

The policy of village infrastructure service in Deli Serdang Regency, Indonesia



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Abstract This study, conducted in Deli Serdang Regency, Indonesia, explores the challenges associated with the policy of village infrastructure service and examines the relationship between the execution of village administration programs/policies in the region. The research employed a constructivist paradigm and a qualitative approach, gathering data through in-depth interviews and discussions with various local informants. These informants included the headman, village administration secretary, members of the democratic village council-BPD, the regency secretary, and a prominent local figure. The findings reveal limited land availability as a village asset, leading to constrained construction of village structures and a lack of financial resources for new facilities. Also, historical structures are inadequately maintained, and many village roads are poorly maintained. Various factors, such as communication elements, resource availability, disposition, and organizational structure, contribute to the challenges in implementing village infrastructure service policies. To address these issues, the village collaborates with the community, businesses, and other stakeholders to solve local infrastructure problems.

Keywords: village, policy, infrastructure

1. Introduction

The most recent policy concerning villages is Constitution No. 6 of 2014. This was ratified on January 15, 2014, after the house of representatives of the Indonesian Republic approved it on December 18, 2013 (Jamal et al 2023, Syukri, 2023). This is also a successor to local government constitutions No. 22 of 1999 and No. 32 of 2004. This village law is thought to be more comprehensive than previous village laws. Meanwhile, the previous law, law No. 32 of 2004, established village laws as a subpart of the Local Government law's overall text.

Following the decentralization notion and extensive autonomy accepted by law No. 32 of 2004, the government only established 5 (five) administrations (Phahlevy 2016). Furthermore, the regional administration has been given this authority. This results from the government's effort to boost decentralization to the village level (Lewis 2015). As a result, law No. 32 of 2004's basic notion of broad autonomy is only achieved at the regency/city level (Pratolo et al 2020). As a result, the villages' authority had been transferred to the regency/city. Then, it was in charge of the villages' continued rules (Annahar et al 2023). According to academic documents, the village demands more authority than the regency or municipal government can provide. As a result, law No. 6 of 2014 highlighted the village's expanded jurisdiction (Silubun et al 2020).

The village's administrative situation has limited the village's authority, particularly in planning and finance processes. Because of its diversity, defining and identifying the origin of authority (original) is challenging (Rodiyah 2018). The regency's delegated authority in the realm of governance is more of a residual authority that the regency/city could not implement, and that comes with many responsibilities because enough resources did not accompany it. For example, the village had the authority to recommend certain administrative letters, but higher authorities made the final decision. The village's function was confined as a result of the village's lack of authority, and there was no room for the village to manage its affairs (Rodiyah 2018). As a result, "village authority includes the authority in the implementation of village government, the implementation of village development, the coaching of a rural community, and the village community empowerment based on community initiative, the right of origin, and the village customs. It was incorporated into Article 18 of the village's law. As a result, the village has taken over regency authority.

Law No. 6 of 2014 aims to improve the village so that it can become more self-sufficient and successful (Endartuti et al 2020). These goals and expectations were considered difficult to attain if the village was still governed by Regional Government Laws No. 22 and 32 from 1999 to 2004. As a result, independent communities in Indonesia are likely to emerge in the future. *Penglipuran* village in Bali, for example, is a self-contained traditional village. In Asia, there are many examples of self-contained settlements. In South Korea, for example, the village development movement known as *Saemaul Undong* has successfully created villages. The village development program in South Korea began in the 1970s and demonstrated a significant increase in farmers' family income from 225.800 Korean won in 1970 to 1.531.000 Korean won in 1979. The triumph



of the *Saemaul Undong* movement was undoubtedly made possible by the South Korean government's overwhelming national support. This finding drew the attention of many policymakers who decided to implement the trend in industrialized countries. The Indonesian government is working hard to ensure that Indonesian villages can grow and develop into self-sufficient communities, similar to what happened in South Korea's villages. Village law No. 6 of 2014 is a policy intended to stimulate the formation of independent communities by giving villages more authority, notably in financial administration.

This study aims to examine how village infrastructure services are provided in the Deli Serdang regency, as well as how village infrastructure services are related to the development of village public policies in the Deli Serdang regency. This research is relevant to applying Deli Serdang Regency's village law No. 6 of 2014. Village law No. 6 of 2014 delegated authority and responsibility for village public services to the village. The village infrastructure service is one of the services available. This research will also provide recommendations for the village public service-making process in the Deli Serdang regency and village administration in Indonesia in general.

2. Method

This research was carried out in the Deli Serdang regency of North Sumatra Province. The constructivist paradigm was employed in conjunction with a qualitative research method. The information was gathered through an in-depth interview and discussions with several villages (headman, secretary of village administration, democratic village council-BPD), regency (secretary of regency), and prominent village (headman, secretary of village administration, democratic village council-BPD) informants (village).

The first step in this investigation is to schedule an interview to learn more about the Deli Serdang regency's village infrastructure service strategy. Several aspects were incorporated into the interview agenda. First, the village infrastructure services in Deli Serdang Regency as a whole include the village office, meeting hall, road, bridge, irrigation, market, village enterprise office, village enterprise outlet (shop, café, homestay, and so on), fish auction, boat mooring, early childhood education building, integrated healthcare center, and so on. Second, administrative infrastructure services such as the village hall and office. Third, services include village roads, bridges, irrigation, markets, village meeting halls, village enterprise offices, village enterprise outlets (stores, cafés, guesthouses, and so on), fish auctions, and boat docking. Market location, building condition, parking area, park, trash bin, toilet, market, prayer room, and so on are all village market services. Fifth, the village's social infrastructure includes early childhood education facilities, an integrated healthcare facility, a meeting hall, waste disposal (TPS), a sports field, a sports center, a cultural art studio, etc. The village apparatus (headman, secretary of village administration, democratic village council-BPD), the regency apparatus, the prominent, and the mass organizations were given the questions prepared in the interview schedule.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the interview, JF, as the headman of Mariendal II, Patumbak, states that the village infrastructure service is quite good, such as the village road and the village office. For instance, the roads of villages are paved by the regency. Moreover, the headman, Jufrianto, expressed:

"Overall, we believe that the infrastructure service provided by the district government in this Marendal II village is fairly good and successful. Since the start of the project, road paving has been prioritized. Through what we refer to as the Development Planning Conference (MUSRENBANG), then to the desire of regional assembly, and finally to our own proposal, whether for Public Works or for Public Housing and Residential Areas. However, since we took over as head of the village in 2016, the village office has never been modernized. This condition, in our opinion, is fairly appropriate and representative. As a result, there was no further building funded by the Regional Government or the Village Government" (interview with JF).

He further notes that all administrative services at the village office are free because the regional government's budget covers them. "We make the administrative service at the village office free." Second, everything has to be lightning-fast. Why are we giving it away for free? We have no reason to establish the rate of service here, either the daily or public administrative service in the community because it is funded by the regional government budget by village funds. Village funds are one of the types of autonomy given to villages to manage their budgets (Permatasari et al 2021, Renyaan 2023, Tarlani & Sirajuddin 2020, Utomo et al 2022, Wardiningsih et al, 2022). He also adds that neither that nor the service rate were used in the end. Even though some people do give it, we normally refer to it as an old habit. We occasionally decline the rate, but for some who want to provide it, it is sometimes IDR 5,000". As a comparison, Table 1 shows village infrastructure services in Deli Serdang Regency in 2019-2023.

On the other hand, Mr. JL, the headman of Mekarsari village, Deli Tua, stated that the village infrastructure runs very well. The infrastructure financing thus far has come from the village fund. It is relevant to research by Andari and Fitria (2023), mentioning that village funds are crucial to rural poverty alleviation goals and the improvement of village autonomy. For instance, it is the repair of 197 meters of drainage.

"The infrastructure of Deli Serdang is, Alhamdulillah, in good working order. However, for the past two years, since the village budget, which is funded by the village fund, has been tied to the COVID issue, we know that we, particularly the world

and Indonesia, are still exposed to COVID. This indicates that the village fund is used to help those afflicted by COVID, and the money comes from three different sources: DD, BHP, and ADD, totaling Rp. 1.651.191.426,-. Since there are three sources, the fund that may be used for BLT (cash transfer) is Rp. 697.021.326, from the ADD (allocation of village fund), and we repaired a 197-metre drainage system. Finally, we continue to provide infrastructure services, although there is only one infrastructure. In terms of the regional government budget, we have a lodge rental budget, but it is not used to its full potential because many people in Mekarsari village have similar businesses. In addition, because we are a densely inhabited village, we do not have a fish auction or anything like that because the Mekarsari community means that services and trades that existed in Mekarsari village are no longer available."

Table 1 Village Infrastructure Services in Deli Serdang Regency 2019-2023.

No	Types of Services	Budget (IDR)/Year	Total (IDR)
1	Village-Owned Enterprises	9,850,000,000	49,250,000,000
2	Village Market	11,000,000,000	55,000,000,000
3	Early Childhood Education	8,865,000,000	44,325,000,000
4	Integrated Health Service Post	15,322,000,000	76,610,000,000
5	Waste Disposal	4,230,000,000	21,150,000,000
6	Village Garden	13,405,000,000	67,025,000,000
Total			313,360,000,000

Several significant findings are related to the village infrastructure service in the Deli Serdang regency. All the results need further theoretical analysis in implementing a village's policy/program. Theoretically, several models could be used as analysis tools in the implementation of village public policy, for instance, Edwards III (1980); Meter & Carl E (1975); Cheema & Dennis (1983). These models of policy implementation generally pay attention to the variables or factors that cause failure in policy implementation.

For the discussion/analysis purpose of the research findings related to the problems in implementing the village infrastructure service policy/program in Deli Serdang regency, the model George C. Edwards III developed is adopted. The model focused on the variables/factors that affected the failure to implement the policy/program. According to Edwards III, policy implementation is affected by four variables/factors: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. Those four variables/factors are related to each other.

3.1. Communication

The implementer determines the success of policy implementation. He must know what he would do (Sufi et al 2023). The objective and goal of the policy must be transmitted to the target group to reduce implementation distortion. If the objective and purpose of the policy are not transparent or even not known by the target group, then there is likely to be opposition from the target group. In implementing village infrastructure service policy through community empowerment, the headman/village officials must know the objective and mechanism of village public service as a form of policy/program communication.

To transmit the objective and goal of the policy to the target effectively and efficiently, not only a good building but also the physical distance of the location of adjacent buildings is needed (Dilapanga et al 2023). Even though communication technology can overcome a long distance, technology cannot solve every problem in policy/program communication in the government bureaucracy. In several ways, physically close contact is needed. It could be concluded that the modern offices are in one location, and all facilities are available in it, including sports facilities, worship rooms, shopping centers, and so on.

3.2. Resource

Even though the policy content is communicated clearly and consistently, the implementer lacks the resources to execute the policy/program, so the policy implementation will not run effectively. The variables/factors of resources could be human resources (for instance, competence), financial resources, and facilities (Dilapanga et al 2023). The lack of village infrastructure facilities, either new or old, is related to resources. The village government has difficulty executing the village policy/program amidst the limited facilities of the village office building. The village government cannot recruit new and qualified administrative staff amidst the limited office facilities. In addition, adequate seats and tables do not exist, and salaries are minimal. Consequently, the village policy/program in serving the public does not run effectively.

3.3. Disposition

Disposition is a trait and characteristic the implementer owns, such as commitment, honesty, and a democratic attitude (Dilapanga et al 2023). If the implementer has a good disposition, he could implement the policy/program well, similar to what the policymakers wanted. If the implementer has a different attitude from the policymakers, the policy implementation process will run ineffectively. Practically, this disposition could be done quickly, for instance, through corruption.

The buildings of the village government that are good are located adjacent and are in one area related to the disposition. Commitment, honesty, and democratic attitude of the policy implementer would increase because those work in a good building and are physically supervised at a close distance. Modern office buildings are equipped with sophisticated equipment to supervise employees' performance, for instance, CCTV.

3.4. The Bureaucratic Structure

The organizational structure that is in charge of performing the policy/program significantly influences policy implementation, such as SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) (Dilapanga et al 2023). SOP is one of the most important things in the bureaucratic structure and is the guideline/basis for every implementer in taking action. An organizational structure that is too long could weaken the implementation of the supervisory function and lead to red tape. Red tape is a complicated and complex bureaucratic procedure. Red tape could cause organizational activities to become rigid or inflexible. The SOP of the village government (operational/technical guidelines) would be easy to arrange and to be implemented as the basis/guidelines for the village implementers in performing the policy/program if the village has good buildings, is adjacent physically, and is located in an integrated area.

4. Final Considerations

Based on the analysis, it was found that the village generally does not have sufficient land as village assets. The buildings of villages were constructed on land with a limited area. In addition, the village is not able to build new buildings. The old buildings also did not receive adequate maintenance due to budget reasons. The village infrastructure service, such as village roads and offices, is quite good. For instance, village roads are asphalted by the regency through the proposal submitted by the village. However, in several villages in Deli Serdang, the condition of village roads is still poor.

The village does not have the village hall as a separate building. However, the village office has a hall. The village hall could be used for public activities such as organizational meetings and sports centers. However, some village halls need building maintenance in several villages. The problems found in the village infrastructure service policy related to the implementation of the village's program/policy. The failure of the village infrastructure service policy in Deli Serdang Regency was caused by communication factors (objective, suggestion, and process), resources (human beings, costs, and facilities), disposition (commitment, honesty), and organizational structure (charts, standard operating procedures, authority).

To address the challenges in the Policy of Village Infrastructure Service in Deli Serdang Regency, collaboration among the village, community, enterprises, and other stakeholders is essential for constructing and managing the village government's buildings and facilities. Additionally, the government of Deli Serdang regency's will to obtain the area of ex-HGU PTPN II to be allocated as a village asset is needed.

Ethical Considerations

Before conducting interviews, informed consent was obtained from all participants. They were provided detailed information about the study, its purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and their right to withdraw. Participants were allowed to ask questions and provide written consent before participating in the study.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest.

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