City Leadership in Para-Diplomacy: The Case of Jakarta's International Engagement in Addressing COVID-19 Pandemic

Luerdi*
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia

Abstract

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the world communities, including the interactions among governments. While some governments chose to conflict with others or overlooked the pandemic, the rest attempted to collaborate in addressing the new global threat. Cities in many countries were the most suffering regions due to the enormous virus-confirmed cases, deaths, and economic declines, intertwining with other urban issues. As the largest city in Southeast Asia and Indonesia, Jakarta could not avoid this unprecedented crisis. However, apart from the efforts to tackle the crisis at home, the city showed its international engagement in addressing the issue together with other world cities as its para-diplomacy. This article aimed to answer the driving factors that encouraged the city for such engagement. It employed the qualitative method with descriptive analysis and the city leadership theory proposed by Rapoport, Acuto and Grcheva. The article found that Jakarta's international engagement in addressing the pandemic as the city leadership action was driven by the role of city leader, decentralization and global city networking, and the regional COVID-19 policies and internet representing three elements in the theory: actor, structures, and tools. It argues that cities within the global city networking have demonstrated their stronger role during the pandemic, providing opportunities for nation branding by regional initiatives in handling the pandemic in addition to state foreign policy. This study, then, contributes to the studies the city leadership in responding to global issues that merit attention among scholars.

Key Words

Jakarta, international engagement, COVID-19, city leadership theory

*Penulis untuk korespondensi:
Wini Meliani
Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati
Bandung, Indonesia
Email: winimelianimyg@gmail.com

Abstrak

Pandemi COVID-19 telah berdampak pada semua aspek di dunia, termasuk interaksi antar pemerintah. Pada saat sebahagian pemerintah memilih untuk terlibat konflik dengan yang lain atau menganggap remeh, sebahagian yang lainnya mencoba berkolaborasi dalam menghadapi ancaman global tersebut. Kota-kota besar di banyak negara merupakan wilayah yang paling terdampak dalam hal kasus konfirmasi positif, kematian, dan kemunduran ekonomi, bersangkut paut dengan masalah-masalah urban lainnya. Sebagai kota terbesar di Asia Tenggara dan Indonesia, Jakarta tak dapat terhindar dari krisis besar tersebut. Namun, selain upaya di tingkat lokal, Jakarta telah menunjukkan keterlibatan internasionalnya bersama kota-kota dunia lainnya dalam menghadapi isu tersebut sebagai bentuk para-diplomasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab faktor-faktor yang mendorong keterlibatan internasional Jakarta tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan analisis deskriptif dan teori kepemimpinan kota yang diusulkan oleh Rapoport, Acuto and Grcheva. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa keterlibatan internasional Jakarta dalam menghadapi pandemi tersebut merupakan bentuk aksi kepemimpinan kota yang ditentukan oleh peran pemimpin kota, desentralisasi dan jaringan kota global, serta kebijakan-kebijakan COVID-19 di tingkat lokal dan internet yang merepresentasikan tiga elemen pada teori yang digunakan, yaitu actor, structures, dan tools. Tulisan berargumen bahwa kota-kota dalam jaringan kota global telah menunjukkan peran yang lebih kuat selama pandemi, memberikan peluang untuk pembentukan nation branding melalui upaya-upaya lokal selain politik luar negeri negara. Tulisan ini, dengan demikian, berkontribusi kepada kajian tentang kepemimpinan kota dalam merespon berbagai isu global yang seharusnya mendapatkan perhatian dari para cendikiawan.

Kata-kata Kunci:
Jakarta, keterlibatan internasional, COVID-19, teori kepemimpinan kota

Introduction

The unprecedented global crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic brought about a new phenomenon in that regional governments demonstrated their rising roles in responding to the pandemic. That they acted more actively during the crisis was evident that the pandemic successfully encouraged them to take part beyond national borders, especially those experienced

with international cooperation. Cities, for example, were more pragmatic and less political in their actions so that they could be at the forefront of international cooperation in fighting against the pandemic (Rudakowska and Simon 2020). This study belongs to the area of para-diplomacy and international politics of cities which is not a dominant realm in international relations. However, the area of study has been growing and it is now "part of a broadening of the universe of international affairs" (Keating 2013).

Like other world mega-cities, Jakarta was the most exposed to the COVID-19 pandemic due to its population density and status as the largest urban agglomeration in Indonesia. Though Jakarta was frequently reported to be the most contributor of the COVID-19 confirmed cases in the country, the city had a record as the region with the most massive testing and vaccination (Tuti et al. 2022; Yuda and Qomariyah 2022) in addition to contributing to providing hospital treatment and vaccination for those coming from neighbouring cities (Antara 2021; Tempo 2021). The Jakarta regional government's local initiatives in responding to the pandemic made it among the top 50 cities globally with best practices for handling the pandemic benchmarking economic resilience, government efficiency, healthcare management, quarantine efficiency, and vaccination rate (Deep Knowledge Analytics 2021).

Not only did it merit international recognition for its effective COVID-19 response strategy, but Jakarta also weighed its international engagement in time of the pandemic through "global city networking" para-diplomacy. Through this type of para-diplomacy, the Jakarta regional government capitalized on its local development in handling the pandemic to get more visibility on the international stage. The global city networks facilitated the initiation of the world's cities' collective pandemic responses by sharing scientific knowledge, best practices, and other relevant information through joint international initiatives (Kurniawati et al. 2022). Other urban issues were also discussed within the city networking forums as the pandemic caused wide impacts on urban lives and was seen as multi-dimensional. Such collective efforts were on a par with the creation of digital platforms compliant with the principle of transparency related to the pandemic in the cities (Kurniawati et al. 2022; Yuda and Qomariyah 2022).

Jakarta participated in international forums involving city leaders, experts, and non-governmental actors like the Cities Against COVID-19 (CAC) Global Summit initiated by the Seoul Metropolitan Government in June 2020 (Smart City Journal 2020). Similarly, the city initiated the

Jakarta Development Collaboration Network (JDCN) Forum in December 2020 (Jakarta Regional Government 2020b). The Jakarta regional government also collaborated with foreign communities in response to the pandemic impacts, released a gubernatorial message for international communities in the city, and improved the data platform capability in collaboration with the British embassy (Luerdi 2021). Though the latter were the initiatives generated at the local level, they could be the attempts to engage internationally as the target audiences were international communities, especially those residing in the city.

Speaking before international entities about the best practices in tackling the pandemic and providing a reliable platform was expected to raise credit to the Jakarta regional government and bring about the city's image as a crisis-proof city by providing good examples of public policies issued during the crisis. However, it has not yet widely discussed what drove the Jakarta regional government to engage on the international stage in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. This paper sheds light on the driving factors which paved the city's international engagement during the first years of the pandemic between 2020 and 2022.

Studies of Cities and the COVID-19 Pandemic
Studies on how regions, including cities, responded to COVID-19 show that sub-national or regional governments become more important actors during difficult times than states and international organizations. These studies cover a variety of cases coming across the world, such as Maranhão (Alvarenga et al. 2020), Cape Town (Maziwisa 2021), the Euroregion (Böhm 2021; Casula & Pazos-Vidal 2021), Jakarta (Luerdi 2021 2022), West Java (Suhendrik et al. 2021), Seoul (Shon 2021), and the US, Chinese and Taiwanese cities (Rudakowska and Simon 2020).

The challenges faced by the regional government during the COVID-19 pandemic were studied by Alvarenga et al. (2020). The region struggled to access the mechanical ventilators amidst the global commercial and political disputes in addition to the inefficiency or absence of the national government's efforts to tackle the pandemic (Alvarenga et al. 2020). The study shows that a regional government could respond to the global emergency less dependently when its national government took a populist stand, overlooking the pandemic as a new global threat.

The studies on multi-level governments' responses to the pandemic were conducted by a few scholars (Böhm 2021; Casula and Pazos-Vidal 2021). The pandemic complicated the relationship of regions in the border

areas as cross-border cooperation "de-bordering" – seen as a form of para-diplomacy – shifted to a "re-bordering" policy (Böhm 2021). Meanwhile, the roles of regional governments affected by existing political structures and dynamics contributed to the creation of national policy patterns in responding to the pandemic (Casula and Pazos-Vidal 2021).

A few scholars have also studied the role of regions in the context of economic recovery after being harshly devastated by the pandemic (Luerdi 2022; Maziwisa 2021). Economic cooperation beyond borders was a strategy for the region to respond to the economic decline in addition to promoting local economic development despite the constraints caused by the legislative framework (Maziwisa 2021). Differently, the regional government began to promote its sports tourism sector to encourage economic rebound and introduce a new green icon by hosting an international sporting event (Luerdi 2022).

The study of the region's response to the pandemic through a sister city cooperation was studied by Suhendrik et al. (2021). In this study, the regional para-diplomatic practice was conducted in tandem with the national government's health diplomacy (Suhendrik et al. 2021). The study attempts to provide para-diplomacy in the public diplomacy paradigm which suggests that regional governments' foreign relations are supposed to support national foreign policy and interests. "Sister city" para-diplomacy by regions, especially cities to tackle COVID-19 is the top research topic among scholars as investigated by Kurniawati et al. (2022). The study shows that another para-diplomacy in the context of global city networking follows the second (Kurniawati et al., 2022).

Despite being not the mainstream case studies, the studies on para-diplomacy within the global city networking to address the pandemic have been conducted by a few scholars (Luerdi, 2021; Rudakowska & Simon, 2020; Shon, 2021). Similar to the study by Alvarenga et al. (2020) suggesting the regional capacity to act less dependently, the cities acted on their para-diplomacy to cooperate and collaborate with others thanks to the city networks and ICT development (Luerdi 2021; Shon 2021). Such cooperation and collaboration prevailed despite political disputes between their national governments (Rudakowska and Simon 2020).

The studies on para-diplomacy reviewed above have revealed that regions found momentum to project their engagements on the global stage to respond to the global emergency through "global city networking" para-diplomacy. However, the studies do not provide clear information on the causing factors for such responses, especially in the case of Jakarta.

This research aims to narrow the gap by describing the drivers of Jakarta's international engagement from the perspective of city leadership theory. This paper is expected to contribute to providing a new insight on international relations, especially para-diplomacy study.

City Leadership Theory as Theoretical Framework
This research applied the city leadership theory proposed by Rapoport, Acuto and Grcheva in their work entitled "Leading Cities: A Global Review of City Leadership" (Rapoport et al. 2019). Not only are cities home to the majority of the world's population, national and global economic drivers, and culture and innovation hubs, but they are also the places for the greatest challenges, like from climate crisis to social unrest (Rapoport et al. 2019). That cities have increasingly begun voicing their interests in responding to the challenges beyond national boundaries makes the role of city leadership more visible (Rapoport et al. 2019).

The city leadership cannot be understood as merely leaders (actors), but consists of three elements, namely actors, structures (institutions), and tools (instruments) (Rapoport et al., 2019). The 'actors' element refers to the individuals or groups who are often considered acting as catalysts for city leadership (Rapoport et al. 2019). They can be represented by elected leaders (executive), elected representatives (legislative), appointed leaders (Chief Executive, city manager), and partnership boards, and business and community leadership groups (Rapoport et al. 2019).

The 'structures' element refers to the durable entities which establish and underpin the actors and their tools' legitimacy (Rapoport et al., 2019). They can be the recognized process for putting leaders in place, such as election and appointment, the legislation granting powers and authority, such as city charter, regional and national law, judiciary, and bureaucracy (Rapoport et al., 2019). While the former is known as domestic institutions which can be either formal or informal, cities are also exposed to international institutions, such as international organizations and norms as well as globalization (Keating, 2013; Lecours, 2002).

The 'tools' element refers to the instruments used to action leadership with which actors and structures use to determine, codify and implement governance priorities (Rapoport et al., 2019). They can be the documents of strategies and plans, policies and procedures, citizens' forums and public consultation, and websites and public information campaigns (Rapoport et al., 2019).

The city leadership theory argues that an actor cannot perform or set up

city priorities and execute them without being supported by the structure underpinning it and the tool connecting the two (Rapoport et al., 2019). In this regard, the theory considers city leadership as catalysts of action weighing the importance of the individual and structural aspects. As the theory embraces the relationship-based approach, city leadership is an interactive process which is distributed among actors and institutions (Rapoport et al., 2019). The theory also suggests that effective city leadership can be achieved if the three elements can be brought together. Despite actors' important role in leadership processes, they do so in the context of structures which influence their operating environment and tools at their disposal (Rapoport et al., 2019).

This paper sees Jakarta's international engagement to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic as an action driven by city leadership comprising the three components. It emphasizes the role of Jakarta's Governor Anies Rasyid Baswedan as an actor, decentralization and global city networking as structures, and Jakarta's regional COVID-19 policies and digital platforms as tools. These elements provided opportunities for Jakarta's regional government to take part actively on the international stage together with other world cities to tackle the crisis.

This study employed the qualitative method with a descriptive analysis. The data were retrieved from secondary sources, such as scholarly journals, reports, books, and other online sources. This research also used primary sources like official websites operated by the Jakarta regional government. The data were analyzed through Miles and Huberman's interactive method consisting of a few steps: collecting data, reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The above steps were conducted as follows. First, information about the Jakarta's para-diplomacy in responding to the COVID-19 was collected. Second, some of the information was sorted out as the researcher attempted to focus on one specific question regarding the issue. During this stage, the research investigated the involvement of the Jakarta regional government at the international level during the pandemic. Third, I saw a pattern of Jakarta's international engagement and the city leadership. Such assumptions were investigated further by continuing the data collection and reduction if necessary. As the interactive method is cyclical, these steps had to be conducted during the entire process of the research or until the research was done. Fourth, the conclusion or finding was becoming stronger as the patterns along with configurations, meanings, and propositions turned more visible and convincing.

Para-Diplomacy and Jakarta's International Engagement during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Jakarta's international engagement in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic can be seen from various participations in international events which talked over the pandemic issues followed by the provision of factual data on the pandemic situation in the city. Through international conferences, summits, and other forums, the city was able to introduce the regional measures to respond to the pandemic and contribute to providing thoughts regarding resilience cities post-pandemic, providing reliable information on the pandemic situation in the city was expected to gain trust from international communities. Such international engagement representing "global city networking" para-diplomacy was an action of city leadership which was encouraged by several drivers like actors, structures, and tools. The three elements determined the city's moves not only in the local but also towards the international arena which contributed to paving Jakarta's effort to enhance its global interactions.

Actors

The actors are often considered as leaders such as mayors or governors when it comes to a narrower city leadership. This behavioural aspect includes a vast range of leadership from internationalist personalities to populist figures (Rapoport et al., 2019). Such element emphasizes any of the idiosyncratic sides of a leader, such as background, ideas and political thoughts, leadership style, and others. As mentioned in the previous section, this paper attempts to describe the role of Governor Anies in positioning Jakarta on the international stage during the crisis of COVID-19.

Governor Anies represented an internationalist personality, seeing Jakarta as part of a global community compliant with the idea of a "global city" which he often sounded during his tenure. Regarding this, Anies in the interview on the COVID-19 handling in Jakarta by Aljazeera stated:

> We are consistent in implementing the policy, and we have been transparent. We are doing everything we can to make sure that Jakarta is a great home for everyone, including the international community. Let's look at where we are. Jakarta is ready to be part of the global community (Aljazeera, 2020).

Seeing Jakarta as a global city means that the Jakarta regional government was supposed to communicate actively with international

communities regarding the pandemic situation and how the city responded to the pandemic. Participating at the CAC Global Summit, for example, Jakarta could contribute to tackling the crisis by sharing the best practices as well as providing some ideas on how the world's cities could be resilient. Speaking as one of the speakers at the forum, Governor Anies not only elaborated on the updates of the pandemic and regional measures but also emphasized the opportunities to transform regions like cities as well as leadership beyond the economic and health crisis (Luerdi, 2021).

Studies suggest intrapersonal content in leadership development such as experience and learning as noted by Day et al., (2014). Regarding the transparency in time of the pandemic which Jakarta attempted to uphold, this paper argues that such belief could represent an evidence-based technocrat which was encouraged by his background as an academic and researcher as well as his international experience. This personality embraced the primacy of data-driven policies suggesting openness and accessibility of timely pandemic updates to either local or international audiences. Providing detailed COVID-19 updates through the symmetric online and one-data platform of "corona.jakarta.go.id" following the formation of a 24-hour call centre and regional response team in the city was among the earliest policies taken by the Jakarta regional government at the beginning of the pandemic (Yuda and Qomariyah, 2022).

Such moves gained support from experts and Anies even repeatedly stated the importance of transparency in times of crisis like the unprecedented COVID-19 in international forums. For example, at the international plenary discussion of the JDCN Forum, Anies reiterated that transparency in addition to a collaborative approach is the key value which the city adopted since the beginning (Jakarta Regional Government, 2020b). He believed that transparency along with science or data-driven actions and collaboration were prerequisites to facing the global challenges and through which global cities would succeed in handling the crisis and retain people's trust, including international audiences (Jakarta Regional Government, 2020b).

As leaders act as the catalysts of actions according to the city leadership theory proposed (Rapoport et al., 2019), this paper suggests that Anies had a role in bringing the city into the circle of international communities during the pandemic of COVID-19. His involvements were not merely as an attendee in international forums, but as a distinguished speaker who delivered his thoughts on the city's resilience against the pandemic and shared the regional measures taken by Jakarta to control the

impacts of the pandemic so that other cities could learn and gain some insights from the Jakarta's COVID-19 experience.

Such international engagement was followed by the provision of reliable data and measures from which international communities in the city could update themselves on the pandemic situation. Within the platform of collaboration designed by the Jakarta regional government, foreign communities could even take part in addressing the pandemic impact. Such actions are in line with the argument that regional leaders with well-established experiences tend to be more active and innovative in participating in international cooperation (Surwandono and Maksum, 2020). However, as argued by Rapoport et al., (2019) the actor is not the only element to generate the city leadership since a leader acts in the context of existing structures and chosen tools, it is necessary to see the other two elements as described below.

Structures

Structures refer to the domestic and international institutions which can allow and encourage regions to perform their para-diplomacy activities. They provide opportunities as well as act as operating environments for actors. This section attempts to describe both domestic and international institutions which paved Jakarta to engage actively on the international stage in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic together with other world cities.

Decentralization is often believed to be the domestic structural driver of regional governments' participation in international affairs, especially in the case of Indonesia. Strong demand for regional autonomy in the post-reformation era in Indonesia has been followed by wider chances for the regions to conduct their international affairs. The changing situation has allowed the regional governments to create innovative policies to develop their regions, one of which is through cooperation with international entities compliant with the local government acts and technical guidance prescribed by the ministries. In other words, the Indonesian para-diplomacy is the product of state transformation comprising the decentralization of power and the fragmentation of formerly powerful central agency (Utomo, 2022).

Jakarta is one of the regions in Indonesia which has taken advantage of this opportunity to expand its relations with foreign entities in addressing various issues. The city currently has 21 twinning or sister city cooperations with foreign cities (Hasan, 2022) as well as international cooperation with

other entities like corporations, think-tanks, and non-governmental organizations (Jakarta Regional Government, 2021). Decentralization with which the city gains its autonomy also provides the chance for itself to participate actively in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic beyond traditional "sister city" para-diplomacy.

Decentralization is also strongly affected by globalization which has brought massive changes in governance. As the world has been being challenged by various issues, hardly regional governments prevent themselves from the issues, including health emergencies. The COVID-19 pandemic, for instance, had so larger impact on the cities than other regions that they attempted to respond – apart from the national governments' foreign policy – to mitigate the crisis. In such a situation, cities localized the global issue while the national governments internationalized the domestic situation through foreign policy. The distinctive line between domestic and foreign affairs is obscure since the more intense involvement of regional governments (Keating, 2013). Thus, national governments can't respond to the crisis themselves without allowing the portion of regional governments' role.

Global city networking which has also been pushed by globalization is another international structure benefitting cities. Cities have built their international networks – such as the Healthy Cities Network, C40 Cities, World Mayors Summit, Urban 20, UCLG ASPAC, etc. – as their concerns grow and through which they can coordinate and collaborate to address challenging global issues. During the COVID-19 emergency, city networking contributed to the pandemic response efforts as cities were able to engage in multilateral processes quickly (Acuto et al., 2017). Furthermore, networking is now the conceptual basis of modern diplomatic practice (Hocking & Melissen, 2015).

Jakarta attempted to take advantage of such networking to project its para-diplomacy by participating in global events. At the CAC Global Summit, for example, speaking at the forum together with other cities like London, Maryland, and Moscow, Governor Anies had an opportunity to share the last six-month experience of the COVID-19 situation and countermeasures in Jakarta (Luerdi, 2021). Jakarta together with other world cities participating at the summit through the World Mayors Summit session declared the "Seoul Declaration" in addition to the formation of the Megacity Alliance Against Pandemic (MAAP), a new city network to retain the solidarity between cities around the world in response to current and future infectious diseases (Smart City Journal, 2020).

As Jakarta belongs to several global city networks, it can become a venue for promoting its local initiatives to address the pandemic. Not only did the institutions pave the way for Jakarta to promote local initiatives against the pandemic before its global city counterparts, but they also helped the city to gain international visibility as the city networking facilitates cities to forward their local initiatives to the international stage strengthened by local strong leadership (Ruiz-Campillo, 2022).

The above leadership structures or institutions play an important role in ensuring the transparency, lines of accountability, and stability of city leadership of Jakarta thanks to their durability as argued by Rapoport et al. (2019). Underpinned by the structures, the city was able to perform its leadership and collaborate with other international actors to address the pandemic. In other words, decentralization and globalization encouraged Jakarta to forward its role beyond the national border in times of global crisis by taking advantage of existing global city networking.

Tools

Tools become important to bridge the element of actors and structures in the city leadership theory. This paper suggests Jakarta's policies in addressing COVID-19 embraced the principle of transparency, collaboration, and data-driven actions – a set of guidance for the Jakarta regional government to issue the policies needed (Jakarta Regional Government, 2020b; Yuda & Qomariyah, 2022) – as well as the ICT like internet that became instruments which helped Jakarta to enhance its international engagement.

The Jakarta regional government began to respond to the pandemic – even before it was officially named the "COVID-19" disease by the WHO – by sending early awareness to all health units under its administration in January 2020 (Jakarta Regional Government, 2020a). The government also documented all citizens who just come back from overseas as those who were under surveillance. This measure was followed by the formation of the regional COVID-19 task force – the first task force to respond to the pandemic in the country (Baswedan, 2020) – and the creation of "corona.ja-karta.go.id" on March 6th, 2020 just three days after the official announcement of the first confirmed cases by the Indonesian national government on March 3rd, 2020 (Luerdi, 2021).

Not only was it the first COVID-19-intended platform created in the country, but it was also one of the most complete platforms which could be accessed by either local or international communities in addition to being the consideration for policymakers in the city. The bilingual platform provided real-time data and updates regarding the pandemic, such as

confirmed cases, active cases, number of tests, policies and other related things complemented by graphs, maps and visualizations (Jakarta Regional Government, 2020a). This practice has also been implemented by other cities since the beginning of the pandemic, such as Seoul (Seoul Metropolitan Government, n.d.), Tokyo (Tokyo Metropolitan Government, 2020), Chicago (City of Chicago Government, n.d.), London (Greater London Authority, n.d.), and the Europe Union cities (Rudakowska & Simon, 2020).

What the Jakarta government did at the beginning of the pandemic was criticized by the officials from the central government as they could cause panic in the country. Just like many countries at the beginning of the pandemic, Indonesia was still blind about the new kind of disease while the WHO had not yet provided enough information about it (Luerdi & Setiawan, 2022). Despite the criticisms against the initial moves, Jakarta was considered the most responsive regional government compared to its counterpart regions according to a research survey by Darmastuti et al., (2020). So has the case of Jakarta been a role model for its city counterparts in the country in adopting innovative policies for the prevention of pandemic spreading (Tuti et al., 2022).

Believing in science, real-time data for policies, and public accessibility is the shared attitude among global cities that encouraged Jakarta to talk about the pandemic at the international level. These principles, in turn, eased Jakarta to advance its collaboration to address the pandemic thanks to the existence of transparency and trust among cities. Learning from previous pandemics in human history, only those upholding transparency could well tackle the crises (Joshi-Ghani, 2020). In addition, Jakarta and other world cities could both exchange their expertise and achieve some insights from their counterparts' experiences when facing the pandemic.

In addition to the COVID-19 policies, the internet helped the Jakarta regional government to advance its international engagement. During the pandemic, the use of digital platforms was very massive as the traditional method of interaction was restricted around the world. Apart from assisting cities to provide reliable pandemic information to their audiences, the internet became an important tool since communication among the world's cities took place in the form of online conferencing. In the time of the pandemic, the internet facilitated city governments to initiate global inter-city meetings (Shon, 2021). Realizing the opportunity, Jakarta attempted to exploit the function of digital platforms to participate in international events and share its countermeasure policies with other world

cities. At the CAC Global Summit and JDCN Forum, Governor Anies reiterated that the pandemic fostered the transformation of governance and leadership in Jakarta on a par with digitalization (Jakarta Regional Government, 2020b).

Digital platforms enabled Jakarta to maintain its international involvement during the pandemic and with which the regional government expected that international communities could see what was progressing in the city. Such effort is in line with the idea that digital media are effective in communicating positive attitudes and programs worldwide (Adesina, 2017). Jakarta's engagement indicates that the city could be an active actor and become ambitious in its para-diplomacy thanks to digital technology as it empowers a new layer of actors in decentralized networks (Bjola, 2016).

Leaders can deploy a variety of different tools to set priorities and catalyze action to achieve objectives, among which are innovative IT-based tools type which aid the city leadership to continue to advance (Rapoport et al., 2019). The latter is the opportunity fostered by the pandemic which the Jakarta regional government attempted to catch. The regional government sought to create a good image for the city as a resilient city among its global counterparts and played a role in tackling the crisis as the part of global community by sharing its regional COVID-19 policies and taking advantage of the ICT development. Such international participation could be conducted since both the regional COVID-19 policies and the medium of internet-connected the individual behaviour of a leader and institutions of decentralization and city networking as suggested by the city leadership theory that tools connect actors and structures (Rapoport et al., 2019).

Conclusion

This paper has explained the three components of city leadership that determined Jakarta's engagement on the international stage during the COVID-19 pandemic. The health emergency encouraged Jakarta – just like other global cities in global city networking – to attain visibility by actively getting involved in global conversations and retaining trust from international audiences. Despite contrasting stand with the national government for its policy principles at the beginning of the pandemic, the city's efforts could bring a positive impact of nation branding to the national government due to its noticeable status as the largest city in Southeast Asia as well as the main entrance in the country.

The case of Jakarta represents the Indonesian capacity to play a global role through regional initiatives in addition to state foreign policy. Thus, the national government must push the cities in the country to participate in the

arena of global city networks. It also suggests that the role of cities has become stronger in addressing global issues thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis has consolidated the world's cities and retained solidarity to respond to the health emergency together with other urban issues, such as climate crisis, urban transport, and others within the global city networking.

The city leadership action is not merely about actors, but also structures and tools as the theory suggests. However, many cities have enjoyed similar structures given by their environments, but the factor of leaders and policy innovations could differentiate their behaviours in whether to take opportunities to go global for the pursuance of specific local interests. Such an assumption needs investigating in future research. This paper is expected to benefit those who have an interest in the non-mainstream areas of international relations like para-diplomacy, especially in the case of Indonesia and "global city networking" para-diplomacy.

References

Acuto, M., Morissette, M., & Tsouros, A. 2017. "City Diplomacy: Towards More Strategic Networking? Learning with WHO Healthy Cities." *Global Policy 8*(1): 14–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12382

Adesina, O. S. 2017. "Foreign Policy in an Eera of Digital Diplomacy." *Cogent Social Sciences*, *3*(1): 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2017.1297175

Aljazeera. 2020, June 9. *Q&A: Jakarta's Governor on Bringing the Coronavirus under Control*. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/6/9/qa-jakartas-governor-on-bringing-the-coronavirus-under-control

Alvarenga, A. A., Rocha, E. M. S., Filippon, J., & Andrade, M. A. C. 2020. "Challenges for the Brazilian State from the COVID-19 Pandemic: the Case of Paradiplomacy in the State of Maranhão Desafios." *Cadernos de Saúde Pública 36*(12): 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-311x00155720

Antara. 2021, January 19. *Legislator: Pasien COVID-19 dari Luar Jakarta Tak Bisa Dihindari*. https://www.antaranews.com/berita/1955864/legislator-pasien-covid-19-dari-luar-jakarta-tak-bisa-dihindari

Baswedan, A. R. 2020. "Resolving Crisis, Building Resilience and Accelerating Transformation: Jakarta's Response to COVID-19." *International Webinar: Rebuilding Cities Post COVID-19,* October 24th, 2020. https://jakartamrt.co.id

Bjola, C. 2016. "Digital Diplomacy – The State of the Art." *Global Affairs 2*(3): 297–299. https://doi.org/10.1080/23340460.2016.1239372

Böhm, H. 2021. "The Influence of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Czech-Polish Cross-Border Cooperation: From Debordering to Re-bordering?" *Moravian Geographical Reports 29*(2): 137–148. https://doi.org/10.2478/mgr-2021-0007

Casula, M., & Pazos-Vidal, S. 2021. "Assessing the Multi-level Government Response to the COVID-19 Crisis: Italy and Spain Compared." *International Journal of Public Administration 44*(11–12): 994–1005. https://doi.org/10.1080/01900692.2021.1915330

City of Chicago Government. n.d.. *City of Chicago Home Page*. Retrieved January 25, 2023, from https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid19-vaccine/home.html

Darmastuti, A., Warganegara, A., & Maulida, K. 2020. "Public Response to the Government's COVID-19 Mitigation Policy: 2020 National Online Qualitative Survey." *Journal of Governance 5*(2): 145–163. https://doi.org/10.31506/jog.v5i2.9161

Day, D. V., Fleenor, J. W., Atwater, L. E., Sturm, R. E., & McKee, R. A. 2014. "Advances in Leader and Leadership Development: A Review of 25 Years of Research and Theory." *Leadership Quarterly 25*(1): 63–82. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.11.004

Deep Knowledge Analytics. 2021. *COVID-19 City Safety Ranking Q2/2021*. https://www.dka.global/covid-city-ranking-q2

Greater London Authority. n.d.. *London Datastore Home Page*. Retrieved January 25, 2023, from https://data.london.gov.uk/topic/covid-19

Hasan, Q. 2022, May 23. "Menuju Jakarta Kota Global." *Okezone*. https://nasional.okezone.com/read/2022/05/23/337/2599057/menuju-jakarta-kota-global?page=2

Hocking, B., & Melissen, J. 2015. "Diplomacy in the Digital Age." *Clingendael Report* (Issue July 2015). http://www.clingendael.nl/

Jakarta Regional Government. 2020a. *Jakarta's COVID-19 Response Team Home Page*. https://corona.jakarta.go.id/en

Jakarta Regional Government. 2020b. *JDCN Hari ke 2 Sesi Keenam: Forum Diskusi Internasional*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZZMgcK4G50

Jakarta Regional Government. 2021. *Jakarta Rendah Emisi: Collaboration Partners*. https://rendahemisi.jakarta.go.id/en/collaborations

Joshi-Ghani, A. 2020. "How COVID-19 Will Impact Our Cities in the Long Term." *World Economy Forum*. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/11/what-will-our-cities-look-like-after-covid-19/

Keating, M. 2013. "Regions and International Affairs: Motives, Opportunities and Strategies." In F. Aldecoa & M. Keating (Eds.), *Paradiplomacy in Action: The Foreign Relations of Subnational Governments* (pp. 1–16). London: Routledge.

Kurniawati, D. E., Purnomo, E. P., Roziqin, A., & Khairina, R. Z. 2022. "The Global Role of Cities Government on Tackling Covid-19." *Journal of Government and Civil Society 6*(2): 204–226. https://doi.org/DOI: 10.31000/jgcs.v6i2.6075

Lecours, A. 2002. "Paradiplomacy: Reflections on the Foreign Policy and IR of Regions." *International Negotiation 7*(1): 91–114. https://brill.com/view/journals/iner/7/1/article-p91_8.xml

Luerdi, L. (2021). "Paradiplomacy of Indonesian Sub-State Actor: Digital Diplomacy of Jakarta Government in Response to COVID-19." *Berumpun: International Journal of Social, Politics, and Humanities 4*(2): 104–126. https://doi.org/10.33019/berumpun.v4i2.59

Luerdi, L. (2022). "Para-Diplomacy in Time of Covid- 19 : Jakarta Regional Government's Objectives in Hosting International Youth Championship." *Resolusi: Jurnal Sosial Politik 5*(1): 38–51. https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.32699/resolusi.v5i1.2782

Luerdi, L., & Setiawan, A. 2022. "Upholding Multilateralism: Indonesia's Foreign Policy in Responding to Covid-19 Pandemic." *Jurnal Ilmiah Hubungan Internasional 18*(1): 29–54. https://doi.org/10.26593/jihi.v18i1.5255.29-54

Maziwisa, M. R. 2021. "External Economic Arrangements and South African Cities as Agents of Local Development: Illustrations from the City of Cape Town." *Journal of Global Business and Technology 17*(1): 55–69. https://gbata.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/JGBAT_Vol17-1-FullText.pdf

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. 1994. *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Sage Publication, Inc.

Rapoport, E., Acuto, M., & Grcheva, L. 2019. *Leading Cities: A Global Review of City Leadership*. University College London Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv8jp0qg

Rudakowska, A., & Simon, C. 2020. "International City Cooperation in the Fight Against Covid-19: Behind the Scenes Security Providers." *Global Policy* 1–14. https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/sites/default/files/pdf/Rudakowska and Simon - International City Cooperation in the Fight Against Covid-19%2C Behind the Scenes Security Providers.pdf.

Ruiz-Campillo, X. 2022. "The Drive to Sustainability: A Way in Which Local Initiatives Diffuse Internationally." *Politics & Policy 50*(5): 967–991. https://doi.org/10.1111/polp.12496

Seoul Metropolitan Government. n.d. *Seoul Solution Home Page*.
    Retrieved January 25, 2023, from
    https://www.seoulsolution.kr/en/node/8858

Shon, C. 2021. "The Role of Cities as the First Responder to Pandemics:
    Focusing on the Case of the Seoul Metropolitan Government's
    Response to the COVID-19." *Journal for Peace and Nuclear
    Disarmament 4*(S1): 60–72.
    https://doi.org/10.1080/25751654.2021.1882773

Smart City Journal. 2020. *Seoul Hosts CAC (Cities Against COVID-19)
    Global Summit 2020*.
    https://www.thesmartcityjournal.com/en/news/seoul-hosts-cac-
    cities-against-covid-19-global-summit-2020

Suhendrik, S., Affandi, N., & Sari, D. S. 2021. "Paradiplomasi Provinsi
    Jawa Barat terhadap Provinsi Sichuan dalam Menanggulangi
    Pandemi Covid-19 di Jawa Barat." *TRANSBORDERS: International
    Relations Journal 5*(1): 50–62.
    https://journal.unpas.ac.id/index.php/transborders/article/view/4733

Surwandono, S., & Maksum, A. 2020. "The Architecture of
    Paradiplomacy Regime in Indonesia: A Content Analysis. *Global:
    Jurnal Politik Internasional*, *22*(1), 77–99.
    https://doi.org/10.7454/global.v22i1.443

Tempo. 2021, June 23. *Warga KTP Luar DKI Kini Bisa Dapat Vaksin
    Covid-19 di Jakarta*. https://metro.tempo.co/read/1475717/warga-
    ktp-luar-dki-kini-bisa-dapat-vaksin-covid-19-di-
    jakarta/full&view=ok

Tokyo Metropolitan Governmnet. 2020. *COVID-19 Information Home
    Page*. https://stopcovid19.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/en

Tuti, R. W., Nurmandi, A., & Zahra, A. A. 2022. "Handling COVID-19
    in the Capital City of Jakarta with Innovation Policy: the Scale of
    Social Restrictions Policy." *Heliyon 8*(5): 1–10.
    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e09467

Utomo, A. B. 2022. "Paradiplomacy As the Product of State
    Transformation in the Era of Globalisation: the Case of Indonesia."
    Janus.Net: E-Journal of International Relations 13(1): 63–78.
    https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.13.1.5

Yuda, T. K., & Qomariyah, N. 2022. "Ideas and Policy Response to the
    COVID-19 Crisis: Evidence from Jakarta, Indonesia." *Social Policy
    and Society* 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746422000616