Challenges Faced By Partnership Governance In Regional Development Of Maluku Province

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ABSTRACT

The Maluku Provincial Government still faces various issues in achieving equitable regional development. The challenges are not only extraordinary events such as the Covid-19 pandemic, but also the main factors are the dissatisfactory regulation and policy frameworks and synergy between the national, provincial and city/district governments. This will certainly affect the collaboration efforts with partners, whether they are domestic, third-party, or international partners. Based on such realities, this research aims to identify the depiction of partnership governance in regional development in Maluku Province. The method used in this research is descriptive-exploratory of qualitative approach. The results reveal that collaborative governance in regional development in Maluku Province has not been properly implemented due to several factors, including: 1) the improper governance of regulation and policy frameworks for collaboration in Maluku Province, as evidenced by the absence of regulations at the regional level as an elaboration of laws and government regulations governing collaboration with partners; 2) the ineffectiveness of institutional collaborations in Maluku Provincial Government; and 3) the improper implementation of collaboration, both with domestic and international partners in various sectors such as education, energy, and maritime. With efforts to improve and enhance collaborative governance, it is expected that the development in Maluku Province is moving for the better.

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INTRODUCTION

Regional cooperation policy is interpreted as a decision taken by regional leaders as a joint effort between regions with other regions, between regions and third parties, and/or between regions and institutions or local governments abroad based on consideration of the efficiency and effectiveness of public services and mutual benefits, to solve a public problem faced by region but cannot be handled alone. Maximizing various efforts by local governments in providing public services and development programs for the welfare of the community is a constitutional mandate that needs to be fulfilled by both the central government and regional leaders (Paskarina, 2017).

In the development of modern countries today, especially in emerging countries, public administration (public services) serves as one of the basic functions of government other than empowerment, development, and the setting (regulator). Public services can be interpreted as the government or public service agencies that work to fulfill basic human needs in the form of goods and services for their survival. In reality, basic needs may vary according to time and space. Thus, the efforts to fulfill human basic needs require different approaches and methods based on the conditions (Madubun, J, et al., 2017: 209).

The Province development plan of Maluku Province can be compared to a puzzle that is in line with the national plan. The puzzle has different pieces representing the various development challenges faced by the province, such as inadequate access to basic services, inadequate development of natural resources, erratic connectivity, improper infrastructure development, and inefficient local governance. To complete the puzzle and solve these challenges, the province continues to encourage different development approaches and policies that promote partnership and cooperation between different stakeholders. Just like fitting the pieces of a puzzle together, partnership and cooperation can bring different perspectives and resources together to create a comprehensive and effective development plan for Maluku Province.

The emphasis on synergy in public services and regional development programs is stated in the regional medium-term development plan (RPJMD) policy of Maluku Province for 2019-2024. Among them are supporting efforts to achieve shared prosperity through synergy, coordination, and synchronization by each development stakeholder in a strategic pattern, as well as ensuring the creation of integration, synchronization, and synergy in regional development planning between district/city governments and the central government. In the effort to achieve the mission of realizing a dynamic, honest, clean, and service-oriented bureaucracy, one of the goals to be achieved is to enhance inter-governmental cooperation with the target of achieving collaboration among governments and other parties in a synergistic and integrative development, with the target indicator being the level of effectiveness of regional government cooperation.

The implementation of partnership collaboration conducted by regional governments through relevant institutions has the potential to foster developmental synergy within a region. This collaboration aims to generate mutual benefits for the involved regions, promote cooperation, and alleviate the need for development financing locally. These partnership initiatives extend beyond government-to-government interactions and have expanded to include various stakeholders such as the private sector, universities, and the community. The overarching goal is to enhance community welfare by leveraging the region’s potential and capabilities to facilitate and drive development. However, it is important to acknowledge that partnership collaborations pursued by local government institutions are endeavors pursued by
diverse entities seeking profits and benefits. Consequently, there is a significant possibility of encountering obstacles, challenges, and issues related to these partnership collaborations.

Currently, the issue in implementing regional cooperation is the lack of synergy among regional cooperation within a province, as well as the limited role of the provincial government in supporting such cooperation within its jurisdiction. The inconsistency of policies among neighboring regions that regulate similar matters, coupled with the legal constraints faced by provincial government in bridging the policies formulated by local regions in the context of regional autonomy, contributes to these challenges (Putra, 2014). The lack of synchronization in implementing regional cooperation within a provincial area is a significant problem. Furthermore, the weak role of the province as the executing and supervising unit of regional cooperation hampers the harmonization of these efforts (Cahyani, 2009).

The initial data gathered by the researcher shows that the Maluku provincial government has implemented various regional cooperation policies with domestic and foreign partners, which are coordinated by the Regional Investment Board, Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), Regional Government and Regional Autonomy Bureau of the Maluku Secretary, Regional Apparatus Organization, and coordination with private organizations through the corporate social responsibility (CSR) forum. For example, in the tourism sector, the head of the Maluku Provincial tourism agency has come up with the idea that Maluku can have an internationally recognized tourism icon, such as the potential of the presidential mini-palace tourism in Banda, which can be used as a national tourism icon. In addition, the Maluku provincial government is also exploring cooperation with investors from South Korea to develop a transportation sector for tourism using wing-in-ground craft, which is a plane that can land on the sea.

The author’s research is informed by several relevant studies. For instance, Rahmatullah (2012) conducted case studies in Cilegon City, revealing that corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the city has not been officially ratified as a regional regulation. It was highlighted that there is a need for extensive public awareness campaigns to foster the growth of partnerships between the Cilegon City Government and companies. Another study by Mas’ud (2019) focused on the partnership between the government and companies in Maros Regency. It found that a form of cost-sharing cooperation was employed, but the implementation was suboptimal due to insufficient communication from biogas development partners to the community. Consequently, the community did not fully grasp the benefits of domestic biogas. Additionally, Fatmawati (2011) examined partnerships involving the public, private, and community sectors. The study suggested the development of various partnership network models to address the demand for public services and to prevent either government or market dominance in the provision of public goods and services. In the context of research, the aim is to understand the challenges of partnership governance implemented in Maluku Province because this research has not been adequately examined.

In general, there are several challenging empirical issues in the implementation of cross-sectoral partnership governance identified within the Maluku Provincial Government, including: (1) the lack of regulatory arrangements and regional cooperation policies within the Maluku Province; (2) the administration of regional cooperation has not been effectively organized and consolidated within the Maluku Provincial Government; (3) in the field of manpower, for example, there is still insufficient data on planning and information of domestic and international job opportunities; and it needs more cooperation with educational institutions (particularly higher and vocational education); (4) cooperation among institutions in sustainable environmental management needs improving; (5) lack of coordination in community empowerment programs implemented by various government bodies (planning and
budgeting); (6) limited small enterprises market network & business partnerships; (cooperatives and SMEs); (7) the synergy between the central, provincial and district/city government needs improvement (in investment); (8) in the marine and fisheries, there is no cooperation in place for processing and marketing of fishery products among fishermen, the government and entrepreneurs; (9) in tourism, there is still a lack of development in community, government and business collaboration; as well as limited supporting infrastructure for international-scale tourism; (10) in agricultural sector, there is no collaboration in the processing and marketing of agricultural products among farmers, the government and entrepreneurs; (11) in industrial sector, local resource-based industries are still limited; lack of human resources related to industry; and no domestic and foreign cooperation in place in the framework of industrial development in Maluku.

Drew the above elaboration, it can be perceived that partnership governance within the Maluku Provincial Government in recent years there have been active efforts to speed up several improvements. This can be seen through efforts to develop regional regulations and implement government programs by collaborating with both domestic and international partners. Nonetheless, the partnership governance of the Maluku Provincial Government still encounters several challenges as stated in the empirical findings above. Therefore, this research is aimed at exploring and obtaining a comprehensive and in-depth understanding as the focus of the research problem is “Challenges Faced by Partnership Governance In Regional Development of Maluku Province”.

**Literature Review**

Various collaborative policies come in various forms, including partnerships and collaboration. According to Dwiyanto (2010), for example, states that currently, it is very important for the central government and regional leaders to carry out development and public services for various reasons such as the limited capacity and resources of the central government and regional governments. The partnership and collaboration approaches have been widely recognized and exercised on various public policy agendas by policymakers, officials, and local communities (McQuaid, 2000; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). Cross-sectoral collaborative partnerships in the public sector, for instance, are considered enabling factors in building capacity through the design and implementation of policies and public programs that can be improved and also increase the legitimacy of the public sector (Miller and Ahmad, 2000).

The emergence of ‘governance’ as a theoretical viewpoint and practical reality has introduced a new organizational dynamic rooted in the private sector. In this dynamic, government is just one of many actors, and government officials no longer hold an automatic position of superiority, despite being democratically elected representatives within governance networks (Kincaid & Stenberg, 2011).

In terms of etymology, there is a distinction between governance and government. Governance encompasses intricate interactions among multiple stakeholders within the public sphere (Clayton, 1994), whereas government solely pertains to the role of the government as a singular actor. According to certain experts, governance can be defined as a novel process through which diverse actors jointly manage the public sphere through reciprocal interactions (Kjaer, 2004).

However, as indicated by Rhodes (1996), "governance" refers to a change in how the government works which implies a broader meaning including a new process of governing, a changed condition of rules, or a new method by which society is governed (Rhodes, 1996). Furthermore,
Rhodes (1996) elaborates on some of the dominant characteristics of governance, including: (1) "governance" has a broader meaning than government since it involves non-state (non-government) actors which causes an interdependent relationship among organizations; (2) the progression of interaction between members that is urged by the need for exchange of resources and negotiations to share; (3) it is rooted in a relationship of mutual trust and managed by regulations as a result of negotiations and agreements among related actors; and (4) it has a significant degree of being independent or autonomous from government intervention.

There are several terms associated with the term ‘governance’, including collaborative governance, corporate governance, network governance, co-governance, and partnership governance. These terms have different definitions, but the most commonly used and interchanged terms are collaborative governance and partnership governance. The term ‘collaborative governance’ according to Ansell and Gash (2007) is a way for the government to administer one or more public institutions of non-governmental stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative which is intended to make or implement public policy or manage several programs or public assets. The principle of collaborative governance refers to an alternative concept of how to run a government that requires cooperation between related sectors in solving a complicated problem (Pamungkas & Inayati, 2018). Grossman & Holzer (2015) explain that partnerships are more than just a method of collaboration, but rather a formal organization of collaboration.

In other term, the concept of partnership governance captures the process of engaging multiple sectors, and it can be associated with the development of democracy as a form of citizen action and the corresponding capacity for public management. However, it is at these points of development that we often encounter concerns driven by ideological aspirations, rather than genuine curiosity. Munro et al. (2008) elaborates, on partnership as a form of collaboration between community leaders and public managers for the effectiveness of democracy. Meanwhile, Bovaird (2004) defines partnership as an arrangement of work based on mutual commitment, exceeding and going beyond what is stipulated in any contract, between one organization in the public sector and an organization outside the public sector.

Partnership governance is a concept that structures this process and its conflicts, providing a means to resolve and enhance the potential of democratic government through collaboration with its citizens. It emphasizes a collaborative approach where government and its citizens work together to address challenges and achieve common goals (Grossman & Holzer, 2015).

Based on the explanation above, the points highlighted emphasize the importance of collaboration and partnerships in a democratic setting. It underlines the necessity to organize and work together with others, actively participate in governance, engage in joint planning, learn from others, establish trust, and internalize the process. This approach encompasses agreements, identifying sustainable resources, managing change, and achieving desired outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODS

The exploratory-descriptive type of qualitative methodology is employed in this study. The approach used in this research is a case study that combines descriptive, exploratory, and explanatory aspects. It is characterized by being multi-technique and multi-analysis in nature with the aim of facilitating a comprehensive and in-depth depiction and uncovering the meaning behind the focus of the researched
problem. The approach also seeks to thoroughly understand a case within its context for future development prospects (Muhadjir, 2002). Data collection for this research was conducted through several techniques, including field observations, semi-structured open-ended interviews, document studies, and focus group discussions (FGD). The informants and documents needed for this research were obtained from the environment of the Maluku Provincial Regional Apparatus Organization (OPD). It is based on several factors, including: 1) considering the fact that arrangement of regional cooperation policies within the Maluku Provincial Government is a new phenomenon derived from new regulations and national policies therefore it requires understanding, digging and intensifying including being able to be adaptive and flexible towards interpretation when dealing with novel and multiple phenomena and realities; 2) this specific methodology directly presents the nature of interactive relationship between researchers and informants and 3) this methodology is more sensitive and more adaptive to the overwhelming of collective influences and to the patterns of values encountered (Moleong, 2015; Sugiyono, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Regional cooperation regulations and policies are products of the efforts from Indonesian policy authorities to enable regional governments to carry out or implement various public programs in the form of public services and regional development through diverse collaborative governance schemes and in their implementation need to be broken down into regulations and policies at the provincial government levels and districts/cities. The role of involvement of parties outside the government in influencing public policy is very crucial since it drives the direction of change of a policy (Johansson et al., 2010).

In order to ensure that policies bring widespread benefits to society, it is crucial for them to possess the capacity to break barriers and undergo renewal. According to Sururi (2016), policy innovation is essential and should involve the expansion and updating of regulations throughout the formulation, implementation, and evaluation processes. Additionally, partnership governance can facilitate the introduction of diverse perspective and the participation of actors from different sectors in policy development and various reform initiatives. This inclusive approach allows for the collective representation of public interest and promotes the possibility of generating comprehensive and effective policies (Burgess & Curry, 2014).

The institutions of cooperation in the Maluku Provincial Government encounter numerous difficulties in achieving partnership governance. These challenges are observed in the areas of regulations, human resources, and policy execution. These issues are inevitable as partnership cooperation involves multiple stakeholders, resulting in a multitude of potential disparities in opinions, interpretations, and interests.

Currently, there is a lack of regional regulations governing cooperation policies in Maluku Province. The existing regulations and policy products related to regional cooperation in Maluku Province still rely on national regulations and policies at the central level, specifically the Regional Government Law No. 23 of 2014, specifically in Articles 363 to 370, which aims to enhance the welfare of the people (Regional Development Planning Agency-Bappeda Maluku, 2021). To implement the policies outlined in the regional cooperation law, the Government Regulation (PP) No.28/2018 concerning Regional Cooperation was issued. This regulation outlines the principles, objects, subjects, procedures, forms, and outcomes of regional cooperation.
The emergence of multiple local regulatory products has led to various issues, including overlapping regulations within regions, conflicts between regional regulations and higher-level statutory regulations, and inconsistencies with other related regulations. These controversies and problems in implementation have ultimately led to the central government revoking the problematic regional regulations (Adiyanta, 2019).

The research provides an overview of partnership governance implemented by institutions in the Maluku Province Government, based on the development cooperation list managed by Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) Maluku Province (2021). According to the research, Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) Maluku Province is the most organized government institution when it comes to documenting data on partnership cooperation in the province compared to other regional agencies (OPD) such as regional secretariats or government bureaus. The data compiled by Regional Development Planning Agency-BAPPEDA Maluku Province covers partnership activities carried out by the provincial government during the period of 2012-2017. Several partnership cooperation programs continue to run until 2023-2024.

During the 2012-2017 period, Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA) recorded a total of 28 partnership with various entities, including domestic and foreign partners. The majority of these partnership (13 collaborations) were established with universities within the country, focusing on cooperation in the fields of education, training, research, planning, and community service. The remaining 15 partnership involved government agencies, local governments, and non-governmental organizations (both domestic and international). Apart from the 28 documented collaborations in the Maluku Provincial Regional Development Planning Agency (BAPPEDA), Maluku Regional Government and international partners in the Bureau of Government & Regional Autonomy is also exploring four international collaborations. However, the current status of these collaborations has not been elaborated upon. These collaborations include working with the University of Rhode Island (URI) in the United States, focusing on education, training, research and planning for the development of Maluku Province from 2019 to 2021. Additionally, there is a collaboration with the Mercy Corps Indonesia Foundation regarding the Access to New Zealand-Maluku project, which aims to support renewable energy initiatives. The Maluku Provincial Government has also initiated sister city cooperation with Seychelles, one of the island countries in Africa, as well as Ambon-Darwin.

The lack of partnership governance data from the Maluku Regional Government and international partners in the Bureau of Government & Regional Autonomy database reinforces information from the Head of Cooperation Division that the Maluku Provincial Government needs to explore more cooperations with international partners, especially during the Covid-19 Pandemic which limiting international mobility and travel, even though during that time there has been initial talks on cooperation from Australia and South Korea.

Several examples of development of partnership governance by the Maluku Regional Government with international partners, both those oriented towards islands and those adjacent to national borders, are in line with Ufi (2008) highlighting the urgency to fulfill the vision of international cooperation in supporting the development of Maluku Region. It can be achieved through at least 3 (three) pathways as follows: 1) based on the similarity of characteristics of the archipelago, for example with Rhode Island University in the United States and Seychelles in in Africa); 2) the proximity of physical geographical areas between countries, such as with Australia and Darwin, New Zealand; and 3) it is based on close colonial historical emotional relations, for example with the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and others.
Despite implementing partnership governance, the Maluku Provincial Government has faced challenges in fully realizing certain cooperation programs due to various factors. The Head of the Cooperation Bureau Government highlighted one issue, which is the insufficient communication and coordination of data and information reports pertaining to the implementation of collaborations, particularly those involving foreign partners. Consequently, data regarding foreign cooperation has not been properly managed and recorded has not been properly managed and recorded at the Government Bureau.

Wulandari et al. (2020) state that international cooperation undertaken by a country is driven by the need to fulfill national interests that are not available within its own borders. Wulandari et al. (2020) elaborates, collaborations between two countries or regions are not merely formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signings, but the most important aspect of such partnership is maintaining continuous communication and consultation. The intensity of communication and consultation should surpass mere commitment. Therefore, the failure of a significant cooperation is likely caused by insufficient communication and consultation.

Based on the data analyzed by the researchers, it is evident that not all collaborations carried out by government agencies, including Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda) and the Government Bureau, have been successful. Some partnership lacked clear information regarding the actualization process, and some were only in the form of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), with some MoUs even remaining unsigned and therefore not serving as binding agreements between the Maluku Provincial Government and its partners. Additionally, collaboration between local governments within Maluku Province has not been effectively implemented, which aligns with the disclosure made by the Head of the Sub-Section of Novation and Cooperation at Maluku Province’s Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda). This lack of effective collaboration is primarily due to regional egos prevailing among the local governments. Moreover, the province has encountered various issues such as inflation and drought in certain areas like Buru and Central Maluku Regencies, while other regions have experienced a surplus of resources.

Moreover, it is important to consider the partnership cooperation in Maluku Province from the perspective of benefiting the welfare and progress of the region. The implementation of partnership cooperation in Maluku Province should thoroughly understand its potential, particularly in the maritime and island areas. If the Maluku Provincial Government recognizes this potential, it must prioritize mapping human resources and formulating policies that support territorial development.

Putra (2014) emphasizes that to engage in cooperation with partners, the local government should first strengthen its internal capabilities as it significantly influences the success of collaborations. Internal factors, such as human resources (HR), particularly the skills of HR, become crucial when the government enters into partnership agreements. This is essential to minimize errors in drafting cooperation agreements and to avoid ambiguous partnerships with partners.

Observing the actual situation of cooperation conducted by agencies of the Maluku Provincial Government, as reflected in the cooperation data from Regional Development Planning Agency (Bappeda), it is evident that there are instances where Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) have not been signed or cooperation agreements have not been adequately followed up. This serves as a significant reminder that the internal capacity of the Maluku Provincial Government needs to be strengthened. Sufficient human resources are required to effectively manage partnership cooperation, ensuring that each agreement is completed and successful. At the very least, there should be clarity in the agreements, which can be achieved through MoUs of formal cooperation agreements.
In the view of Harta & Diana (2017), to achieve development progress in all its aspects, real actions are a must, and verbal reflections from public officials will not work. The way to do it method is to shape and develop professional work ethics. Professional work ethics from public officials will inspire productive attitudes and create self-control to deal with diverse challenges.

CONCLUSIONS

Partnership governance as an endeavor to develop the Maluku Province can be viewed from four substantive aspects as follows: 1) the aspect of regulation and policy; there is no regulation and policy in place at the regional level as an operational explication of government regulations or legislation in question; 2) the institutional aspect; there has been a change within the cooperation management agencies with partners, which requires a transitional time to adjust cooperation patterns making such agencies function ineffectively and less-coordinated; and 3) the aspect of implementing tasks and functions; the cooperation of the Maluku Provincial Government in various sectors such as education, energy, and maritime, has not been optimally implemented and is still oriented for domestic needs. Moreover, there is still a disparity in interregional cooperation in the Maluku Province, such as areas experiencing inflation and drought like the Buru and Central Maluku Districts, while at the same time there are areas that experience a surplus. In the meantime, cooperation with international partners is still far reaching the expectation; not only due to budget and communication, but also due to the Covid-19 Pandemic which has delayed some discussions of cooperation with international partners. The Maluku Provincial Government can develop cooperation with international partners tailored to its regional needs and potentials, such as cooperation in the marine tourism sector with Seychelles or cooperation in governance by promoting the concept of sister city between Ambon and Darwin. Another crucial element that is intertwined with the essence of partnership governance is human resources. In order to effectively execute partnership cooperation and develop exceptional programs, local governments require capable and proficient personnel. This pertains to comprehending the intricacies of partnership cooperation, including technical aspects such as understanding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or cooperation agreements. The present study highlights the existence of partnership governance between the Maluku of Provincial Government and various partners, both domestic and foreign, with unclear progress. The implementation of this partnership extends beyond a mere formal agreement, emphasizing the continuous communication and consultation as the binding force of partnership cooperation.

REFERENCES


