
The Impact of Post-Potivism and Constructivism on Public Policy: A review of Philosophy of Science in Indonesia

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Abstract: *This research aims to analyze the impact of the post-positivist and constructivist paradigms on public policy in Indonesia from an academic perspective. The main focus of this research is how the two paradigms affect policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. The methodology used in this research is qualitative with a focus on literature analysis. Data sources come from several academic works related to post-positivism, constructivism, and public policy in Indonesia. The findings of this study show that while the post-positivist paradigm contributes to the development of a data-driven approach to multiple perspectives, the constructivist paradigm emphasizes the need to understand local social and cultural dynamics in decision-making. Both paradigms are highly effective in producing public policies that are more inclusive and accountable to the needs of the general public. The implication is that Indonesian policymakers should adopt a more critical and contextual approach to policymaking, and improve the application of epistemological principles in the policy development process. This research contributes to the development of philosophy of science discourse in the context of governance, particularly in Indonesia, by offering an alternative perspective to support more effective and successful governance.*

INTRODUCTION

Public policy is one of the important components in the development of a country, including Indonesia (Isnaini, 2017). As a process that emphasizes policy decisions and implementation to achieve collective goals, public policy is influenced by various factors, including the knowledge paradigm used by policy makers. In the field of philosophy, post-positivism and constructivism have emerged as two schools of epistemology that have a significant influence on the formulation and implementation of public policies. Therefore, it is important to study the relationship between these two paradigms and public policy (Irawati et al., 2021a).

Research in the field of public policy shows that the approach used in understanding social

reality and managing public problems determines the success of the policy. The post-positivism paradigm, with its empirical and reflective approach, provides a foundation for evidence-based policies that are adaptive to social dynamics (Aldi, 2024). On the other hand, constructivism, which emphasizes the importance of understanding social construction, underlines the need to recognize the diversity of people's perspectives in public policy. Studies on the influence of these two paradigms have been conducted, but not many have specifically linked them to the context of public policy in Indonesia (Shafwah & Sianturi, 2024).

Various studies have identified the impact of post-positivism in improving the quality of decisions through more critical analysis of evidence and assumptions. In contrast, research on constructivism suggests that this approach can encourage more inclusive and culturally sensitive behavior (Khairanis & Aldi, 2024). Nonetheless, there is evidence in the literature of the integration of these two paradigms in public policy in Indonesia, particularly in understanding how they can be used to produce more effective and accountable policies that meet the needs of society.

Moreover, while the post-positivism paradigm is often seen as more dominant in the realm of evidence-based policy, critics of this approach note that it tends to ignore the qualitative aspects of social reality. Constructivism, on the other hand, faces criticism for its perceived lack of systematic and measurable approaches. This controversy highlights the need for more in-depth studies to bridge the differences between the two paradigms and explore how their combination can make a meaningful contribution to public policy (Lele, 2024).

The purpose of this research is to analyze the influence of constructivism and post-positivism on public policy in Indonesia from an academic perspective. The main focus is to identify how these paradigms influence the process of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation and explore the potential to integrate them to develop more inclusive and fundamental policies.

Conceptually, post-positivism is a paradigm that emerged as a critique of positivism, which states that knowledge about the world is always tentative and subject to revision. In the context of public policy, it highlights the importance of triangulation in decision development and encourages more reflective data analysis. On the other hand, constructivism, which is evident in the assertion that reality is socially constructed, emphasizes the importance of understanding local culture, customs and values in shaping relevant laws (Sundaro, 2022a).

Existing literature shows that the post-positivist paradigm has been widely used in research to support the development of data-driven conclusions. For example, research by Dunn shows how post-positivism can help identify weaknesses in evidence-based decision-making processes through critical analysis of the facts and assumptions that underpin them. On the other hand, constructivism has been used in research on how social and cultural factors influence the success of policy implementation, as shown by Hoppe's research (Firmansyah et al., 2024).

However, most of these studies still focus on the Western context and do not pay much attention to Indonesia's specific dynamics. As a country with strong religious, cultural and social values, Indonesia has unique challenges in formulating and implementing public policies. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the gap by providing an analysis that is contextualized and appropriate to the Indonesian context (Basuki, 2018).

In this research, post-positivism will be used to analyze how data and facts are used in the public policy process in Indonesia, while constructivism will help to investigate how social and cultural factors influence the implementation of such policies. The combination of these two

approaches is expected to provide a more comprehensive example of how public policy can be directed to be more responsive to the needs of Indonesian society (Rosyada, 2020).

By highlighting these two paradigms, this research also contributes to the development of scientific discussions in public discourse, especially in Indonesia. In addition, the results of this research are also expected to provide practical advice for those who want to apply a more inclusive and fundamentally-based approach (Hardi, 2020).

This research focuses on the relationship between public education and policy, offering a new perspective on how the post-positivist and constructivist paradigms can be effectively applied in the Indonesian context. As such, this research not only analyzes literary works, but also provides a more inclusive and flexible contribution to the development of public education.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to examine the influence of the post-positivism and constructivism paradigms on public policy in Indonesia. This approach was chosen because it allows in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena, especially those related to the process of public policy formulation and implementation (Roosinda et al., 2021).

The research population included public policy documents, academic literature, and interviews with policy experts and practitioners in Indonesia. The research sample was purposively selected to ensure that the data collected was relevant to the research objectives. Respondents in the interviews were selected based on their expertise in public policy and philosophy of science.

Data collection techniques include literature study, policy document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. Literature study was used to identify relevant theories and concepts, while document analysis was conducted to evaluate the implementation of the post-positivism and constructivism paradigms in public policy in Indonesia. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth perspectives from experts (Utami, 2014).

The data that had been collected was analyzed using the thematic analysis method, which involved a coding process to identify key themes relevant to the research objectives. Data validity was maintained through triangulation of data sources, while reliability was ensured by adopting a systematic approach to analysis. The results of the analysis are expected to provide new insights into the relationship between the science paradigm and public policy in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Influence of Post-Positivism on Public Policy in Indonesia

As a knowledge paradigm that emphasizes the importance of an open and honest approach to revision, post-positivism has a significant impact on public policy in Indonesia. In the policy formulation process, this paradigm supports the development of data-driven decisions and also balances social diversity. For example, in promoting health, it helps the government develop evidence-based interventions that can be tailored to local needs (Fahlefi, 2017).

Post-positivism has made a significant contribution to the development of public policy in Indonesia. This paradigm encourages data-driven decision-making, while still considering the social and cultural complexities of Indonesian society. For example, this approach is evident in health policy, where the government uses epidemiological data to design specific

interventions, such as immunization programs and endemic disease management. Data triangulation is an important element in post-positivism, especially in a culturally and geographically diverse country like Indonesia. By combining various data sources-both quantitative and qualitative-the government can produce a more thorough analysis. For example, in poverty alleviation policies, economic statistics are combined with insights from local communities to create more effective and relevant programs. The main challenge is data availability and quality. Infrastructure for data collection in some areas is still limited, making it difficult to obtain accurate and up-to-date information. In addition, the capacity of human resources in managing and analyzing data also needs to be improved. The government needs to invest in information technology and training to support this evidence-based policy (Interview, Irwan 2024).

From the interviews above, it can be drawn that post-positivism has had a significant impact on the development of public policy in Indonesia, by encouraging data-driven decision-making that takes into account social and cultural complexities. This approach, as seen in health and poverty alleviation policies, prioritizes the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data to produce more effective and relevant policies. However, the main challenges faced are limited data collection infrastructure and human resource capacity, which require improvement through investments in information technology and training to support more optimized evidence-based policies.

The post-positivism approach also emphasizes the importance of data triangulation in analyzing public issues. In the Indonesian context, this is relevant given the cultural and geographical diversity that affects people's needs and priorities. Reflective and comprehensive data analysis is an important foundation to ensure inclusive and equitable public policies (Sundaro, 2022b).

However, the implementation of this paradigm in Indonesia faces challenges in terms of data availability and quality. Limited infrastructure and resources often hinder the collection of accurate data, affecting the effectiveness of evidence-based policies. Therefore, efforts are needed to strengthen the data management system in Indonesia.

In addition, post-positivism provides guidance for non-government actors in the policy development process. Collaboration with civil organizations, academics, and the private sector can help clarify perspectives in policy formulation. In Indonesia, this approach has been implemented in various initiatives, such as environmental conservation and inclusive education.

Thus, the post-positivism paradigm has contributed to strengthening public policy in Indonesia, although it still requires improvement in the technical implementation aspect. The implication of the application of this paradigm is the need for commitment to increase the capacity of human resources and technology in supporting data-driven policies.

The Role of Constructivism in Shaping Policies that are Responsive to Social Dynamics

Constructivism, which views reality as a social construction, makes a significant contribution to building public policies that are responsible for social dynamics in Indonesia (Irawati et al., 2021b). The study emphasized the importance of understanding local norms, values and perceptions to make decisions that suit local needs (Umanailo, 2003).

Constructivism views reality as a social construction, which means that our understanding of the world is influenced by the norms, values and perceptions that exist

in society. In the context of public policy in Indonesia, constructivism encourages the government to understand the social dynamics prevailing in local communities, so that the resulting policies are more relevant and responsive to the needs of these communities. Of course, the most obvious example is the peace policies implemented in Aceh and Papua after long conflicts. In both regions, the government utilized a constructivist approach by engaging with local communities to understand their perspectives on peace and reconciliation. This made the resulting policies more acceptable and effective, as they were based on a deep understanding of the needs and values of local communities. Constructivism also plays an important role in education policy development. For example, education curricula in Indonesia are now starting to integrate local values that exist in society, which not only supports cultural preservation, but also strengthens people's sense of identity. This can help raise people's awareness of their social and economic conditions, as well as provide a deeper understanding of the importance of their role in social and economic development. One of the main challenges is the potential bias in understanding relevant social constructs, especially due to political influence. Politics often influence the interpretation of societal values, which can affect objectivity in policy making. Therefore, it is important to ensure that constructivism-based policy development processes are conducted in a transparent and participatory manner, so that all parties can be involved and the resulting policies truly reflect the needs of society as a whole (Interview, Irwan 2024).

From the above interview, we can draw a red thread that constructivism plays an important role in shaping public policies that are responsive to social dynamics in Indonesia. By viewing reality as a social construction, this approach encourages the government to understand the norms, values and perspectives of local communities, so that the resulting policies are more relevant and effective. Examples of the application of constructivism can be seen in peace policies in post-conflict areas such as Aceh and Papua, as well as in the development of educational curricula that integrate local values. However, the main challenge is the potential for political bias to affect policy objectivity, which requires a transparent and participatory policy development process to ensure fair and targeted outcomes.

In the Indonesian context, constructivism has been used to address challenges in social and cultural conflict management. For example, this approach was used in the formulation of peace policies in post-conflict areas such as Aceh and Papua. By understanding the perspectives of local communities, the resulting policies become more effective in creating sustainable peace. This approach also strengthens people's awareness of economic conditions. For example, education policies have integrated local values into the curriculum to strengthen people's sense of identity. This shows that constructivism can help prevent unforeseen and sensitive community-related problems.

However, one of the main challenges in constructivism studies is the potential bias in understanding relevant social constructs. In Indonesia, politics often influences the interpretation of societal values, which in turn affects the objectivity of governance. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the process of developing construction-based plans is conducted in a transparent and participatory manner. Constructivism therefore offers a useful alternative approach in addressing public policy in Indonesia. This approach enriches the policy process by integrating social and cultural dimensions, resulting in more relevant and effective policies.

Integration of Post-Positivism and Constructivism in Public Policy

The integration of post-positivism and constructivism offers a holistic approach to public policy. These two paradigms can complement each other to overcome their respective weaknesses and create more inclusive and evidence-based policies (Amizar, 2011). In Indonesia, this integration can be seen in disaster mitigation efforts, where data-driven approaches are combined with an understanding of local population dynamics. For example, in disaster projects in Lombok and Palu, geospatial data analysis was used to expedite interventions, while consultations with local communities ensured that the aforementioned measures were appropriate to the needs and historical context (Judijanto et al., 2024).

This approach is also relevant in urbanization policy. By using demographic data and analyzing migration trends, governments can design policies that support sustainable urban growth. At the same time, understanding the social and cultural dynamics of urban communities helps ensure that policies do not neglect social aspects such as poverty alleviation and community integration.

The integration of post-positivism and constructivism creates a holistic approach to public policy development. Post-positivism focuses on making decisions based on objective data and empirical evidence, while constructivism emphasizes the importance of understanding social realities constructed by society. These two paradigms complement each other by combining comprehensive data analysis with an understanding of social values and dynamics, resulting in more inclusive and relevant policies. Of course, one concrete example is in disaster mitigation efforts in Indonesia, such as those in Lombok and Palu. In both cases, geospatial data analysis was used to expedite interventions when disasters occurred, while consultations with local communities were conducted to ensure measures were appropriate to local needs and historical context. This shows how data and social understanding can work together to produce more effective solutions. This integration is also relevant in urbanization policy. Demographic data and migration trends are used to design policies that support the sustainable growth of cities. However, it is equally important to understand the social and cultural dynamics in urban communities. For example, a good urbanization policy should not only pay attention to physical aspects such as infrastructure development, but also prioritize poverty alleviation and social integration of the community so that no group is marginalized in the urbanization process. The main challenge is the epistemological difference between the two paradigms. Post-positivism tends to prioritize objective data and empirical evidence, while constructivism focuses more on subjective social construction. This difference can cause tension in decision-making. Therefore, a flexible and inquisitive approach is needed so that the two paradigms can complement each other without sacrificing one side or the other (Interview, Duski Samad 2024).

From the interview above, we can draw a common thread that the integration between post-positivism and constructivism in public policy offers a holistic and complementary approach, combining evidence-based data analysis with an understanding of the values and social dynamics of society. In Indonesia, this integration has proven effective in various policies, such as disaster mitigation and urbanization, by ensuring that policies are not only based on objective data but also relevant to local needs and social context. Although the challenge in integrating these two paradigms is related to epistemological differences, a flexible and inclusive approach can ensure

that the resulting policies are more effective, inclusive, and responsive to social change.

However, this integration requires clear working practices to ensure that the two paradigms can work together harmoniously. The main difference is the epistemological difference between constructivism and post-positivism, which can cause conflict during the decision development process. Therefore, a flexible and inquisitive approach is required when integrating these two paradigms. Therefore, the integration of post-positivism and constructivism offers significant potential to improve public policy in Indonesia. This approach not only provides comprehensive data-driven solutions, but also ensures that the policies are relevant to the needs and values of the society (Ramadhani & Winarno, 2025)

CONCLUSION

This research shows that post-positivism has made a significant contribution to the development of public policies in Indonesia, especially in data-driven policies. This paradigm emphasizes the importance of data triangulation that combines various sources of information to produce more inclusive and effective policies. Despite challenges related to infrastructure and data quality, this evidence-based approach has proven relevant in the health and poverty alleviation sectors, taking into account Indonesia's social and cultural complexities.

This research also illustrates that constructivism also plays an important role in shaping public policies that are responsive to social dynamics in Indonesia. By viewing reality as a social construction, constructivism encourages the government to pay attention to local norms, values and perceptions, which makes policies more relevant and effective. Its application in peace policies in post-conflict areas and education that integrates local values shows the importance of understanding the social context in the decision-making process. However, potential political biases can affect objectivity, so transparency and participation in policy development are necessary.

The integration of post-positivism and constructivism offers a more holistic and complementary approach to public policy. By combining evidence-based data analysis with an understanding of social values and dynamics, these two paradigms can produce more inclusive and relevant policies. Implementations of this integration, such as in disaster mitigation and urbanization policy, show how both approaches can work together to address complex social challenges. Despite epistemological differences, a flexible and inclusive approach can ensure more effective policies that are responsive to people's needs.

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