

IESR Efforts to Accelerate Indonesia Renewable Energy Transition Through Media Relations

Melaty Anggraini¹, Sika Nur Indah²

¹Department of International Relations, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Yogyakarta, Indonesia

²Department of Communication Sciences, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Abstract

This study examines the role of an epistemic community, namely the Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR) which focuses on energy and the environment in encouraging the transformation towards a sustainable energy system in Indonesia by analyzing the public policy advocacy efforts IESR has carried out. Indonesia has set a Renewable Energy transition target in every national energy regulation. Still, it has not been focused and has become a top priority in supporting the renewable energy transition sector. Hence, it is necessary to involve IESR to pursue a renewable energy transition roadmap in the future and be included in the draft energy bill academic paper. In its action to create an energy transition roadmap, IESR collaborates with the media to accelerate the renewable energy transition and push for legislation on its legal policies. The purpose of this study is to identify the efforts made by IESR in accelerating the change of renewable energy through collaboration with the media (media relations). The method used is a literature study focusing on examining the role of IESR in framing renewable energy issues through the media. From the analysis results, it was found that IESR data-based policy advocacy research published in the media has contributed to crafting knowledge to change a transformation of norms in social society, especially in the field of renewable energy issues.

Keywords: *IESR, Renewable energy, Media Framing*



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INTRODUCTION

The energy transition to a low-carbon energy system with the use of renewable energy has become a global trend policy agenda in the framework of mitigating climate change, promoting sustainable development, and the energy security of a country. Even in some countries such as Europe and the United States, renewable energy is the primary energy source to support the country's energy security and sustainable economic sector. Indonesia has a similar opportunity to develop renewable energy considering its potential. Data from the BP Statistical Review of World Energy (2018) states that Indonesia's fossil energy reserves, especially crude oil and coal, will run out in approximately ten years. However, this is not yet supported by the general plan of the national energy policy.

In 2016, the renewable energy mix only contributed around 7.70% of the total realization of the national energy mix. This contribution has not led to an increase in the position of renewable energy in the national primary energy mix (Kontan, 2020). Although the government has done many things in structuring the law so that the potential for renewable energy is optimized, some of these policies have not confirmed the legal umbrella. The issue of renewable energy has not been mapped out regarding clarity of investment, identification of renewable energy types that can optimize exploration, and market strategy opportunities both locally and globally.

Corresponding author

Anushia Chelvarayan, anushia.chelvarayan@mmu.edu.my

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Research Synergy Foundation

The Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR), a think tank that focuses on energy and the environment, tries to overcome the obstacles and challenges in Indonesia's renewable energy transition by creating a road map that Indonesia can take in developing a sustainable energy system. In making the energy roadmap, IESR focuses on various public policy advocacy by inviting professional media agencies. Media involvement is considered essential to expand the range of issues so that the community and stakeholders can see opportunities for renewable energy transitions. This study aims to identify the efforts made by IESR in accelerating the evolution of renewable energy through collaboration with the media (media relations). The results of this study are expected to contribute to policy-making in seeing opportunities for the epistemic community in accelerating the transition of new and renewable energy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

For making an energy roadmap, especially the renewable energy sector, Indonesia Government needs assistance from the Epistemic Community as a network of experts in their fields to understand the most dominant obstacles or problems in developing the NRE sector. The Epistemic Community coordinates with the government or authorities to solve problems that are considered complex. Knowledge elites are involved as policymakers as parties who understand related issues, map problems, and provide tactical solutions (M.Haas, 2002).

The logic behind this concept of an epistemic community is straightforward. As national decision-makers find it increasingly challenging to maintain extensive information relating to a particular issue area, eventually, these decision-makers will need someone to condense the information into manageable sections. They act as consultants, but this professional network also plays a role in influencing the policy-making process. Therefore, this community also needs to occupy a position in the arena of political power. The epistemic community also plays a significant role in creating a common understanding among the people because it offers various information that can influence societal norms and perceptions (Sundstrom, A Brief Introduction: What is an Epistemic Community? 2000).

An article was written by Leslie Mabon et al., 2019, entitled "What is The Role Of Epistemic Communities in Shaping Local Environmental Policy? Managing Environmental Change Through Planning and greenspace in Fukuoka City, Japan." Examines the epistemic community in Fukuoka consisting of academics and architect scientists who focus on environmental change and green open space planning. Researchers reveal that framing issues at the policy innovation stage can influence the government policy sector to shape local environmental policies.

Other studies mention media involvement is also an important point. As explained in Joris Dehler Holand et al. 2020 in an article entitled "Topic Modeling Uncovers Shift in Media Framing of The German Renewable Energy Act." This article describes the role of the mass media in a certain period (2011-2017) which is used as a construction pattern for changes in the perspective of the German government and political structure in policy-making for the Renewable Energy Law. In this paper, media reports become an essential variable in the policy-making process between politicians and the public concerned. However, the media does not work alone because the news or information previously conveyed is the result of research and reports from scientists and industrial business people. Although it is not clearly explained in terms of the performance of scientists working with the media in conveying EBT issues, it is implied that there is a role for the epistemic community in spreading alternative ideas on EBT policies in Germany through the press.

Nain Martinez (2020), in an article entitled *Resisting Renewables: The Energy Epistemics Of Social Opposition in Mexico* in his writings explains the role of the epistemic community in Mexico. Social

researchers and academics who are members of the government's institutional capacity take a role in reducing the controversies in society regarding the energy transition. This community can change people's perceptions that initially did not agree to support the EBT project policy.

In the article "Social Capacitance: Leveraging Absorptive capacity in the age of social media," Anshu Saxena Arora, K.Sivakumar, and Paul A.Pavlou explain how social media technology is used as a repository of knowledge that assimilates cultural patterns of society. The author takes a concrete example of the company's running during the Covid-19 pandemic, which requires all patterns of interaction that are carried out through online media and how social media can be used to create new knowledge for companies to develop innovations create competitive advantages.

The article by Leah Temper and Daniela Del Bene (2016), entitled "Transforming Knowledge Creation For Environmental and Epistemic Justice," is also an insight for the author because of the role of environmental activists and academics engaged in the "Environmental Justice" epistemic community. They created Project Co-Design as a collaborative effort of environmental activists and scholars across continents to develop electronic design maps related to environmental problems at the global level. The "EJ ATLAS" design becomes a database for the public and the media to understand environmental issues. The epistemic community is a think tank that can frame issues and share knowledge with the public and influence the government's policy agenda. However, this community is also challenged to invite people to obey the rules that have been made by the government as norms and culture to be carried out in daily life. This is in line with Laurence L Delina and Benjamin K Sovacool. They revealed that rules such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Climate Change Agreement would have no impact if the countries involved do not adopt them in legislation. Adoption alone is also not enough, and it is necessary to develop policies according to each country's environmental and economic conditions. To establish government policies, it is essential to include insights from academics and environmental activists as expert staff who focus on the ecological field to accelerate environmental improvement, including renewable energy transition.

There are many approaches that an epistemic community can take in accelerating the agenda of the government's framework on environmental issues and the renewable energy transition. Benjamin K. Sovacool, with other researchers David J. Hess. and Roberto Cantoni, broadened their understanding of the influence and intervention of the epistemic community in the nuclear, renewable energy policy sector in the application of energy transitions in France, Greece, Papua New Guinea, and Estonia. The article explains that the epistemic community encourages the government's policy framework from three approaches: seeing nuclear as a form of technological development, nuclear implications for society, and the use of nuclear as a new energy source. In this study, it is known that the epistemic community works by synergizing the community's energy needs and the economic conditions of each country. Furthermore, the technology design is formulated to meet the needs of both to be widely integrated through the government's policy agenda.

Next, the article "Read All about it! Comparing media discourse and The United Kingdom in a transition era" written by S. Ganowski and I.H. Rowlands explained the comparison of media discourse in Canada and the UK on the issue of the clean energy transition. The author uses a comparative media analysis of the two countries as a means of public knowledge and understanding of the significance of the energy transition. In essence, the comparative analysis leads to framing the importance of clean energy that supports a sustainable economy, so it needs to be included in the policy recommendations of the two countries.

As a social institution, the press or mass media have enormous power to influence the masses. However, as a form of responsibility to the community, the mass media usually places themselves

in a position as controllers who at the same time exercise social control (Muhtadi, 1999). The media's influence sets the mass media as the fourth estate after the executive, legislature, and judiciary. However, the media cannot be separated from bias, ideology, politics, society, culture, economy, and religion (Eriyanto, 2018). Each media frame in each news story is related to the interests behind it. Robert M Entment said that complex reality by the media was simplified so that it was easier for the audience to understand through the priming of fact (Eriyanto, 2018). Seeing the incredible power of the media, framing specific issues will have a significant effect on society.

RESEARCH METHOD

For the purpose to answer the formulation of the research problem, comparative data is needed from the results of the search for the literature study of related documents by in-depth analysis of primary and secondary sources from a literature review. Thus, it can be concluded in answering the research hypothesis about what efforts the epistemic community can take in carrying out its role in restructuring the form of policy (Ir. Melfianora, 2018).

A literature review is a library research method that examines primary data and secondary data in papers, journals, report documents, articles, whether published or not, which results in a theoretical review of the problems studied. The data collection process in this study was carried out by collecting secondary data obtained through library searches related to the topic of new and renewable energy in the last ten years. Data analysis uses an interactive analysis model that includes three main components, namely reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2014). Data reduction is carried out after data collection on new and renewable energy is obtained. The data is reduced by sorting out data related to the work of the Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR) epistemic community and its contribution to encouraging the energy transition in Indonesia.

Furthermore, the reduced data were analyzed by comparing the various data obtained. Validity is measured by triangulation of sources, meaning that the more similar the data, the more valid the data. If there are deficiencies and excess data in the analysis process, data withdrawal is carried out again until the results can be drawn to a conclusion.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Renewable Energy Transition Drive

The number of fossil energy reserves in Indonesia is depleted due to the decline in production and the increasing demand for energy consumption. The government has begun to set various policy regulations that lead to the transition of renewable energy. However, of the many rules, the main direction of policy is still focusing on cheap and efficient fuel, which prioritizes financial capacity support on fossil energy. So that renewable energy development projects are still less competitive and detrimental to investors. For this reason, in drafting regulations, the Indonesian government needs the help of think tanks or epistemic communities that are experts in the energy sector who understand the energy roadmap in the future.

The Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR) is a think tank or epistemic community that focuses on energy and the environment that conducts in-depth studies on the low-carbon energy transition in Indonesia. The IESR, which consists of various academics, researchers, business people, and energy policy expert staff, is actively conducting multiple data-based studies to accelerate a low-carbon energy system by the Paris agreement targets. IESR supports every energy transition scheme of the

Indonesian government by providing many inputs of research data related to the development of the renewable energy sector, an overview of global energy trends that are more directed towards sustainable energy and climate change mitigation frameworks, as well as obstacles and challenges in the application process.

IESR provides an overview of the energy roadmap for Indonesia's energy transition policy framework. In addition, IESR also tries to reach the public by giving various important information and direct dialogue with the community through social media such as Twitter, Instagram, or interactively through dialogue forums. IESR works closely with local, national, and international stakeholders to analyze the opportunities and challenges of renewable energy.

IESR's work program covers various fields, not only limited to research, policy analysis, and capacity building, but also covers various issues related to energy, such as energy access, foreign investment, and so on. The program's overall objective is to open up space for actual discussion and discourse between various stakeholders through a solution-oriented approach. No doubt, IESR always holds regular conferences and dialogues that invite the public to think about the energy transition roadmap in the future jointly. IESR also always conducts direct surveys to the public to explore public opinion about renewable energy.

To accelerate the transition to renewable energy, IESR makes an energy roadmap by prioritizing the energy transition roadmap in the electricity and transportation sectors in reporting its policy advocacy. The two industries are considered to have consequences for other industrial sectors and are supposed to meet the target of the Paris agreement, which is carbon neutral by 2050 (Giwangkara, 2020).

The General Plan of National Energy for the electric energy mix until 2025 is still targeting the use of coal. This condition is not ideal when it is associated with the commitment of the Indonesian government in the Nationally Determined Countries (NDC) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 29% by 2030 (Peace, 2021). For this reason, the general national energy plan needs to be directed at increasing renewable energy in the national primary energy mix. Moreover, the increase in consumption of electricity needs of the Indonesian people is projected to increase by 7.1% per year to reach 443 TWh in 2027, if still using coal and oil power plants, the BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2018 predicts the availability of materials in 2027 and 2028. fossil fuels have been exhausted (Peace, 2021).

Meanwhile, as a share of fossil energy users in the transportation sector, it also needs to be a priority to transform. By replacing energy in the transportation sector with renewable energy, it will provide an option for decarbonizing GHG emissions to near zero by 2050 and opening up new business opportunities that are more environmentally friendly, namely the electrification of vehicles made from renewable energy (Giwangkara, 2020).

From the energy transition roadmap plan made by IESR, IESR begins to frame issues in the policy sector at the policy innovation stage, and as an epistemic community seeks to build partnerships with sector policymakers such as the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources in mapping problems and looking for policy alternatives in developing the energy plan. Renewable in Indonesia. IESR public policy advocacy results can become policy inputs and recommendations for the Indonesian government to calculate and include in the draft academic text of the renewable energy policy law. IESR has also sought to adopt the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) as the basis for a program work plan in sustainable development and to highlight significant action points to develop a roadmap for Indonesia's energy transition to accelerate the process of transitioning low-carbon energy or renewable energy.

Media as partners in accelerating the energy transition

In its action to accelerate the renewable energy transition process, IESR collaborates with stakeholders at the government and academic levels and involves the media. IESR requires professional media agencies to inform and launch reporting on the renewable energy transition. IESR assesses that media representation often has a significant impact in influencing public opinion, affecting the structure of government policies. The media will help deliver knowledge construction for the community about renewable energy and change fossil energy use in everyday life.

More than 50 media in Indonesia since 2008 have collaborated with IESR to support the acceleration of information from data policy-based advocacy reports that IESR has launched. Official media partners who consistently report on every event and advocacy report issued by IESR are Jakarta Post and Kompas. However, IESR always opens up opportunities for other media partners to contribute.

IESR has an official website to publish programs of activities that have been carried out and advocacy reports related to the transition to renewable energy and even social media forums such as Twitter, Instagram, and podcasts. However, on average, the published reports are only accessed by the public who cares about the energy sector. Not all general public are aware of and understand renewable energy reported in the IESR media forum. Cooperation with professional media is expected to smooth further the steps of IESR in framing new and renewable energy.

The renewable energy transition is related to climate change. To control the impacts of climate change, the Indonesian people need to know the importance of the renewable energy transition as a climate control strategy. In informing its renewable energy transition roadmap, IESR also informs policymakers and all stakeholders in the energy sector and needs to include community capacity because it will be the community that will carry out the policies made by the policymakers. With this objective, IESR has held several activities involving the role of the media. IESR, in launching a report entitled "Deep decarbonization of Indonesia's energy system: Pathways to carbon neutrality by 2050," invites the participation of all media. The meeting was intended to broaden the understanding of the media and stakeholders regarding the opportunities for decarbonizing Indonesia's energy system by 2050.

IESR has also held an editor's forum discussion by inviting the various press to be directly involved in conveying their perspectives on why renewable energy issues do not attract media attention to be reported. There, the journalists said the difficulty of renewable energy issues being the central issue in media discourse. It had an impact on the lack of community or regional community initiatives to move towards renewable energy. And in the forum together, look for a solution to minimize these problems (Rahmadi, 2020).

From the results of published reports in collaboration with general media forums, IESR has succeeded in creating awareness of renewable energy system trends in the community to form public opinion. With many people turning to support and utilizing low-carbon energy, influencing the public policy agenda with systematic reform of academic texts and the body of the renewable energy bill. It also motivates business actors and foreign investors to develop projects based on environmental mitigation, such as renewable energy power plant projects.

CONCLUSION

Indonesia's policy regulations in the energy sector have not focused on the transition to new and renewable energy. This is proven by the use of fossil energy as the primary energy source. The role of the epistemic community is needed as a community of thinkers in providing considerations, thoughts, and

encouragement to convince the government of the benefits of transitioning to new and renewable energy. As one of the epistemic communities, the Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR) has accelerated the transition of new and renewable energy. This community focuses on research, conducts diplomacy with stakeholders, and establishes relations with the media to create frames that align with their interests.

This research is still limited to looking at the collaboration between the epistemic community and the media. A detailed analysis has not seen the effectiveness of publications related to accelerating the energy transition in Indonesia. Nevertheless, this research is expected to be an input for stakeholders to consider the importance of maximizing the role of the epistemic community and media relations.

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