

## **Synergizing Social Welfare And Family Planning: A Policy Analysis Of Surabaya City's Population Strategy**

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### **Abstract**

This study analyses the synergy between social welfare policies and family planning programs as part of the Surabaya City Government's strategy to control population growth. The research aims to examine how the integration of social assistance with Family Planning (FP) services contributes to sustainable population management and to evaluate the effectiveness of these policies through the lens of public policy theory by Merilee S. Grindle. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through in depth interviews with government officials from the office of Women Empowerment, Child Protection, Population and Family Planning (DP3APPKB), as well as from documentation and literature review. The findings reveal that the linkage between social welfare programs and active participation in FP initiatives, supported by adequate budget allocation, inter-institutional cooperation, and accessible services, significantly increases community participation, including among men. Communication strategies, such as the slogan "Two Children Are Healthier" and community-based education through Family Development Groups, have effectively strengthened public awareness of reproductive health and population control. The study concludes that adaptive, integrated, and community-based policy implementation plays a crucial role in achieving population control goals. The synergy between social and population policies not only reduces the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) but also enhances the quality of life and social equity in urban communities.

**Keywords:** Public Policy, Social Welfare, Family Planning, Population Control.

## Introduction

Population growth in Indonesia's urban areas continues to rise in line with the country's rapid pace of urbanisation. Sustainable urban population growth in cities such as Surabaya presents significant challenges for sustainable development, particularly in maintaining a balance between demographic growth, public service capacity, and social welfare. When population growth exceeds a city's ability to provide adequate services, this can increase pressures on the economy, health, education, and social equity (Hana & Pujiati, 2023). Population control has become an important policy priority to support inclusive and sustainable urban development. The Surabaya City Government has responded to these challenges through an integrated population control strategy that links social welfare programs with Family Planning (FP) initiatives. This approach reflects a policy transformation from a demographic-oriented perspective to a welfare-based and empowerment-driven model. The integration of social assistance with FP services aims not only to reduce fertility rates but also to improve the overall quality of family life and strengthen social welfare among urban communities. The East Java Provincial Population and Family Planning Agency (BKKBN) has set the ideal fertility rate for districts and cities below the provincial Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 2,03% (Andini & Ratnasari, 2019).

This policy orientation has become increasingly relevant as demographic indicators show a gradual decline in Surabaya's population growth. According to data from the Office of Women Empowerment, Child Protection, Population, and Family Planning (DP3APPKB), the city's population growth rate decreased from 0,457% in 2021 to 0,363% in 2024. This downward trend suggests the potential effectiveness of Surabaya's local policy innovations, which combine reproductive health programs with social protection measures to enhance community participation and awareness. However, the effectiveness of population control policies depends not only on quantitative outcomes but also on the quality of their implementation at the local level. The success of public policy is determined by how well it aligns with community needs, the adequacy of institutional resources, and the degree of coordination across implementing agencies. In this regard, Surabaya's integrated policy design represents an interesting case of intersectoral synergy in the context of decentralisation and local governance in Indonesia.

Previous studies have primarily focused on the effectiveness of Family Planning (FP) programs in reducing fertility rates and promoting reproductive health awareness. Recent research has highlighted the importance of community and male participation in program success (Rahayu et al., 2023). Nevertheless, limited attention has been given to how the integration of social welfare and population policies can generate synergistic outcomes for sustainable demographic management. Addressing this gap, the present study examines the synergy between social welfare policies and FP programs in Surabaya as a strategic effort to achieve sustainable population control. This study aims to analyse how the Surabaya City Government designs and implements an integrated approach that combines social assistance and FP initiatives within its broader population management policy. It also evaluates the policy's effectiveness using Merilee S. Grindle's theory of public

policy, which emphasises the interaction between the content of policy and the context of implementation. Through this theoretical lens, the study explores how institutional coordination, policy substance, and community participation interact to produce effective outcomes in local population governance.

## **Method**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method to analyse how the Surabaya City Government integrates social welfare programs with Family Planning (FP) initiatives as part of its population control strategy. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables a contextual and comprehensive understanding of policy phenomena within their real-life settings. According to Creswell & Creswell (2017), qualitative research seeks to explore and interpret the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social problem through an inductive and flexible process. This study employs a qualitative design, enabling an in-depth exploration of policy implementation dynamics and inter-institutional coordination in local governance.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the Office of Women Empowerment, Child Protection, Population, and Family Planning (DP3APPKB) and supported by a review of relevant literature. The data analysis process consisted of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Interpretation was guided by Merilee S. Grindle's public policy theory, which emphasises the interaction between the content and context of policy implementation. This analytical framework enables the research to reveal how Surabaya's integrated approach contributes to effective population control and social welfare improvement.

## **Result and Discussion**

The findings of this study indicate that the population control strategy implemented by the Surabaya City Government is not solely focused on improving Family Planning (FP) services, but also emphasizes the synergy between social welfare policies and population programs. Through the Department of Women's Empowerment, Child Protection, Population, and Family Planning (DP3APPKB), the government integrates FP services with social assistance and community empowerment programs as an adaptive policy approach based on local needs. This approach reflects the *content of policy* as conceptualized by Merilee S. Grindle, wherein the substance of the policy is designed not only to address demographic issues but also to strengthen family welfare (Merilee S. Grindle, 2017). Beneficiary families not only gain access to contraceptive services but also receive social support in the form of economic assistance and family empowerment activities through community based family development groups. This aligns with (Taufiq, 2022), who argue that the integration between social policy and family planning programs functions as a form of social investment that enhances the effectiveness of local population control efforts. From the community's perspective, this

integrative policy is perceived as more relevant and inclusive, as it does not merely aim to reduce birth rates but also seeks to improve the quality of family life in urban areas (Suardi Mukhlis dkk., 2025). The effectiveness of this policy can be observed from the declining trend in Surabaya's population growth rate over the past four years, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Population Growth Rate in Surabaya City (2021-2024)**

| NO | YEAR | POPULATION GROWTH RATE (%) |
|----|------|----------------------------|
| 1. | 2021 | 0,457%                     |
| 2. | 2022 | 0,432%                     |
| 3. | 2023 | 0,397%                     |
| 4. | 2024 | 0,363%                     |

*Source: DP3APPKB Surabaya City, 2025*

This decline demonstrates that the synergy policy implemented by the Surabaya City Government has been effective in sustainably reducing the population growth rate and reflects tangible outcomes of collaboration among government agencies, social institutions, and the community.

The implementation of the synergy policy between social welfare programs and the Family Planning (FP) initiative in Surabaya City proceeds through cross-sector coordination and a community based approach. The Surabaya City Government not only relies on formal bureaucratic apparatus but also empowers social networks such as cadres, Bina Keluarga Groups, and partner institutions like Baznas to expand service outreach (Kissumi Diyanayati & Retnaningdyah Weningtyastuti, 2017; Rusliadi & Aina, 2024). One tangible form of this synergy is seen in FP social services activities that provide free contraceptive services concomitantly with the distribution of social assistance for underprivileged families (Frans & Djasri, 2023; Taufiq, 2022). This approach shows an integration between public services functions and social empowerment so that the community is more encouraged to participate actively. From the perspective of Merilee S. Grindle's theory, this reflects the combination of *content of policy* designed inclusively and *context of implementation* that considers the socio-economic conditions of urban communities (Merilee S. Grindle, 2017). Political support and institutional capacity also play a key role, evidenced by the City Government's commitment through budget allocations via the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) and the Regional budget (APBD). The coordination pattern formed among DP3APPKB, Social Affairs Office, and health institutions demonstrates that the success of implementation is heavily influenced by the alignment of actors' roles and clarity of policy execution mechanisms at the local level (Diah Siti Utari dkk., 2023).

The synergy between social welfare policies and the Family Planning (FP) program has had a significant impact on increasing community participation and transforming public perceptions regarding family planning. Communities have experienced dual benefits from this integrative policy, not only receiving social and economic support but also gaining easier access to reproductive health services. This condition has led to a steady rise in the number of active FP participants each year, including among men who were previously less involved in FP initiatives (Haerawati Idris & Willyana Syafriyanti, 2021; Utarini, 2016). The community also

perceives that the government's approach of linking social assistance with participation in FP programs fosters a stronger sense of shared responsibility in controlling population growth. This positive outcome is reflected in the increasing participation data, as presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2. Active Family Planning Participants in Surabaya City (2023–2024)**

| YEAR | MALE   | FEMALE  | TOTAL   |
|------|--------|---------|---------|
| 2023 | 6.239  | 301.371 | 307.610 |
| 2024 | 19.549 | 397.532 | 417.081 |

*Source: DP3APPKB Surabaya City, 2025*

The increase of 109.471 active participants, with a notable rise among male acceptors, signifies the government's success in expanding service coverage and fostering collective awareness of reproductive responsibility. This supports Grindle's argument that the effectiveness of public policy depends on the alignment between the substance of policy and the social context in which it is implemented. It further demonstrates that the success of Surabaya's population control program is not solely the result of a well-designed policy, but also the outcome of growing public trust developed through participatory interaction between the government and the community.

Although it has shown positive outcomes, the implementation of the synergy policy between social welfare programs and the Family Planning (FP) program in Surabaya still faces several challenges. The main obstacles lie in the community's awareness and willingness to use Long-Acting Contraceptive Methods (MKJP), which remains low due to negative perceptions, limited education, and inadequate field personnel and facilities in several regions (Prastyoningsih dkk., 2023; Sutrisminah dkk., 2023). In addition, social resistance toward FP program is still observed, particularly among groups with low educational and economic backgrounds. Some residents admitted reluctance to participate due to lack of understanding, persistent myths surrounding contraceptive side effects, and fear of medical procedures (Sari dkk., 2024). From the perspective of Merilee S. Grindle's theory, these challenges illustrate how the *context of implementation* becomes a determining factor in the effectiveness of public policy. The success of policy is not only shaped by well-formulated *content of policy* but also by the bureaucratic capacity and adaptability of implementing actors in responding to complex social dynamics (Merilee S. Grindle, 2017).

Despite these obstacles, the policy has still produced positive demographic outcomes. The achievement of declining Total Fertility Rate (TFR) indicates that the synergy between social welfare and FP programs has effectively contributed to population control, as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) Achievement in Surabaya City (2023–2024)**

| YEAR | TARGET TFR | ACHIEVED TFR |
|------|------------|--------------|
| 2023 | 1,74%      | 1,70%        |
| 2024 | 1,74%      | 1,68%        |

*Source: DP3APPKB Surabaya City, 2025*

The decrease in TFR from 1,70% to 1,68% demonstrates that the implementation of this integrative policy has been relatively effective. Nevertheless, sustaining these results will depend on the government's ability to strengthen community education and enhance institutional capacity at the local level. In the case of Surabaya, strong local leadership and cross-sectoral coordination have become key drivers of success. However, limited public awareness still highlights the enduring socio-cultural challenges in realizing a fully inclusive and participatory population policy framework.

The synergy between social welfare policies and the Family Planning (FP) program in Surabaya City reflects a model of public policy implementation that is adaptive, responsive, and oriented toward the needs of the community. The integration of these two policies has proven effective in reducing population growth rates while simultaneously improving family quality of life through increased awareness, service access, and socio-economic empowerment (Hafid, 2025; Umi Listyaningsih dkk., 2021). From the perspective of Merilee S. Grindle, the balance between *content of policy* and *context of implementation* has been achieved because a comprehensive policy substance is followed by contextual and participative execution (Merilee S. Grindle, 2017). However, to strengthen policy sustainability the government needs to broaden cross sector collaboration, enhance the capacity of implementing staff, and develop a more interactive public communication model. The government also needs to expand partnerships with the private sector and community organizations to deepen social impact and widen service reach. With these steps, the synergy policy between social welfare and FP doesn't just serve as a demographic control instrument, but also as a social development strategy that places family welfare as the primary foundation for sustainable urban population management.

## I. Conclusion

This study concludes that the synergy between social welfare policies Family Planning (FP) programs in Surabaya City represents an effective model of integrated public policy for sustainable population control. By combining social assistance with reproductive health services, the Surabaya City Government has succeeded in promoting both demographic stability and social welfare enhancement. The integration policy has proven instrumental in increasing community participation, including among man, improving the accessibility of FP services, and reducing the city's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) from 1,70% to 1,68% between 2023 and 2024. These outcomes affirm that policy effectiveness is achieved when the *content of policy* in this case, comprehensive and inclusive program design is aligned with the *context of implementation*, namely strong institutional capacity, intersectoral coordination, and active community involvement, as emphasized by Merilee S. Grindle's theoretical framework.

The findings highlight that Surabaya's population control strategy is not merely a demographic intervention but also a social development approach centered on family welfare. It demonstrates that adaptive, responsive, and community based policy execution contributes significantly to strengthening social equity and improving urban quality of life. However, persistent challenges remain,

particularly in public awareness regarding the use of Long Acting Contraceptive Methods (MKJP) and in addressing socio-cultural resistance among certain groups. These factors underline the importance of continuous education, capacity building, and participatory communication in sustaining the program's success.

From a theoretical standpoint, this study contributes to the understanding of policy integration in local governance, showing how welfare based population strategies can operationalize Grindle's interaction model of policy content and context. Practically, the research recommends that the Surabaya City Government continue to expend multi sectoral collaboration involving private and society actors, strengthen institutional and human resource capacity at the grassroots level, and intensify community education through culturally adaptive communication models. These steps are essential to maintain policy sustainability and ensure that population control efforts continue to contribute to social resilience and inclusive urban development. The Surabaya case illustrates that synergizing welfare and population policies can serve as a replicable model for other local governments, positioning family welfare not merely as an outcome but as a strategic foundation for achieving sustainable demographic and social development.

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