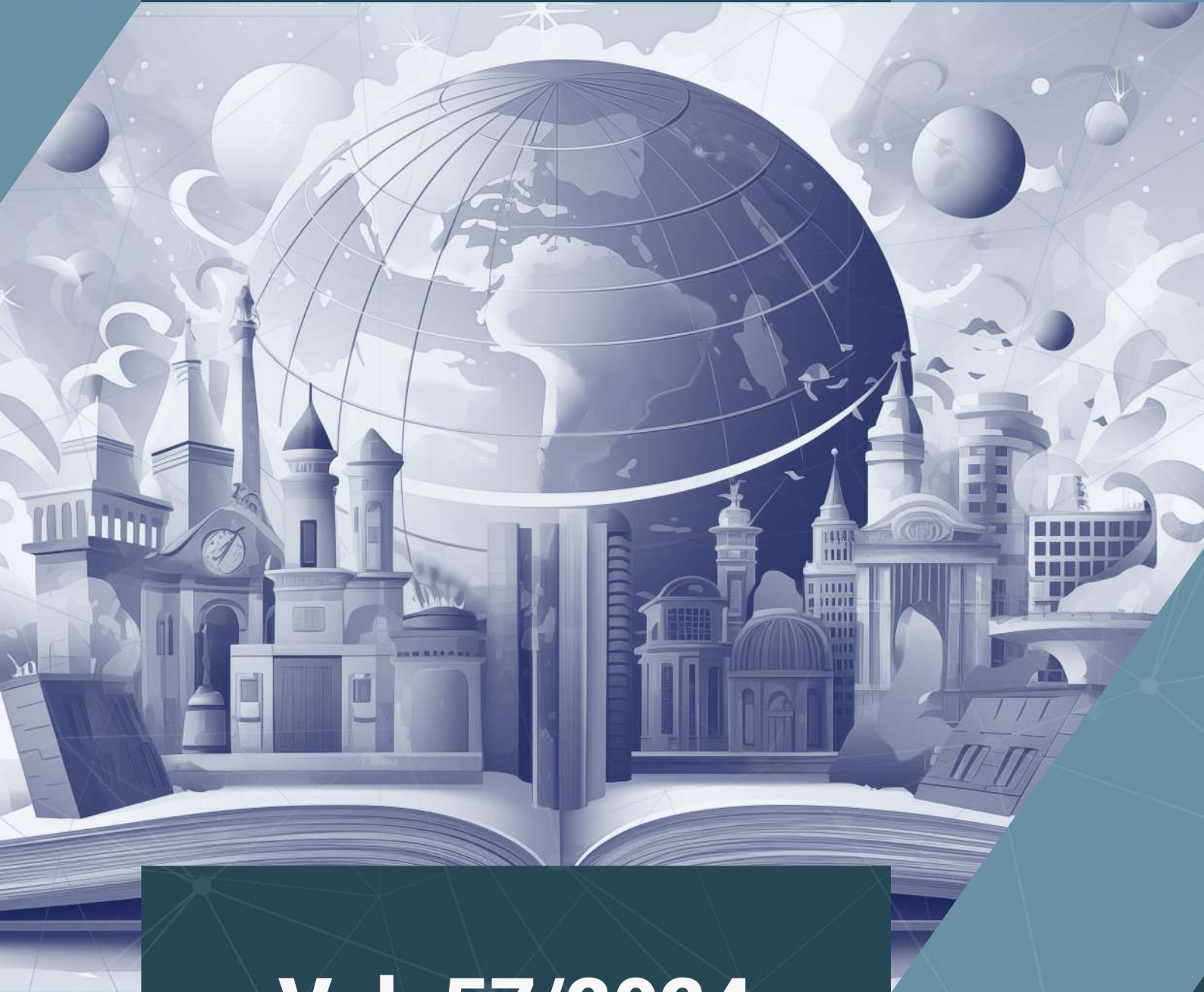




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## Localization of Social Distancing Norm to Combat Covid -19 Pandemic in Indonesia

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this research is to explore the localization of social distancing norm in Indonesia during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic has spread globally, affecting many aspects of human life. WHO, as a world health authority, encourages the implementation of social distancing norm to prevent the spread of Covid-19. However, countries around the world use various strategies to implement social distancing, such as lockdowns or social restrictions. Using Finnemore and Sikkink's norm life cycle and Amithav Acharya's norm localization, this article finds that the internalization and localization of social distancing norm in Indonesia are carried out through four efforts: determining the Covid-19 pandemic as a national disaster, forming a task force for the acceleration of Covid-19 countermeasures, and establishing social restriction policies through the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) and the Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM) policies and socializing new habits such as maintaining distance and using masks. The localization of the social distancing norm is influenced by the domestic situation and the local norm of helping each other which is implemented through various movements such as *jaga tangga*, *3NI*, *canthelan*, etc.

**Keywords.** Covid-19 pandemic, social distancing norm, Indonesia, localization

### 1. Introduction

The world health crisis due to the spread of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) has had an impact on the health, economic, social, and even political security sectors. Covid-19 is a disease that arises from the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus. At the end of 2019, the spread of this virus began in Wuhan China, which is thought to have originated from natural mutations that occur in nature which are then transmitted to humans through consumed animals [1]. The virus then spread between humans very quickly. Not only at the local level of a particular country's territorial area, but also across national borders as a result of the high human movement between countries. Based on official data from the World Health Organization (WHO) as of January 30, 2020, 7,736 positive cases occurred in China. The Covid-19 virus even spread outside China from 68 cases in 15 countries to 82 cases in 18 countries in less than one month. Based on data from Worldometers, global Covid-19 virus cases as of October 2020 have reached 39 million cases in 189 countries worldwide [2]

This makes Covid-19 one of the fastest spreading epidemics in the 21st century. Therefore, the WHO then declared the Covid-19 pandemic a global pandemic [3]. The status of a disease outbreak is categorized as a pandemic when the outbreak simultaneously affects many victims and occurs in a large geographic area covering almost all countries of the world. With this pandemic status, WHO as a world institution that has authority in the health sector asks all countries to increase emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, as a prevention effort, WHO also instructs the application of social distancing, by limiting activities and interactions between humans [4]. However, the application of social distancing has a negative impact on the economy, social, education and others. From the economic field, the application of social distancing has an impact on reducing economic activity due to reduced industrial activity, consumption and interaction between people, resulting in a decrease in the economic growth of the country and society. This leads to the diversion or cutting of the state budget, salary cuts, termination of employment rights (PHK) and others. Not only does it have an impact on the economy, the application of social distancing also causes a lot of social activities that must change by avoiding face-to-face meetings to online meetings, such as government and private offices implementing work from home (WFH). Meanwhile, from the field of education, social distancing is applied through online home study policies for school students and college students (school from home). These online meetings are considered less effective in achieving work targets than offline meetings and cause a reduction in the human side of humans as part of life in a social environment.

WHO's instruction to implement social distancing is responded by world countries through different policies. Some countries in the world implement strict social distancing through lockdown policies such as China, the United States, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Italy [5]. Lockdown can be interpreted as an emergency measure when people are prevented from leaving or entering an area temporarily, in order to avoid danger. While some countries such as Japan, Malaysia, including Indonesia choose to implement social distancing through limited social restriction policies as an effort to reduce transmission, prevent further spread and inhibit the spread of the Covid-19 virus. This policy is considered by some to be very slow and half-hearted in suppressing the spread of Covid-19. As a result, Indonesia is then considered to be one of the new epicenters of the spread of Covid-19 in Southeast Asia [6]. The different policies taken by world countries in implementing social distancing such as the WHO recommendation then raises the question of how the process of localizing this norm in policies to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic in a country, especially in Indonesia.

## **2. Methodology**

This article uses the theory of norm localization developed from international norm diffusion by Finnemore and Sikkink. A norm is a rule that is mutually agreed upon to control the behaviour of an entity. At the international level, norms will control and dictate what is appropriate for international actors to do [7]. According to Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), international norms develop from domestic norms that transform into international norms through the promotion of an actor [8]. Norms that have been promoted at the international level will then descend back to the domestic level, penetrate the state filters created by domestic norms, and then replace domestic norms. This is what is known as international norm diffusion. Specifically, Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) argue that international norm diffusion takes place in three stages [8]. The first stage is norm emergence, which results from the existence of norm entrepreneurs and organizations. The norm entrepreneur creates and promotes norms through the organization he/she establishes or uses; and persuasively, the norm entrepreneur tries to

convince the public to accept the norms he/she promotes. When the number of people who are convinced has reached a critical mass, the norm will reach a tipping point. According to Finnemore and Sikkink, the tipping point of a norm is reached when it is accepted by at least one-third of the countries in the international system [8]. In addition, it also requires the acceptance of an important country, which is defined as a country that must exist in order for the purpose of establishing the norm to be achieved. After reaching the breaking point, the second stage of the norm cycle begins, the norm cascade. At this stage, the norm that is on the cusp is cascading, characterized by the increasing number of countries that accept the norm. In this phase, a new dynamic is created where countries in the world start to create policies to adopt the new norm aggressively without domestic pressure. The cascading process in this norm occurs through international socialization, such as diplomatic relations, international treaties, or campaigns [9]. State acceptance of a norm will be driven by each state's motivation which is influenced by how the state perceives its identity in the international community. In addition, norm acceptance that has reached a breaking point allows for pressure from neighboring countries that accept the norm first [8]. The third stage occurs when a norm has been widely accepted (the extreme point of cascading) and internalized into something that is taken for granted. The public will no longer debate the validity of a norm. This is the last stage of the norm cycle, namely norm internalization. At this stage, a norm becomes very strong because the standard of behavior regulated by the norm is no longer questioned. When the norm has been internalized, various institutions will be formed to perpetuate the truth of the norm [8]. However, Finnemore and Sikkink's international norm diffusion theory has been criticized for not considering the changes that can occur when international norms are internalized at the domestic level. Cortell and Davis (2000) extend this idea and provide a thorough explanation of the domestic salience of international standards. They argue that not all international standards can be taken for granted domestically [10].

According to Amitav Acharya, international norms can be adapted to local needs and rejected when they enter the domestic arena [11]. In this case, they believe that local parties also have a significant role in influencing the spread of international standards. Acharya uses this perspective to explain his theory on the localization of international standards. According to Acharya, localization occurs when international standards descend to the domestic level. Redefining international standards by incorporating local features into them is known as localization [11]. However, Acharya emphasizes that localization should not be confused with adaptation. While both ideas refer to the process of adjusting to change, localization is unique in that local actors are solely responsible for initiating it. To select acceptable and discarded elements, adoption usually involves a back and forth process to find a middle ground between local and international standards. Localization, however, is the process by which local parties consciously adopt global standards while maintaining local standards. Furthermore, localization is done specifically to meet local needs while adaptation is done to meet global standards. The end result of localization is practices that appear to comply with international standards but maintain existing local standards. Three factors can theoretically lead to localization: (1) existing domestic norms threatened with replacement by international norms have a higher degree of uniqueness and acceptance; (2) domestic elites believe that international norms can be changed to strengthen the legitimacy of domestic practices based on existing domestic norms; and (3) the presence of domestic actors who have greater influence than existing domestic norms.

With reference to norm localization theory, this article will explain how local norms in Indonesia appropriated the social distancing norm and produced practices that are different

from those of other countries. Therefore, the next section of this article will briefly explain the emergence of the social distancing norm and its socialization process until it reached Indonesia. Then, this article will explain how the process of social distancing norms is localized within Indonesia.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

#### **3.1 The Development Cycle of Social Distancing Norm**

Social distancing (which was later changed to physical distancing) recommended by WHO to deal with the Covid-19 health disaster can be called an international norm (global norms), because according to Khagram, Rikker, and Sikkink international norms are common expectations or standards of behavior that are appropriately accepted by states and intergovernmental organizations that can be applied to states, intergovernmental organizations or various other non-state actors [7]. In addition, just like an international norm, social distancing is also created as a direct response to the crisis that is being faced by countries in the world which are new steps built on existing norms [12]. International norms become a standard of "must" and or a widely accepted standard of behavior that permeates all levels of political and social life at the international, regional and national levels [1].

WHO in this case acts as a norm entrepreneur who promotes convincingly to influence a country's national policy to adopt the norm in its national policy. These norms then shape national policies by "teaching" countries what their interests and actions should be. In terms of how they develop, international norms start as a core idea shared by a number of individuals, organizations, or countries, and end up as a globally institutionalized norm with the power to shape the behavior of governments around the world. WHO uses emergency meetings at WHO headquarters in Geneva Switzerland and various other forums to determine anticipatory steps to deal with Covid-19. WHO also collaborates with health experts in determining health protocols that accompany social distancing instructions. On March 3, 2020, WHO issued "Covid-19 advice for the public" through its official website which contains WHO recommendations for the prevention of Covid-19 through the application of social distancing, wearing masks, avoiding crowds, cleaning hands and coughing ethics[4] [1]. In order for social distancing norms to be more spread and accepted by the international community, norm entrepreneurs (WHO) need cooperation with organizational platforms as influential actors. In addition to collaborating with other UN agencies, WHO for example, also collaborated with FIFA. launched an international awareness campaign "Pass the message to kick out coronavirus", which calls on people around the world to protect their health through hand washing, cough etiquette, not touching faces and the application of social distancing [1]. FIFA has become a strategic partner for WHO to campaign for this norm as the organization's network and fanatical fans of FIFA matches span the globe.

This social distancing norm continues to be socialized to other countries through various international organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union and ASEAN to accelerate the spread of this norm. In the European Union, for example, on March 18, 2020 issued EU recommendations for community measures, containing social distancing guidelines which explain that the incubation period is 2-14 days and the possibility of asymptomatic infection [13]. So it is important to avoid shaking hands, avoid crowded transportation, and mass gatherings. The EU recommendations for community measures also ask EU member states to take several social distancing measures such as isolation for affected patients, closure of gathering places, religious, and educational institutions etc. Meanwhile in ASEAN at a special ASEAN Summit on April 14, 2020, Indonesia's representative to AICHR

said that ASEAN took a community approach and committed that the coronavirus must be controlled. However, there are differences in the characteristics of each country and population size, so regarding lockdown and social distancing policies, ASEAN gives freedom to each member country. However, there must be transparency, both transparency from the government to the community and transparency from the government to 10 other ASEAN countries [14].

This social distancing norm has been promoted by WHO to the international community both through international organizations and through other mechanisms and means. When the society has accepted the norm, it means that the norm has reached the tipping point stage. In this study, the tipping point is not seen from one third of the total countries. However, the tipping point in this study is seen from the global spread of Covid-19. Data from worldometers on March 7, 2020, recorded the number of countries affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as many as 97 countries with a total of 102,050 cases, 3,494 global deaths, 57,611 patients recovered and 6,135 patients in critical condition [15]. This data is data on the spread of Covid-19, after 3 months of the discovery of Covid-19 cases in China in December 2019 and 4 days after WHO on March 3, 2020 issued an appeal for social distancing through "Covid-19 advice for the public". Then, on March 10, 2021, worldometers recorded the number of countries affected by the Covid-19 pandemic reached 221 countries with a total of 118,278,693 cases, 2,624,426 global deaths, and 21,716,292 active cases [2]. In addition, the adoption of social distancing norms by countries in the world can also be seen from school closures (school from home). According to data from UNESCO on September 16, 2020, there were 192 countries that closed schools during the Covid-19 pandemic [16]. Countries around the world are enforcing stricter social distancing as governments try to limit the spread of Covid-19 after WHO on March 11, 2020 declared the coronavirus outbreak a pandemic. However, the implementation policy regarding social distancing varies from country to country [17].

In the next phase, the norm then continues to flow to the domestic level of regional countries such as ASEAN and including Indonesia. As one of the ASEAN member countries as well as part of the international community that is also experiencing the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government of Indonesia has a moral obligation to participate in implementing efforts to tackle the spread of Covid-19 in order to achieve world order. The cooperation of each country to have the awareness of implementing this norm will have a major influence on the development of the spread of the virus, especially with regard to border management and mobility of people and goods across national borders. Therefore, Indonesia is taking strategic steps to be able to internalize the global norm of social distancing in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic without causing adverse impacts on society.

### **3.2 The Spread of Covid-19 and the Localization of Social Distancing Norm in Indonesia**

When Covid-19 in Wuhan China was first reported to WHO in late December 2019 and then spread massively to many countries in a matter of months, public officials in Indonesia ignored the threat of the outbreak, so there was no urgency to take anticipatory policies [6]. A number of statements from public officials even believe that Indonesia will be immune from the COVID-19 outbreak with various arguments that are not based on adequate knowledge and science. There is even optimism that the spread of outbreaks in various countries can actually be a national economic opportunity. [6]. The positive case of Covid-19 in Indonesia was first confirmed by President Jokowi on March 2, 2020, which stated that 2 Indonesian citizens had contracted this virus [18]. The government should immediately anticipate the possibility of the spread of Covid-19 to Indonesian territory by conducting prevention campaigns, preparing

health facilities or establishing procedures and handling protocols. However, because there is no government policy that shows preparedness, after the announcement what happened was a stutter in dealing with Covid-19. When Covid-19 cases emerged, there was no clear screening process and test protocols, referral hospitals for people who were confirmed positive, the absence of test equipment and personal protective equipment, the lack of medicines and various other handling problems [19]. At the government level, coordination with related institutions and agencies is also poor, as well as miscommunication between policy makers. This has caused the spread of Covid 19 cases in Indonesia to increase rapidly from 2 sufferers in March 2020 to more than 100,00 sufferers in July 2020.

The Indonesian government is trying to prevent the wider spread of Covid-19 by following instructions from WHO through several policies. **First**, establishing the Covid-19 pandemic as a national disaster through Presidential Decree Number 11 of 2020. The determination of the Covid-19 pandemic as a national disaster has the consequence that disaster management is under the coordination of the central government through the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) and the opportunity for the entry of foreign assistance in the management process. BNPB together with the Ministry of Health, the Indonesian National Police, the Indonesian National Army and local governments in the implementation of Covid-19 countermeasures are directly responsible to the President of Indonesia.

**Second**, establish a task force for the acceleration of Covid-19 countermeasures. This task force is a task force formed by the Indonesian government to coordinate inter-agency activities in an effort to prevent and overcome the impact of Corona Virus disease in Indonesia [20]. This task force was formed on March 13, 2020 based on Presidential Decree Number 7 of 2020 concerning the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Corona Virus Diseases 2019 which is tasked with establishing and implementing an operational plan for accelerating the handling of Covid-19, coordinating and controlling the implementation of activities to accelerate the handling of Covid-19, supervising the implementation of accelerated handling of Covid-19, mobilizing resources for the implementation of accelerated handling of Covid-19, and reporting the implementation of accelerated handling of Covid-19 to the President and Steering Committee. This task force is within the scope of BNPB by involving the ministry of health, the Indonesian National Police, the Indonesian National Army and local governments. In its development, this institution was disbanded on July 20, 2020 based on Presidential Regulation Number 82 of 2020 and replaced by the Committee for Covid-19 Handling and National Economic Recovery. This change is due to the fact that the handling of Covid-19 has not prioritized much on handling economic recovery, so the task of this committee is to integrate the authority of the Task Force for the Acceleration of Covid-19 Handling, which previously acted as a central institution in the authority to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 with the authority of other ministries / agencies to accelerate economic recovery due to this pandemic. Through this committee, it is hoped that the economic problems caused by the pandemic can be resolved in tandem with the issue of health impacts, through the same institutional handling and maximum coordination. The Policy Committee is tasked with preparing strategic policy recommendations to the President, integrating and determining the strategic policy steps and breakthroughs needed, as well as monitoring and evaluating the implementation of strategic policies in accelerating the handling of Covid-19 and economic recovery and national economic transformation.

**Third**, the Government established a social restriction policy through the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) policy and the Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM). PSBB is the restriction of certain activities of residents in an area suspected

of being infected with Covid-19 to prevent its spread. PSBB is determined by the local government and carried out during the longest incubation period, which is 14 days [21]. If there is still evidence of spread in the form of new cases, it can be extended within 14 days from the discovery of the last case. The regulation also states that restrictions on activities carried out at least include school and workplace holidays, restrictions on religious activities, and/or restrictions on activities in public places or facilities. The focus of this policy is coordination between regional centers in determining whether an area can be implemented PSBB or not. Each regional head must submit data on the increase in cases and submit information on regional readiness regarding aspects of the availability of basic living needs of the community, health infrastructure, budget and operationalization of social safety nets, and security aspects. Then the Minister of Health will form a special team in collaboration with the Covid-19 Task Force in order to conduct a study by considering aspects of regional readiness. It will provide recommendations to the Minister of Health to impose PSBB .

While the Enforcement of Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM) is a substitute for PSBB, the mechanism for implementing PPKM is determined on a scale ranging from the first to the fourth level. The government can determine that an area can implement PPKM based on the rate of transmission and the number of active Covid-19 cases in an area. All cases are calculated per 100,000 population per week to determine the PPKM level. The differences between PSBB and PPKM include in terms of regulation, PPKM is regulated in the Instruction of the Minister of Home Affairs Number 1 of 2021 to all regional heads in Java and Bali. PPKM targets restrictions on community activities on a limited basis based on cities and regencies. Meanwhile, PSBB itself is clearly regulated in Government Regulation Number 21 of 2020 which refers to Law Number 6 of 2018 concerning Health Quarantine with the criteria that the number of cases or the number of deaths due to disease increases and there is an epidemiological link to similar events in other regions or countries. The implementation of PPKM consists of several points, such as limiting offices by implementing work from home (WFH) by 75 percent and work from office (WFO) by 25 percent. Then, implementing teaching and learning activities online. On-site eating or drinking restaurants are only allowed at 25 percent. Limitation of operating hours for shopping centers or malls until 19.00 WIB. With the determination of this level, each region has a different level of PPKM according to the development conditions of the rate of spread of Covid-19. These policy changes reflect the dynamics of change that occur in society, both at the central government level, provincial, district / city and even at the RW or RT level.

These two policies are a form of localization of social distancing norms as the Indonesian government's response to WTO instructions. However, the government chose not to implement a lockdown policy as implemented by several countries such as China, the United States, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Italy [5], although there are local governments that implement policies different from those of the central government. One of them is the Tegal city government, which implemented a local lockdown policy from March 30 to July 30, 2020. Although it is a dilemma, for the Tegal city government this policy is considered crucial considering the discovery of one of the infected residents and does not want the transmission to be even greater. However, this did not dampen the government's desire to implement a policy that reflects the situation and conditions in Indonesia, namely one that avoids lockdown. According to President Jokowi, the lockdown policy will completely close all sectors, so he chose the PSBB and PPKM policies so that the government can overcome the health crisis but also not forget about handling the economy.

In addition to economic considerations, the government also considers local norms in localizing social distancing norms. The territory of Indonesia has a variety of rich customs that function as a philosophy of life, values and norms in society. For example, in the Javanese community a philosophy called *sayuk rukun saiyeg saeka praya sangkul sinangkul ing bot repot* says that a feeling of harmony is built between people in social life to achieve common goals [22]. In addition, in dealing with common problems, the goal is kindness, justice, and brotherhood, and *sangkul sinangkul* means the spirit to support and bear each other, and *ing bot repot* means in all the burdens and difficulties of everyone [22]. In essence, this Javanese philosophy emphasizes the importance of helping each other in all situations. Although this philosophy is rarely understood by most people, its meaning remains strong in the hearts and behavior of the community. The norm of mutual help believed in the Javanese community is very useful when facing the Covid-19 pandemic. If there are community members in an environment who are identified as positive for Covid-19 and must carry out isolation, the surrounding community becomes supporters to supply their needs during isolation.

The application of this norm of mutual assistance is applied in various regions in Indonesia in various ways and different programs. In Central Java, this norm is applied through the term *jaga tangga* or looking after neighbors through the 3N1 program or *Telu Nulung Siji* (three helping one). The 3N1 program allows three families to help one family when in a pandemic situation. In addition, there is also the *canthelan* movement carried out in Central Java, which means providing assistance to families who are isolated during a pandemic by sending their necessities placed at the gate of the house. So this *canthelan* movement allows interaction without meeting in person. This kind of movement is also found in Bali with a tradition called *megibung* which means sharing food. The *megibung* tradition does not distinguish caste or social status; instead, they blend together to share food. In the community of Bangka Belitung is *besaoh* which means helping each other, helping, appreciating, and respecting each other. In Cirebon there is the *tebus weteng* custom, while in East Nusa Tenggara there is the *khuporo weki* custom. These mutual helps became very popular during the Covid-19 pandemic. Communities that are Covid-positive or affected by the Covid-19 pandemic receive assistance in their food needs from surrounding communities. This situation is the reason why the implementation of lockdown is not in accordance with the real conditions in the community.

*Fourth*, socializing new habits such as maintaining distance in meetings or on public transportation, using masks, etc. In addition to the social restriction policy, along with this policy the government is also socializing new habits in a pandemic situation. Among them are using masks, keeping a distance in social interactions and public transportation and social services, using disinfectants etc. The government's socialization efforts are carried out by utilizing all available media to be able to access the community widely. This is to make social distancing norms permeable in people's daily lives. However, in the government's efforts to socialize the new habit, many problems were faced. In addition to weak coordination and confusion of government communication, individual behavior is also very influential in controlling the spread of covid 19. The key to control is to self-isolate at home, contact medical authorities remotely unless they have severe symptoms, and stay away from mass gathering activities. However, abnormal behavior is actually shown by the people of Indonesia. In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia, which is increasingly showing positive cases, people seem not to be afraid and choose to take vacations, go to shopping centers, hold *tabligh akbar*, and other activities carried out in crowds. This is contrary to the government's call for social distancing and staying at home.

Nevertheless, various government policies in implementing social distancing as a norm within its sovereign territory have proven that the localization of norms has been running by considering various peculiarities of Indonesian society. The social distancing norm has gone through a process of institutionalization and localization so that the social distancing norm has been accepted as part of Indonesian society and has become a new standard of behavior in preventing the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia.

#### 4. Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic, which is rapidly expanding around the world, has prompted WHO to instruct social distancing norms to prevent and stop its spread. Various countries in the world respond to this instruction in different ways and policies. Some countries implement strict social distancing through lockdown policies such as China, United States, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Italy. While some countries such as Japan, Malaysia, including Indonesia choose to implement social distancing through limited social restriction policies as an effort to reduce transmission, prevent further spread and inhibit the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The implementation of social distancing policies by the Indonesian government is influenced by domestic conditions in Indonesia and influenced by local norms such as helping each other which is then realized in various community movements such as *jaga tangga*, *3N1*, *canthelan*, *megibong* etc. These community movements become social capital to survive. These community movements become social capital to survive in a community with the principle of mutual care and help so that economic activities can continue to run.

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