was getting worse, the government took serious steps by imposing restrictions on people's mobility. While many countries implemented lockdown policies, President Jokowi stipulated Large Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB in Indonesian: Pembatasan Sosial Berskala Besar) on March 31, 2020 in areas with high transmission rates as well as the Implementation of Restrictions on Community Activities (known in Indonesian as PPKM, Penetapan Pembatasan Kegiatan Masyarakat). Lockdown was not an option at that time because its impact would be very vast and Indonesia was not ready for an economic paralysis¹². His resistance to lockdown was motivated mainly by the heavy economic consequences that would provoke social unrest¹³. The precautionary principle was held by the government not to immediately implement a lockdown. PSBB and PPKM, therefore, were the middle way to avoid lockdown in areas affected by the transmission of the Covid-19. There must have been careful considerations behind the decision to implement PPKM, especially to maintain the continuity of economic activity in the country. In a statement regarding the implementation of Large Scale Social Restrictions on March 31, 2020, President Jokowi stated that the Large Scale Social Restrictions was a policy to deal with a health emergency that arose due to the rapid transmission of the Covid-19. The central government firmly stipulated that regional governments may not implement their own policies in setting any social restrictions. This centralized policy was taken because several

regional leaders had decided to impose restrictions on public mobility due to the deteriorating situation. The central government did not approve the insistence of the governor of Jakarta to set a lockdown in the province. The governor of Jakarta has requested the approval of the Minister of Health to implement the PSBB in Jabodetabek because from April 2, 2020 (meaning one month after the official announcement on March 2, 2020) 885 positive cases had been confirmed in Jakarta. Restrictions on mobility and public activity were taken based on the level of emergency in each area, and restrictions for affected areas were determined by the central government by setting the level of emergency and restrictions that should be obeyed.

In fact, this strategic decision was not spared from criticism, both from the government's political opponents and the members of the society who felt that their activities were constrained. Even though there is no political decision that may satisfy all parties, Jokowi was decisive to make strategic decisions that were not populist and might drop public sympathy for him as a leader. The institution of the National Covid Task Force is a strategic step to coordinate activities for handling and preventing Covid-19 on a national scale down to the regions. The population received adequate daily information and education regarding the development of the Covid-19 situation, preventive steps to take, health service centers, quarantine and isolation centers to access in various areas, and regulations on

public mobility. The nation's burden reached its culmination mainly due to the cessation of economic activity, because of the large number of layoffs or loss of work opportunities for non-formal workers. This situation became the reason to provide social assistance in the form of direct cash assistance or provision of daily basic needs (rice, milk, oil, health assurance). The provision of this social assistance relieved the burden of the people. Although a more thorough evaluation was still needed regarding the precise beneficiaries of this assistance, the Indonesian government did need to implement economic programs that could be directly felt by the community such as direct cash assistance, reduction of electricity and fuel rates, and provision of free medical expenses¹⁴. Vaccination is an option that cannot be refused. In the midst of public reluctance, the government should convince the public about the need for vaccination. The mobilization of military and police forces as well as health workers to carry out mass vaccinations was a strategic decision that no one could criticize. In an emergency situation, vaccination is a solution to increase personal as well as herd immunity. When the vaccination has achieved the targeted results, the government began to take steps to restore the public activity. Antigen and PCR tests which were required for travel and public activities were expensive and became a burden for the people. With firmness, the government set a maximum price for antigen and PCR tests. The public was surprised that the cost of antigen and PCR tests could be reduced to half of the initial price. This decision was also a bold strategic decision

considering the involvement of important persons in this country in the provision of antigen and PCR test kits.

Apart from making strategic decisions, Jokowi also makes his presence felt by the people. He came in to see, experience, and feel the suffering of the people and made himself available to interact directly with the affected people. It is not enough for a leader to work from behind the scenes at the institutional level. Important decisions are taken as the head of an institution, but being present in a society in crisis is a presence of a human person who feels that he is in a crisis situation with the people, sharing the impact of the crisis borne by members of the community. He does not only represent a leader who makes decisions, but a leader who unites himself in the suffering of others. Direct encounters with those who bear the brunt of the crisis provide new insights for leaders to find creative solutions that alleviate the burden of suffering. He is remembered not primarily for his decision, but for his presence as a suffering human being. This is the compassion of a leader.

How good the government's efforts are in responding to the pandemic (PSBB/PPKM, establishment of the Covid-19 Task Force, provision of health service centers, establishment of information centers, military/police mobilization, provision of socio-economic protection), criticism arose from everywhere about the speed of response, the inflexibility of attitudes in the midst of major changes, the inaccuracy of aid targets, the convoluted rules, etc. In the early stages of the spread of Covid-19, Jokowi's

leadership style has been regarded as downplaying the dangers of the Covid-19, but when the cases were getting worse, his leadership was considered to be harsher by implementing policies that hindered the freedom (so illiberal) and he was accused that in the name of an emergency, he took actions that weakened the democracy, created violations of human rights, and undermined freedom of expression¹⁵. The choice not to immediately set a lockdown was seen as a populist choice, which in fact exacerbated the Covid-19 cases in Indonesia. This option had been also judged as an anti-science option because the assumption that Indonesia was quite strong to fight against the Covid-19 and therefore did not need a lockdown is contrary to the opinion of the scientists. Instead of imposing a lockdown and concentrating on health sector, Jokowi was prioritizing economic recovery, which shows the Indonesian government's weak handling of the Covid-19. The government is considered hesitant to take preventive measures, denying the severity of the virus danger and the severity of the health crisis in the society¹⁶. It was only when the situation worsened that the Indonesian government took forceful actions which were unfortunately considered contrary to the democratic independence. In the name of an emergency, the government disguised its authoritarian power behind law and legal mechanisms through legal decisions and legitimate civil law: national sovereignty, law and order. His priority on the economic recovery over public health and the failure to uphold his commitment to strengthen an array of political and civil rights were considered be

a political failure to promote the quality of Indonesian democracy¹⁷. His failure in handling Covid-19 is considered the biggest failure in his two leadership periods¹⁸.

In an emergency situation, a leader's ability to make decisions and exercise management control is of course crucial. There is an urgent need to maintain order amidst the chaos. There is only limited time as well as rapid spread of the virus that needs to be responded to. All of that requires a responsive and appropriate response. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the spread of the virus was unpredictable due to unexpected situations and problems. In this chaotic situation, a leader should be able to take decisive action with adaptive skills and creativity. On this basis, Jokowi's leadership has also been seen by other parties as a transformative leadership that is transparent and open to criticism, quickly adapts to situations and is not reactive¹⁹.

Leadership Model: Purposeful and Adaptive

There is no single "best" leadership to be universally applied in critical situations. Any step taken by a leader gives rise to pluses and minuses, support and resistance, advantages and disadvantages. In all situations, the speed (responsiveness) and focus on achieving goals (purposefulness) are indicators of a leader's quality. An emergency that is constantly changing, uncertain, complex and ambiguous requires agile leaders who are oriented towards achieving organizational goals. A leader needs to overcome emergencies with an effective leadership based on a clear vision, to

overcome uncertainty with knowledge, to unravel complexity with clarity and to reduce ambiguity with agility.

What kind of leadership model does a society need in the midst of a pandemic? What leadership elements can be learned from Jokowi's strategic choices in handling the Covid-19 in Indonesia? The top-down leadership model can be effective in mobilizing organizational resources on a large scale, but it can also lead to large-scale abuses. Authority holders can mobilize available resources, but a centralized system creates a spirit of waiting for commands, a centralized movement only on predetermined paths, so that civil society is less involved in joint movements. When the path of movement is controlled by a certain group, many people commit abuses in order to take advantage of the turbidity of the situation for their profit. A social minister who was responsible for providing social assistance in the form of groceries, direct cash assistance, in fact, used the opportunity in the midst of a shortage to make profits for himself. Provision of vaccines and tests such as PCR and antigen is being fought over by state officials who were directly involved in handling the pandemic. The high price of PCR and antigen was suspected because the distribution of the test kits was controlled by some of the power holders who are looking for their own profit.

Frequently, decision-making stands in conflict with existing rules and leaders are unable to make a purposeful (effective) and adaptive (flexible) response to deal with extreme situations. On the one hand there is

discipline (obeying rules, laws), on the other hand there is a need of dexterity (agility) in action. A leader who is weak in discipline and at the same time does not have the dexterity to act will only produce dysfunctional leadership. When rules are prioritized, leadership will tend to be top-down and bureaucratic. Meanwhile, leaders who are weak in discipline and dexterity will give reactive and unstructured responses. The ideal, of course, is a leader who adheres to principles and at the same time has high dexterity to produce a response that is clear and adaptive or situation-responsive (purposeful and adaptive).

Tough leadership combines discipline and dexterity. For this reason, reciprocal communication is always needed between the parties in order to have a 'common operating picture' which forms the basis of joint action. Communication is opened by constructing an information center that can be accessed by all the interested parties to consult, to share information on an increasingly wider scale, to identify opportunities, forms of cooperation and support. To build a useful and responsive action, practical guidelines are always needed to act readily, without making complicated work rules and procedures that actually hinder strategic action. Taskforce teams are needed to test the situation and also to determine the necessary changes while sticking to shared goals and priorities in the midst of a crisis.

In an effort to overcome the crisis, the role of a leader who is in control of the joint work is urgently needed. Many people see that here is an advantage of a leader who is

rooted in the grassroots. In the example of Jokowi's leadership in Indonesian politics, Jokowi's main supporting force is the grassroots because he does not have great power in political parties, including in the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (PDIP) which is the main political supporter in the presidential election²⁰. His popularity is supported by his choice to meet and interact directly with the people as often as possible, especially with those who are poor and do not have much access to power holders. *Blusukan* (a Javanese term for an impromptu visit) is a distinctive term that emerged from Jokowi's habit of visiting locations to meet people that past leaders never did. Usually he made it in unexpected ways and time. This choice gives a strong impression that he is on the side of the poor, in solidarity with them. His appearance which is always distinctive with a long-sleeved white shirt, black pants, and sneakers represents him a simple and populist leader. His simplicity and warmth have attracted people to come closer to him as he successfully conveyed his messages through medias or through his impromptu visits to the people²¹ which has become his trademark and now is followed by some regional leaders²². His statements about anti-corruption give impression that he is a leader who is clean from corruption and makes decisions on the side of the poor. An image emerges in the society that he is a leader who has heart for the people (compassion), who serves and provides all his time for the benefit of many people. He represents a new style of

leadership with the capacity of a personal communication and vision as well as means to solve endemic problem to satisfaction of the people²³.

Purposeful

Dandridge M. Malone stated, "The very essence of leadership is its purpose. And the purpose of leadership is to accomplish a task. That is what leadership does-and what it does is more important than what it is or how it works". Good leadership is directed by a purpose/goal (purpose, strategic and overall plan) to realize the greatest possible benefits for as many people as possible. Leadership that is directed by this goal becomes a counterbalance for leadership that is directed by short-term interests or by momentary political-economic interests that are constantly changing. The purpose here is a visionary horizon that provides an aspirational foundation for work by standing on the basis of humanity and inspiring a call to action. In other words, a purposeful leadership is a leadership that is directed by a vision that reaches a long way forward. This vision-directed leadership becomes a challenger to the corporate leadership model that is controlled by greed and corrupted actions by fighting for the improvement of the lives of more and more people and for the sake of a stronger society. Leadership grows from personal conviction to accomplish something important, and leaders are able to articulate a vision that is also supported by many people and are able to demonstrate a series of commitments to themselves or to the organization²⁴. Hannum noted five

commitments that a leader must have, namely: a) being able to inspire people around them to join forces to realize a shared vision, b) involving each team member in a meaningful activity, c) making product or process innovations, d) achieve results by creating appropriate structures and clarity, and e) become more self-aware in the ability to transform, train, and influence people. The key to purposeful leadership is self-awareness and a willingness to constantly evaluate himself and make changes. In a goal-directed leadership, several determining factors are included such as vision, inspiration, direction, action-orientation, critical thinking, morality, values and ethics²⁵. A leader should have a clear organizational vision, a strong moral attitude manifested in justice, compassion, a helping hand, honesty and kindness, and commitment to those he leads.

Adaptive.

As having been mentioned above, Jokowi and his staff's agility in making strategic decisions in front of the Covid-19 outbreak has become the object of criticism from their opponents. The rejection to implement lockdown was considered to have further exacerbated the spread of the virus and the impact of the damage it has caused. Although these criticisms are true, it should also be considered that imposing a lockdown as demanded by his opponents does not necessarily stop the spread of the virus. His choice to maintain economic stability, which has been criticized by many, is understandable. While the focus of critics is on the rapid spread and the enormity of the impact of the virus on public health, Jokowi

still had to think about maintaining the economic resilience of the people who will be dealing with a long-lasting crisis. In this case, Jokowi showed his ability to make firm decisions amidst various criticisms and pressures from different parties.

As the emergency unfolded, he made strategic choices which many of his critics demanded. So he also displayed an adaptive leadership, always firm but careful in making choices according to the development of the situation. An adaptive leader makes an accurate diagnosis of the situation and change his actions according to concrete situation. Various terms used to refer to this skill are flexible, adaptive, responsive (agile), and versatile. Along with the globalization, rapid technological developments, changing mass telecommunication media, and changes in the public values, the Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged the emergence of flexible-adaptive leaders on a national and local scale. Flexible means that a leader is able to display a variety of responses or actions to concrete situations, but to be adaptive, these responses or actions must be relevant to the concrete situation at hand. This flexible response answers the real needs. He is trained at anticipating a crisis, quickly and accurately identifying the causes, showing certainty in responding to problems (not denying the problems or delaying problem-solving), proactive in planning the way to avoid problems, minimizing the impact of problems, and ultimately confident to lead the organization in response to the crisis²⁶. The Covid-19 pandemic is a sudden, extraordinary event that destroyed normal conditions,

undermined public health, which requires a fast and appropriate response to minimize the losses.

Indonesia has received international recognition for its success in dealing with this pandemic. At the opening of The 7th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GPDRR) 2022 which was held in Bali on 25 May 2022, Jokowi stated, "The Indonesian government implements a dynamic policy according to the current situation, implementing a 'gas and brake' policy to maintain a balance between health and the economy and has proven to have a good impact." During the forum, President of the United Nations General Assembly, Abdulla Shahid, and United Nations Deputy Secretary General, Amina Jane Mohammed, praised Indonesia's achievements in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

At the end of this study, it can be concluded that Jokowi's strategic decisions to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic displayed characteristics of a purposeful and adaptive leadership. Within the first eight months of the pandemic, the government showed caution to apply the lockdown as the scientist and experts have proposed. The fact that several affected countries immediately implemented lockdowns was the reason for many groups in the country to force the government to implement a lockdown in Indonesia as well. The rationale of this demand is of course health consideration which shows how fast this virus has spread to various parts of the world. The

spread was accelerated by international travel, further widening the spread of the virus. At this periode, Jokowi seemed to pay more attention to economic resilience of the people while trying to materialize his political priorities. Lockdown would have serious consequences for the people due to the difficulty to obtain the daily needs, while the government did not have sufficient economic capacity to cover all social costs that should be incurred to ensure the well-being of the people during a prolonged pandemic. Jokowi had the courage to make decisions that were contrary to public demands. His ability to make flexible decisions can be seen in the process of dealing with Covid-19. Various strategic policies with a direct impact on the people's welfare were taken and he received positive appreciation. His presence in the midst of people who were suffering made him a respected popular leader. All of these strategic policies were directed by one clear goal, namely ensuring people's well-being in the midst of a pandemic and finding a common solution to get out of the crisis. The toughness of Jokowi's leadership is evident in the clarity of goals, the courage to take strategic actions, and his direct-personal presence in the midst of a suffering society.

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