

The Subdistrict Head Duties and the Delegation of Some of the Regent's Authority Implementation at Sangasanga Subdistrict, Kutai Kartanegara Regency

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ABSTRACT

The delegation of the Regent's authority to Subdistrict Heads under Law No. 23/2014 and Regent's Decree No. 247/2021 aims to enhance local governance and public service efficiency in Kutai Kartanegara Regency. However, implementation challenges persist. This study examines the execution of delegated authority in Sangasanga Subdistrict, identifying supporting and inhibiting factors. A qualitative case study was conducted using Edwards III's policy implementation model (communication, resources, disposition, bureaucratic structure). Data were collected via interviews, observation, and documentation from Subdistrict officials and village heads, analyzed through interactive qualitative analysis. While communication and coordination were effective, key obstacles included inadequate human resources (e.g., untrained staff), delayed infrastructure (e.g., ID card printers), limited budgets, and complex administrative procedures. Supporting factors included strong inter-governmental collaboration and administrative streamlining. The study underscores the need for targeted capacity-building, budget reallocation, and simplified procedures to optimize decentralization. It contributes to the discourse on local governance by highlighting the gap between policy design and grassroots implementation.

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Introduction

In the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 2 of 2015 concerning Regional Government at Article 1 Paragraph 6 it is stated that the definition of regional autonomy is the right, authority and obligation of autonomous regions to regulate and manage their own government affairs and the interests of the local community in the Unitary State System of the Republic of Indonesia.

In the effort to increase the efficiency and public service at the district government level, several authorities have been diverted from the Regent to the subdistrict head. For examples the management of population administration such as the making of family cards and identity cards, village financial management and supervision of infrastructure development at the village level. This aims to bring public services closer to the community, accelerate the decisions making process

and improve coordination between the district government and the village government in the implementation of development policies.

In this regard, Wahyuningsih (2011) explained that the delegation of some of the Regent's authority to the subdistrict head was intended to create the effectiveness and efficiency of government administration while improving public services in the regions. So far, the implementation of part of the existing authority is still concentrated in the Regency/City. This can cause problems such as: 1) Regency/City Government will tend to have a workload that is too heavy so that the service function of the community becomes less effective. 2) District as a Regency/City Government and Ward Government apparatus as a subdistrict apparatus will emerge as an organization with a minimum function.

The Decree of the Regent of Kutai Kartanegara Number 247/SK-BUP/HK/2021 concerning the Implementation of the Subdistrict's Head Duties and the Delegation of Authority illustrates how a Kutai Kartanegara Regency is regulated effectively to achieve better development goals and public services. The Regent's Decree regarding the implementation of the Subdistrict's Head is a key instrument in management of administrative areas. In this case, the Regent determined the role and responsibility of the Subdistrict's Head in ensuring public service and development run smoothly at the Subdistrict level. This includes administrative management, enforcement of regulations, and coordination between institutions in the Subdistrict. The implementation of this decision has a direct impact on the quality of public services and the efficiency of resource management at the Subdistrict level.

The problem faced in Sangasanga District, Kutai Kartanegara Regency in carrying out the implementation of the regent's decision regarding the delegation of authority is the lack of a fairly good understanding of the details of the decision of the transfer of authority among officers in the district. This can result in interpretation and implementation errors that are not in accordance with the original objectives of the decision and administration problems. Among them such as limited human resources and work facilities in the sub-district can be an obstacle in carrying out tasks that can affect the quality of services to the community.

This is in line with the findings in the author's study of a number of previous studies that show that the Subdistrict was an administrative area in the framework of deconcentration, namely the work environment of government apparatus that organized the implementation of general government tasks in the region (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 32 of 2004). However, according to Law Number 12 of 2008 Article 126 Paragraph 3, the Subdistrict is a District/City regional apparatus in the framework of the principle of decentralization. This means that in the past, in the framework of the principle of district deconcentration was one of the administrative areas of government other than national, provincial, district and municipal and administrative cities. But at present, the Subdistrict is the working area of the regional apparatus. So, it can be said that the Subdistrict is no longer a territory, but is a service area (Kusuma, 2013).

Meanwhile Agil (2014) found that the process of delegating the Regent's authority to the Subdistrict Head was the same as the form of bureaucratic reform, both in the central government and other regional governments. Then the Regent and Subdistrict Head should conduct intensive

communication so that also in the form of problems can be resolved properly and need to improve the quality of resources so that the process of implementing authority can be done effectively, efficiently and maximally.

Other studies (Laksana et al., 2015) have shown the implementation of the delegation of government affairs from the Regent to the Subdistrict Head in accordance with the Pasuruan Regent Regulation Number 27 of 2006 is still not effective. In the four affairs delegated, the task of the general government, village government and land affairs are matters that have been carried out by the Subdistrict before the existence of regulations on the transfer of authority. While licensing matters are new authority, but are limited to less strategic permits. Subdistrict Head's vertical coordination is not optimal because it is hampered by a position hierarchy, but horizontal coordination has been effectively implemented because the Subdistrict Head is able to take a persuasive approach to the relevant parties within the Subdistrict environment.

This research seeks to find answers to research questions: how the implementation of the Regent's Decree regarding the implementation of the Subdistrict Head and the delegation of the authority of the regent of the district to the sub-district in Sangasanga District and what are the supporting factors and their obstacles. The current study on the delegation of the Regent's authority to Subdistrict Heads in Sangasanga Subdistrict, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, builds upon prior research (e.g., Agil, 2014; Laksana et al., 2015; Nakamnanu et al., 2019) by offering a localized, empirical examination of policy implementation under Regent's Decree No. 247/2021. While earlier studies highlighted broader challenges in decentralization (e.g., bureaucratic hierarchy, resource constraints), this research uniquely focuses on the interplay of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure in Sangasanga, revealing context-specific barriers like delayed provision of printing equipment for ID cards (2021 policy vs. 2024 implementation) and the absence of service quality standards. Unlike Kusuma (2013), which framed Subdistricts as service areas, this study emphasizes their evolving role as "spearheads" of local governance, integrating community participation. Additionally, it extends Wahyuningsih's (2011) theoretical framework by applying Edwards III's model to evaluate real-world gaps in staff competency and budget allocation, providing actionable insights for improving decentralized service delivery.

Materials and Methods

This research uses a type of qualitative descriptive research with the aim of being able to describe in depth related to the implementation of the duties and delegation of some of the Regent's authority to the Subdistrict Head. The research focus refers to the use of the policy implementation model from Edwards III (in Nugroho, 2014) which include four variables: communication, resources, disposition and bureaucracy structure.

The informants in this study were the Subdistrict Head, Subdistrict Secretary, Head of the General and Personnel Subdivision, Head of Government Section, Head of Development Section and Sanga-sang District Officers, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. Data collection was carried out through interviews, observations and documentation studies. Data analysis using qualitative

analysis component flow based on Sugiyono (2017), in sequence consisting of data collection, raw data description, data reduction and data categorization.

Results and Discussions

Policy implementation of the Subdistrict Head's duties and the delegation of some of the regent's authority refers to the process of implementing and executing policies concerning the tasks that must be carried out by a Subdistrict Head, as well as the surrender of a number of certain responsibilities or authorities from the Regent to the Subdistrict Head in the context he is an official at the district level responsible for coordinating and implementing local government policies at the Subdistrict level.

The delegation of part of the authority of the regent to the Subdistrict Head includes the surrender of certain responsibilities such as financial management, supervision of the implementation of development programs, or Subdistrict administration management. With the implementation of this policy, it is expected that the Subdistrict Head can play an active role in carrying out government functions in the Subdistrict area so that the implementation of programs and policies can run more effectively and responsively to the needs of the local community.

Cheema and Rodinelli (in Surandayang, 2001) stated the definition of decentralization is the transfer of planning, decision making, or administrative authority from the central government to its field organization, local administrative unit, semi autonomus and parastatal organizations, local government, or non-government organization.

As a strategic step in the decentralization of the Regional Government, the decision regarding the transfer of some of the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of public services at the subdistrict level by giving greater authority to the Subdistrict Head. Nakamnanu et al (2019) stated that the abusive authority from the Regent to the Subdistrict Head was actually an effort to optimize the role and function of the Subdistrict in order to improve services to the community. The expected results are the realization of the Subdistrict as an easy, cheap, fast and good quality community service center.

The Subdistrict Head get an assignment in carrying out general tasks of government which include:

- a. Carrying out general government affairs at the Subdistrict level in accordance with the provisions of the legislation governing the implementation of general government affairs,
- b. Coordinating community empowerment activities,
- c. Coordinating efforts to organize provisions and public order,
- d. Coordinate the application and enforcement of Regional Regulations and Regional Head Regulations,
- e. Coordinate the maintenance of public service facilities and infrastructure,
- f. Coordinating the administration of government activities carried out by regional apparatus in the Subdistrict,
- g. Fostering and overseeing the administration of village government,

- h. Carrying out government affairs that are the authority of the District/City regions that are not implemented by the District/City regional work unit in the Subdistrict,
- i. Preparing and completion of the District Strategic Plan with the Regency's Medium-Term Development Plan,
- j. Coordinate and facilitate villages in making Village Medium-Term Development Plan and Village Regulations Design,
- k. Conducting supervision, evaluation and monitoring of development in their region,
- l. Supporting the 12 years compulsory education program, and
- m. Made efforts to reduce poverty and the number of deaths of pregnant women.

In addition to such tasks, the Subdistrict Head carries out the government's authority delegated by the Regent to handle some of the regional autonomy affairs, including:

- a. The Subdistrict Head carry out infrastructure development that is not complex for the Subdistrict and Village regions that are not accommodated by district level regional apparatus,
- b. Carry out community empowerment programs through increasing community participation in the widespread increase in infrastructure that is not complex in the Subdistrict and Village areas,
- c. Implement the digitalization program of public services, Subdistrict as a data and information service center and
- d. The Subdistrict Head in carrying out the delegation of the authority of the Regent's Authority to accelerate the development at the Subdistrict and Village.

The delegation of part of the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head is accompanied by the provision of financing, infrastructure, employees and documents/archives in accordance with the authority delegated which is imposed on the Regional Budget and Expenditure. In the regulation it is emphasized that the Regent provides guidance and supervision of the implementation of the delegation of part of his authority to the Subdistrict Head through the technical regional apparatus in accordance with the main tasks and functions, as well as its authority. The Subdistrict Head submitted a report on the implementation of the delegation of authority every month to the Regent through the Regional Secretary of Kutai Kartanegara Regency.

The area of Sangasanga Subdistrict is 233,40 Km² which is divided into five villages areas namely Sangasanga Dalam Village, Jawa Village, Sari Jaya Village, Sangasanga Muara Village and Pendingin Village. The Sangasanga Subdistrict consists of 66 Neighboring Pillars. The delegation of part of the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head in this study was examined through the policy implementation model of Edwards III which produced the following findings according to each variable:

Communication

In carrying out the tasks delegated, the Sangasanga Subdistrict Head established good communication with other government agencies and the private sector to ensure effective coordination. Cooperation with related agencies in Kutai Kartanegara Regency allows the use of more optimal resources and created synergy in the implementation of development programs in

the Subdistrict. Because the fabric of good communication by the Subdistrict Head to the relevant agencies becomes a channel for the receipt of assistance needed when facing obstacles, as well as making certainty that the policies implemented at the Subdistrict level become in harmony with the general policy of the local government above it.

By placing communication as a key element, the Sangasanga Subdistrict Head is able to implement the Regent's Decree on the Delegation of Some of the Authority more effectively, ensuring that the functions of public services run smoothly and the needs of the community can be better met. The Subdistrict Head as the authority holder delegated must be able to coordinate various functions and public services at the Subdistrict level effectively. This requires good integration between different work units, as well as smooth communication between the Subdistrict Head and its staff. Good coordination will ensure that all work units can work synergistically, avoid duplication of tasks, and improve the quality of public services.

Resources

In the implementation of the policy of delegating the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head, there are still obstacles to human resources in the Sangasanga District Office, Kutai Kartanegara Regency. In terms of quantity, its human resources are adequate but there are still some employees who do not understand the main tasks and functions that must be done, resulting in abandoned tasks. In addition, there are still employees or staff who do not carry out their duties in accordance with the direction and guidance that the leaders give. Some employees in carrying out their duties have an attitude that does not want to serve the community who need services, but only prioritize personal affairs even though it has been given directions and even orders to prioritize the interests of the community in carrying out their duties.

In addition, constraints are also found in other supporting resources, such as work facilities. Among them there is still a lack of the quantity of computers, printers, tables and work chairs, as well as yards that are less extensive for ceremonial activities or field activities and limited parking area. This causes the less optimal service provided to the community in Sangasanga District.

Disposition

Disposition refers to the process of transferring instructions or direction from higher officials to his subordinates, in this case from the Regent to the Subdistrict Head. The right and clear disposition process will provide a concrete direction on how the authority must be carried out at the Subdistrict level, and ensure that the implementation of the task is in accordance with applicable procedures.

In practice, dispositions received by the Subdistrict Head in Sangasanga District must be followed up with a deep understanding of the content of the decision. This process requires the Subdistrict Head to specify every authority delegated, map the tasks that must be carried out, and coordinate with various related agencies to support the implementation of these tasks. Good disposition also involves effective communication between the Regent and the Subdistrict Head, as well as with other agencies at the district level, to avoid overlapping authority or contradictory policies.

The findings of this research result show that in some cases, the disposition process has not been fully optimal. There is a tendency that the Subdistrict Head has not received an adequate explanation related to the limits of the authority delegated, causing confusion in making decisions. In addition, there are also deficiencies in terms of strengthening the capacity of the Subdistrict Head to carry out this new task related to understanding of the applicable laws and regulations. Therefore, the disposition that is unclear or not accompanied by adequate debriefing, can actually hamper the implementation of these authority in its implementation. This founding is similar to Gormico (in Laksana, 2013) research result that further socialization needs to be carried out about the authority that is delegated to foster a better understanding for the Subdistrict Heads and staff to carry out these authorities appropriately and consistently.

Disposition that oriented to the results are a key element in ensuring that the delegation of authority from the Regent has a positive impact on the development and welfare of the Subdistrict community as a whole. Therefore, the Sangasanga Subdistrict Head needs to be able to measure and evaluate the achievements and adjust the work strategy to achieve the stated goals. But the local government must also ensure that there is a clear mechanism to assess the performance of the Subdistrict Head in carrying out the authority that is delegated. Periodic evaluation and constructive feedback can help the Subdistrict Head improve their performance and ensure that public services at the Subdistrict level run optimally. Thus, good disposition is not only a foundation in carrying out the duties and authorities given, but is also the key to creating a sustainable change and improving the quality of life of the community at the local level by providing concrete benefits for the community.

Bureaucracy Structure

The bureaucratic structure plays an important role in the implementation of policies because it determines how the policy is prepared, conveyed and implemented. A clear and organized organizational structure ensures that each level in the bureaucracy understands their respective roles and responsibilities. Policies compiled at the central level require effective delivery to the regional level, with each bureaucratic level has an appropriate understanding of the instructions and mandates given. Hierarchical but flexible structure can help ensure that communication runs smoothly and tasks are distributed efficiently.

In connection with the research that has been done, it is found that the existing bureaucratic structure needs to be adjusted to accommodate changes in authority and responsibility. One important step is to rearrange the organization at the Subdistrict level, including the addition or strengthening of relevant work units. This arrangement aims to ensure that the Subdistrict Head has adequate structural support in carrying out the authority that is delegated, as well as to avoid overlapping or emptiness of administrative functions.

The bureaucratic structure must include adjusting procedures and mechanisms of action. Existing administrative procedures need to be simplified and adjusted to be more responsive to dynamics at Subdistrict level. This includes delegation of authority in decision making, processing permits and public services, and human resource management. With the simpler and clearer procedure, the Subdistrict Head can work more effectively and the community can fell the benefits

of faster and more efficient services. This adjustment must also be accompanied by good socialization to all government officials in the Subdistrict.

Thus, the delegation of authority from the district government to the Subdistrict as conveyed by Utomo (2004) will be able to bring benefits as a vehicle to empower the function of the subdistrict where the burden of the regional government in providing services is decreasing because it has been taken over by the Subdistrict as the spearhead of public services.

The Supporting Factors

This study found a number of supporting factors from the Subdistrict Head duties and the delegation of some of the Regent's Authority at Sangasanga Subdistrict, Kutai Kartanegara Regency include: 1) Administrative support, 2) Good cooperation and coordination between the Subdistrict and the Village Government.

About the administrative support: In the implementation of the delegation of the Regent's duties to the Sangasanga Subdistrict Head, the main supporting factors are administrative support in the form of logistics assistance, integrated administrative systems, work equipment and human resources needed in the implementation of factory service tasks carried out. Good administration ensures that all bureaucratic procedures and procedures run smoothly and efficiently. The importance of administrative support is also seen in the arrangement and simplification of work procedures at the Subdistrict level. This simplification includes the development of clear and easy to understand operating procedures, as well as the use of information technology to accelerate the administrative and communication process, especially in decision making by the Sangasanga Subdistrict Head.

About the good cooperation and coordination between the Subdistrict Government and the Village Government: In the framework of implementing broader authority, the Sangasanga Subdistrict Government works with the Village Government to ensure that the policies and programs pioneered by the Subdistrict can be carried out well at the village level also. Effective coordination between these parties ensures that there is a synergy in carrying out tasks and problem solving faced by the community. Community involvement in the process of planning, implementing and evaluating policies can increase policy legitimacy and accelerate the adaptation and revenue process at the local level. Involving the community can also produce a more inclusive and sustainable solution in the long run.

In this context, the Subdistrict functions as a liaison between the District Government and the Village Government, and the delegation of authority from the Regent to the Subdistrict Head requires effective communication so that greater tasks can be carried out well. Village Government which is the smallest government unit acts as the spearhead in the acceptance of policies and programs derived from the Subdistrict.

Effective coordination between the Subdistrict Head and Village Head is very important to ensure that the programs pioneered by the Subdistrict can be run well at the village level. The Subdistrict Head who now holds a greater authority must ensure that the decisions taken can be clearly understood by each Village Head and continue well to the authority underneath.

Conversely, the Village Government must also be able to convey the problems faced by the community to the Subdistrict Government so that the policies applied can be more targeted and responsive to the needs of the community. With a solid cooperation and effective coordination, the implementation of the Kutai Kartanegara Regent Decree on the delegation of some Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head can run more optimally, improve the quality of public services, and meet the expectations of the community in Sangasanga Subdistrict.

The Inhibiting Factors

Meanwhile, this study also found a number of inhibiting factors include: 1) Limited budget resources, 2) No service quality standards, 3) Complicated administrative procedures, 4) Unreadiness human resources, and 5) Low social and economic conditions of the community.

About the limited budget: When financial resources are inadequate, the implementation of policies experiences various obstacles that hamper the effectiveness and efficiency of tasks delegated to the Subdistrict Head. This has an impact on the Subdistrict's Head ability to provide optimal public services to the community. One of the direct impacts of budget constraints is the lack of support for training and increasing the capacity of human resources or Subdistrict employees. This certainly hampering the development of the ability of human resources at the Subdistrict level which in turn can be affect the quality of service to the community. In addition to this, the limited budget also hampering the procurement of technology and work equipment needed to support the administration and management of new tasks that are more complex.

Subdistrict Heads and staff need to have access to efficient information systems to manage population, licensing and various other administrative data. Without budget support for adequate purchase of hardware and software, the implementation of larger tasks becomes hampered which led to the slow service to the community in Sangasanga Subdistrict. As in the population administration service for the Identity Card. Before 2021, Sangasanga Subdistrict Government only carried out recording. When in 2021 the Regent's Decree was issued regarding the delegation and the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head, the Subdistrict Head was then given the authority to print Identity Cards. However, the provision of printing equipment was only held in 2024. This shows that the implementation of the policies is not supported by the budget properly. This founding is similar to Nakamnanu et al (2019) research.

About no service quality standards: Standards for service quality that are not well defined can result in different interpretations in the implementation of policies, thereby reducing consistency and uniformity in implementing in various districts. This can affect the accountability and effectiveness of actions taken by Subdistrict Heads and staff. Without a clear standard of service quality, it is difficult to evaluate and monitor the performance of the Subdistrict Head and permanent Subdistricts objectively. This can create injustice in public services and community perceptions of local government performance. Without a clear guidance about what is expected of the implementation of this policy, the local government may find it difficult to allocate resources effectively and efficiently.

About complicated administrative procedures: Complexity in the administrative flow and procedures that must be followed in carrying out the authority delegated down to be an obstacle in

the delegation of some of the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head in carrying out tasks at the Subdistrict level. Long and layered procedures sometimes make the decisions making process slow and inefficient, which in turn hinders the smooth running of public services at the Subdistrict level. When administrative or operational procedures are too complicated and complex, can slow down the decisions making process, reduce flexibility in solving problems, and hamper the provision of public services that are responsive to the community. Complicated procedures can also hamper innovation in developing new programs and services at the Subdistrict level. This can reduce motivation to make positive changes and hamper the development of local initiatives that can provide direct benefits to the community.

To overcome this obstacle, efforts need to be made to simplify and accelerate existing administrative procedures, without sacrificing accountability and transparency. Administrative reforms that focus on increasing work efficiency, flexibility and responsibility will help the Subdistrict Head and his staff to be more effective in carrying out their duties and functions, especially in providing better services to the community.

About unreadiness human resources: At the district level, the readiness of human resources is also an important factor in the implementation of the decision of the transfer of some of the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head. The Subdistrict Government needs to have human resources with adequate capacity to carry out greater duties and authorities. At the Sangasanga Subdistrict, there still some staffs that lack of skills and understanding about their duties. Therefore, training and debriefing related to new authority are needed to improve the competencies of the Subdistrict Heads and staff in the Subdistrict. With trained and competent human resources, the implementation of tasks at the Subdistrict level can be more effective and efficient. In this context, the Subdistrict Head and apparatus must have sufficient understanding of the new authority given, as well as the skills to carry out larger and more complex tasks. Every official and staff involved in the administrative process and policy implementation must have the technical ability needed to support their duties. For example, in terms of population administration or licensing services, Subdistrict staff must be trained to manage data well, operate the information system used, and provide fast and appropriate services to the community. The readiness of human resources must also be supported by continuous guidance and evaluation.

The process of delegating authority from the Regent to the Subdistrict Head is not instant, but it requires time and effort to ensure that all apparatus at the district level is ready to face these challenges. Continuing coaching can be done through training, seminars or workshops related to government management, leadership and improving public service. Routine evaluation of the performance of the Subdistrict and Subdistrict staff also needs to be done to find out the extent of their readiness in carrying out the duties and authorities that have been delegated.

About low social and economic conditions of the community: The next obstacle is the factor of the low social and economic conditions of the community in Sangasanga Subdistrict which also affects the effectiveness of the implementation of the policy of delegating part of the Regent's Authority to the Subdistrict Head. If the community has a low level of understanding of changes in the authority of the Subdistrict Government, or if there is an economic instability that affects the

purchasing power and basic needs of the community, it can disrupt the smooth implementation of policies. Limited access to information and effective communication between the Subdistrict Government and the community can also worsen the understanding and participation of the community in the programs implemented, thus hampering the achievement of policy objectives.

Conclusion

The delegation of the Regent's authority to Subdistrict Heads in Kutai Kartanegara, based on Law No. 23/2014 and reinforced by Regent's Decree No. 247/2021, strengthens regional autonomy by empowering local governance and enhancing community participation. While policy implementation has been effective in communication, coordination, and supervision, challenges remain, including insufficient staff competency, inadequate digital and physical infrastructure, and limited budget allocations. To address these gaps, future research should focus on optimizing human resource capacity, advancing digital governance, improving budgetary support, fostering stakeholder collaboration, conducting comparative regional studies, and assessing long-term impacts. These efforts will enhance decentralization effectiveness, ensuring smoother policy execution and greater benefits for local communities.

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