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THE IMPLICATION OF POWER RELATIONS IN ADAPTING ELECTRIC VEHICLES POLICY IN DENPASAR

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ABSTRACT

The use of electric vehicles is attempted to be a new habit in Denpasar City. But, there is still doubt in many parties to switch from conventional vehicles to electric vehicles. The doubt appears from the government's inconsistency in applying the policy and giving incentives. The appeal that is intended to the government and people has not been realized yet. The incentives of choosing electric vehicle are still constrained of quota and complicated bureaucracy. The reduce of carbon emission is used as a discourse to influence people's mindset to rather choose electric vehicle. This research uses qualitative approach through the data from observation, interview, and literature studies to study about the impact of power relation which is played in shaping people's orientation to use electric vehicles. The power play of the government is seen as only be oriented to public and put aside the realization from government themselves. This research finds that the power relation impacts the marginal with losses without further accountability from the stakeholders. It presses the subordinate group who does not have enough power to against the policy.

Keywords: implication, power relation, electric vehicle, Denpasar City

INTRODUCTION

Denpasar city is the only city in Bali Province which has its own policy of electric vehicles. The government of Denpasar legitimates the use of electric vehicle through Mayoral Regulation Number 40 of 2023 about the use of battery-based electric motor vehicles which is focused in Denpasar City. The policy is enforced since 21 September 2023 as listed on policy document. The policy contains an appeal to government and public to start switching from conventional vehicle to electric vehicle. The government shows their commitment supported previous policies that have been made by central government and Bali Provincial government.

The urgency of using electric vehicle is aimed to reduce the carbon emission which is produced by conventional vehicle with oil-based fuel. Almost all of the vehicles in

Denpasar uses fossil as the fuel which release carbon emission in a huge amount. The carbon emission released by Denpasar City reaches 1.58 tons every year so that Denpasar became the largest carbon emitter in Bali Province (Pemerintah Kota Denpasar, 2018). Denpasar as the central place for various activity also affect the higher number of vehicles on the road and increase air pollution. The switching from conventional to electric vehicle is hoped to be the solution to get better air quality.

The policy of using electric vehicle should get a full support because of its positive impact. However, many parties reject the use of electric vehicle and prefer conventional vehicle. The main reason is because of the needs to adapt in switching vehicles which change public's lifestyle. The lack of charging station and switching battery location leads to public's doubt when using electric vehicle for long distance travel. The government as the main parties targeted by the policy still cannot become the example as the lack of realization in government realm. The appeal of using electric vehicle as the operational vehicle has been one example of inefficiency of the policy implementation. It appears various questions about the readiness of the parties which seems forced.

The lack of realization in Denpasar City is same as the adaptation in national realm. Since 2019, the Indonesian President started to focus on the effort of using electric vehicle through Presidential Regulation Number 55 of 2019 about the acceleration of the use of battery-based electric motor vehicle as the road transportation. The policy is followed by other policies, instruction, and appeal in order to build new habit of using electric vehicle. The mission is motivated by the position of Indonesia as the ninth largest carbon emitting country in the world with the total carbon emission reaches 556.572 $MtCO_2$ (IEA, 2021). The emission is calculated from various sectors, such as energy, transportation, and industry. Electric vehicle is planned to reduce carbon emission in transportation sector while encouraging the fossil energy switching to renewable energy (Sudjoko, 2021). This research studies the impact of power in realization of using electric vehicle in Denpasar City which causes the pressure to subordinate parties. This research focuses on the public as the unit of analysis as the affected parties from the policy which should be begun with the government's realization.

This research uses power relations theory from Michel Foucault to discuss the implication of reducing carbon emission discourse in adapting electric vehicle policy. The power nowadays cannot be separated from knowledge. The knowledge itself produces power which can be seen in discourses. The nature of discourse is easy to influence human thinking. People do not need to know the actor who made the discourse but the

impact can even be stronger than physical strength. The dominance of discourse can give sustainable impact in shaping people's behavior. When the discourse is believed as a truth by the public, it dominates people's perspective in seeing the right and wrong thing (Iqbal, 2024:20).

Foucault (1979) stated that power has a huge impact in social life because it can produce reality and make it become a truth (Feder, 2010:194). The unseen power without actor refers to knowledge domination which is constructed in discourse. The discourse that is supported by knowledge can give power effect. The people will start to behave as the discourse believed. However, the power of discourse can also marginalize some people who do not in favor with it or do not behave like what is believed in it.

The belief in carbon emission reduction in electric vehicle implies an unbalanced realization. The power effect presses some people to follow the policy because of the orientation to increase the use of electric vehicle. However, the people who help the policy realization also be the victim because of the unbalanced realization. This fact leads to a question about the implication of power relation in realization of using electric vehicle policy.

METHODS

This research uses qualitative approach which discusses the problems in narrative by words. The qualitative research tries to expand the understanding about things that endure as truth in public. The issue is dismantled by seeing the phenomena from various viewpoint to find problems which press certain parties, especially subordinate parties.

This research gets the data from observation, interview, and literature studies. The observation is done around Denpasar City to see the realization in using electric vehicle. The research is also observed government office, general charging station (SPKLU), general switching battery station (SPBKLU), and electric vehicle dealers in Denpasar to get data about the people's habit in using electric or conventional vehicle. While doing the observation, it is also included interview with certain people which are selected based on certain criteria, such as 1) live or work in Denpasar City; 2) have or use electric vehicle; and 3) play a role in expanding the use of electric vehicle. The data is also combined with various literatures, especially the policies related to following the realization of using electric vehicle in Denpasar City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The use of electric vehicle in Indonesia has been legalized since 2019 through the Presidential Regulation Number 55 of 2019. The policy gets positive and negative response from various parties. The policy which engage the government to be included in the realization can push policy adaptation in the smaller realm, such as provinces and cities in Indonesia.

The Policy Realization

Bali Province as a tourism destination has a mission to use clean and renewable energy. The mission is legitimized through various policies, one of them is Governor Regulation number 48 of 2019 about The Use of Battery Based Electric Motor Vehicle as well as to support the previous policy from the president. Bali Province is believed to be the suitable location for using electric vehicle because of the people's average income and supported by the sustainable tourism effect (Dishub Bali, 2019).

In Denpasar City, the regulation of using electric vehicle has just been legitimized in 2023 through the Mayoral Regulation Number 40 of 2023 about The Use of Battery Based Electric Motor Vehicle. However, the effort in using electric vehicle had been done since 2019 because of the Governor regulation which includes all places in Bali. Denpasar as the capital city of Bali Province as well as the center of governmental activity has an important role in operating the policy of using electric vehicle.

The realization of using electric vehicle started to be done through electric vehicle procurement. The electric vehicle means battery based vehicle, such as electric cars, electric motorbikes, and electric bikes. Most of electric vehicles in Indonesia are imported vehicles because Indonesia has not been able to produce the vehicles itself. Moreover, electric vehicles have been used previously in some countries which are able to do the production, such as China, South Korea, and countries in Europe.

Electric vehicle utilize battery as the main energy source so that it needs supported facilities in charging the battery when it is needed. Those facilities are general electric vehicle charging station (known as SPKLU) and general electric vehicle battery switching station (known as SPBKLU). The construction of the facilities is done by collaboration of various parties, such as National Electrical Company (known as PLN) and private sector to expand the range of SPKLU and SPBKLU provision. The PLN cooperates with government and private sector in order to provide the infrastructure in strategic location. SPKLU from PLN in Denpasar City can be found in 19 locations with the total of 40 units. The amount is calculated until end of 2024 and has been the largest number of SPKLU in

Bali. Each location has one to four units with various electrical power. There are four types of SPKLU: 1) standard charging with 7 kW power; 2) medium charging with 7.4 kW to 22 kW; 3) fast charging with 22 kW to 50 kW; and 4) ultra-fast charging with more than 50 kW power (interview with Andi as the PLN employee, 10 December 2024). Here is the table of distribution of charging stations.

Table 1. The Distribution of SPKLU PLN in Denpasar City until 2024

No	Location	Standart Charging	Medium Charging	Fast Charging	Ultra-Fast Charging
1	SPKLU Bank BRI Renon		1 x 22 Kw	1 x 30 kW	
2	SPKLU Hayam Wuruk		2 x 7.4 kW	1 x 30 kW	1 x 200 kW
3	SPKLU PLN ULP Denpasar		1 x 22 kW	2 x 25 kW 1 x 30 kW	
4	SPKLU Polda Bali		4 x 7.4 kW		
5	SPKLU Pomdam IX Udayana		3 x 7.4 kW		
6	SPKLU Rumah BUMN Denpasar				1 x 60 kW
7	SPKLU Semawang-Sanur				1 x 60 kW
8	SPKLU Tohpati			1 x 30 kW	1 x 200 kW
9	SPKLU Fitness Plus Sanur		2 x 22 kW		
10	SPKLU Dunkin Donuts Teuku Umar		2 x 22 kW		
11	SPKLU PT Bima Sakti		1 x 22 kW		
12	SPKLU Dunkin Donuts Sanur		2 x 22 kW		
13	SPKLU McD Cokroaminoto		2 x 22 kW		
14	SPKLU McD Nangka		2 x 22 kW		
15	SPKLU McD Kebo Iwa				1 x 60 kW
16	SPKLU Trans Studio Mall		3 x 22 kW		
17	SPKLU Kelurahan Serangan		1 x 22 kW		
18	SPKLU PM Parkir Timur Lapangan Renon		1 x 22 kW		
19	SPKLU GM UID Bali			1 x 30 kW	

Source: processed by the author from PT PLN UID Bali, 2024

The spread of SPKLU in the table above does not include other SPKLU which are provided by private sectors. Some charging station facilities are also provided by electric vehicle dealers as the incentive of buying and using the electric vehicle from their brand. The consumers can charge their vehicles at any time as long as the charging station in dealer opens. Some of the charging facilities from dealer can be found in Wuling car dealer, Hyundai car dealer, and VinFast dealer on Gatot Subroto Street, and Polytron motorbike dealer on Cokroaminoto Street.

In fact, the amount of SPKLU which are available in Denpasar City is still limited compared to the increase of electric vehicles amount every year. It has to be balanced with the addition of SPKLU and SPBKLU units to decrease the people's concern in using

electric vehicle for long distance travel. The limit of electric vehicle mileage has been the factor of people's consideration in driving, especially on the rural areas. The people have to make sure about the distance of driving, the battery amount, and the location of charging station when driving (interview with Yudha as electric car user, 27 October 2024).

The realization of using electric vehicle is targeted to every parties, start from government, vehicles industry, and public. In the government sector, there is a specific regulation for the government in Bali Province to reduce carbon emission in transportation by using environmentally friendly vehicle (electric vehicle or bicycle), public transportation, or walking to the office. It is announced in the Circular Letter of the Governor of Bali Number 8 of 2023 about The Reduce of Carbon Emission through Using Environmentally Friendly Transportation Every Friday for Employees in Bali Province (Samudero, 2023). According to the plan to support government as the pioneer of electric vehicle users, it is also supported with funds budgeted for the procurement of electric vehicle in government realm. The electric vehicles have been provided as the operational vehicle to switch the use of conventional vehicle previously. It is announced in the President Instruction Number 7 of 2022 about The Use of Battery Electric Vehicle as Operational Service Vehicle, also Individual Vehicles for Central Government and Regional Government Agencies. The procurement cost is Rp28.000.000 for electric motorbike and Rp430.000.000 for electric cars. For individual which holds Echelon I position is given Rp966.000.000 and Rp746.000.000 for Echelon II position holder (Dewantara, 2023).

The availability of electric vehicle as operational vehicle is not adapted effectively. It is because of the electric vehicle character which dependents on charging. Although the electric vehicle has an enough long distance to travel, there is still skepticism from people in using it. The consideration of the lack of infrastructure and long charging duration keep the doubt in people's mindset. The electric operational vehicle is just used for the short distance or to attend the renewable energy event (interview with Andi as the PLN employee, 10 December 2024).

Besides the procurement of vehicle and infrastructure, the realization of electric vehicle policy is also adapted by giving incentives to the consumers of electric vehicle. The incentives have been a designed program by central government in order to increase people's interest and accelerate the use of electric vehicle. For the electric car users, the incentive is given through tax deduction so that they just have to pay around Rp100.000 every year. The incentive is very profitable if compared to conventional vehicle's tax which starts from Rp1.000.000 every year.

Electric motorbike users also get Rp7.000.000 as the incentives after buying new electric motorbikes or electric motor conversion. They do not have to pay the vehicle tax because it has been the incentives too. The incentives do not out of debates because of the complicated bureaucracy in getting the incentive, especially Rp7.000.000 as the cashback after buying vehicle. The disbursement of funds for subsidy recipients is hampered by complicated administration and the waiting period which can reach 15 months after submission. The problem also comes from the limitation of incentive quota which leads to some protest for consumers who do not get the cashback. For example, in 2023 the budget is limited for 200.000 units of new electric motorbikes and 50.000 units of electric motor conversion (Simanjuntak & Hasjanah, 2023). The increase of electric vehicle enthusiast after the incentives program is not balanced with the quota. It implies people with the unpreparedness of government to adapt the policy.

The Role of Reducing Carbon Emission Discourse

The carbon emission reduction has been an attached discourse to the use of electric vehicle. It is because the characteristic of electric vehicle which is seen as a tool to reduce air pollution with electrical energy utilization and do not produce emission as much as fuel oil combustion. Transportation sector has been the second largest carbon emitter after energy sector. Denpasar city as the central location for various activities causes high number of electric vehicles on the road which is dominated by conventional vehicle. The high emission produced also increase the air pollution and noise which interfere the daily activities.

The negative impact of the increase of carbon emission leads people to make an effort to reduce carbon emission in transportation sector. The discourse of reducing carbon emission plays a very important role to shape people's mindset and direct their behavior to use electric vehicle. The mindset construction about negative impact dominates people's way of thinking so that they feel to be responsible in reducing the emission. The innovation of environmentally friendly vehicle is seen as the ideal decision to switch the mobilization habit which produced much carbon emission. This view gives positive impact to the use of electric vehicle, especially to be focus on the main reason, that is, to reduce transportation emission.

On the other hand, reducing carbon emission discourse is still questioned when being associated with electric vehicle in Denpasar. Electric vehicle utilizes electrical energy source which comes from battery. The electric vehicle is very dependent on the

charging system as well as other electrical device which can be out of power. The electrical energy sources in Denpasar City are dominated by electric steam power plant (known as PLTU) that utilize fossil energy source. PLTU becomes the highest carbon emitter in energy sector. The needs of energy will always be increased so that the emission will become higher too (Afifah et al., 2024:5). This fact shows that electric vehicle is not as ideal as the plan to reduce carbon emission. The emission comes from vehicle, in fact, is just moved from the conventional vehicle to power plant.

The Implication to Marginalized Parties

The policy realization in using electric vehicle gives impact to electric vehicle dealers and people as the policy objectives. The electric vehicle dealers are divided by whole electric vehicle dealers and conversion dealer. The whole electric vehicle dealers include famous dealers, such as Wuling and Hyundai which have known since their conventional vehicle. There are also new dealers which only produce electric vehicle, such as VinFast electric car dealer, Polytron electric motorbike dealer, and Velo City electric bicycle dealer. Their selling is consistent because of the whole vehicles they sell.

There are also local electric vehicle dealers and conversion dealers. One of them is Electric Wheel dealer and conversion which is located on Antasura Street Denpasar. This conversion dealer provides vehicle conversion from conventional to electric. The dealer can also assemble vehicle components which is done by local people. Besides its purpose to expand the use of electric vehicles, they have to face problems related to promote vehicle conversion. It is hard to get consumers because of the time period in doing the vehicle conversion until it can be used legally on the road. The conversion process needs about one week, but the conversion vehicle cannot be used yet. The conversion vehicle needs to be conducted a feasibility test by the Indonesian Ministry of Transportation before it is used on the road. The test is only held in Bekasi, the location of Ministry of Transportation office.

The complexity of conversion process can be seen as the weakness of realizing electric vehicle policy (interview with Darmagita as the owner of Electric Wheel conversion dealer, 3 March 2025). The lack of interest pushes the concern about the sustainability of conversion dealer because it depends only on the income from the conversion vehicle. The complicated bureaucracy in preparing for getting the incentive also decrease people's interest in choosing conversion vehicle for their transportation. They need to make sure about their subsidy recipient status and wait for about 15 months to get the incentive as a

cashback after doing vehicle conversion and submit the documents needed. Electric Wheel conversion dealer then choose to sell electric bike to balance their income because it has more enthusiasts than the conversion vehicle.

The pressure situation faced by local dealer like Electric Wheel seems not to be responded by the government to make sure about their sustainability. The inequality is also happened in public with the continuity of encouraging to realize the policy through various appeals. The people have to adapt the new habit comes from vehicle switching, especially calculating the driving distance, vehicle's battery percentage, and location to get charging system. Their high mobilization frequency affects the doubt to switch from conventional vehicle.

The pressure to the public to buy and use electric vehicle is unequal compared to government's realization. Even though the government is planned to be the pioneer of electric vehicle users, the pressure to them does not impact much to their life. They can still use their conventional vehicle even they get the funds to buy electric vehicle. The reluctance of government in using electric vehicle shows that even the stakeholders are not ready to implement the policy.

CONCLUSION

The adaptation of policy in using electric vehicle in Denpasar City affect public and local conversion dealer. They get the pressure to adapt the policy regardless of the unpreparedness from various parties. The complicated rules in getting the incentive and using electric conversion vehicle leads to skepticism of the government's plan. The government themselves also not adapt the policy whereas they had to be the pioneer. Besides the carbon emission reduction discourse, people are still influenced by their skepticism with the weakness of electric vehicle compared to conventional vehicle. The difficulty in changing the vehicle is just the same with changing people's habit. The inequality in realizing policy also become the reason of people's sustainability concerns of electric vehicles in the future.

From the analysis of problem comes from the power relation in adapting electric vehicle policy, there are some suggestions especially to the government to make the adaptation can become fair to all parties. First, the government should prepare themselves in adapting the policy before applying it to public. The policy which had to be begun by government's realization should be evaluated to get the trust from public. Second, the government have to do a research about the impact of the policy when being applied to

people. Lastly, the government have to help people in order to get the subsidies by making less complicated bureaucracy and give response when there is a problem related to realize the subsidies.

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