

Policy Networks and the Effectiveness of Public Policy Implementation from the Perspective of Special Autonomy in Jayawijaya Regency

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Abstrack

The implementation of public policy in special autonomous regions is highly complex due to unique geographical, social, cultural, and institutional conditions. Jayawijaya Regency, as part of the special autonomous region of Papua, faces various challenges in implementing public policy, requiring a collaborative governance approach. This study aims to analyze the role of policy networks in supporting the effectiveness of public policy implementation in Jayawijaya Regency. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical research type. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation studies, then analyzed qualitatively. The results show that the implementation of public policy in Jayawijaya Regency has not been optimal due to weak coordination between actors, limited capacity of the apparatus, minimal involvement of indigenous peoples, geographical and infrastructure barriers, and low levels of trust between the government and the community. This study concludes that strengthening an inclusive, adaptive, and trust-based policy network is a key factor in improving the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomous regions.

Keywords: policy network, public policy implementation, special autonomy, Jayawijaya Regency

Introduction

Public policy implementation is indeed a critical phase in the policy cycle, particularly in regions like Jayawijaya Regency, which is characterized by unique geographic, social, and cultural conditions. The complexity of policy implementation in a special autonomous region requires an adaptive approach that takes into account the local context (Abu et al., 2023). Geographical barriers, such as challenging terrain and accessibility issues, further complicate public policy implementation, requiring tailored strategies to address these obstacles. Furthermore, the diverse social and cultural background of Papua Province highlights the importance of sensitivity to local customs and values in policy implementation (Abu, 2024). Therefore, effective policy implementation in Jayawijaya Regency requires continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure that policies are not only relevant but also effectively meet the specific needs of the community (Mussad, 2022). This comprehensive understanding is crucial for realizing policy objectives in practice.

The implementation of special autonomy in Papua, particularly in Jayawijaya Regency, aims to improve development and community welfare by empowering local governments and communities. However, significant challenges remain in public policy implementation,

including limited capacity among local government officials, inadequate inter-agency coordination, and low involvement of non-governmental actors (Hasibuan, 2022). These issues highlight that effective public policy implementation cannot rely solely on local governments; it requires a collaborative approach involving various stakeholders (Ismoyo et al., 2022). Furthermore, understanding the legal framework established by the special autonomy law is crucial, as it delineates the roles and responsibilities of local governments and non-state actors in this process. Addressing these challenges through capacity building, enhanced coordination, and active civil society participation is crucial to realizing the goals of special autonomy in the region.

A policy network approach is crucial for understanding the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomy areas, as it emphasizes collaborative interactions between various actors, including government entities, indigenous communities, and civil society organizations. This collaboration is crucial for effective public policy implementation, as it fosters the exchange of resources, information, and trust among stakeholders (Kareh et al., 2025). The participation of indigenous communities is significant, as their involvement in decision-making processes enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of policies. Furthermore, collaborative governance plays a crucial role in establishing a framework that facilitates cooperation among diverse actors, ultimately leading to better policy outcomes (Sukandi, A., 2024). By recognizing the importance of these interactions and resource exchanges, the policy network approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics influencing public policy implementation in this unique context (Ilhami, 2023).

The formation of effective policy networks in Jayawijaya Regency faces significant challenges, including divergent interests among actors, limited infrastructure, low institutional capacity, and insufficient trust. These factors collectively hinder the effectiveness of policy networks, which are crucial for successful public policy implementation (Ilhami, 2023). Infrastructure limitations can hinder communication and collaboration, while low institutional capacity limits organizations' ability to effectively engage in these networks (Busiara et al., 2025). Furthermore, trust and social capital are crucial for fostering cooperation among actors, and their absence can exacerbate existing challenges (Aulia & Andhini, 2025). To improve public policy implementation in special autonomous regions such as Jayawijaya, it is crucial to conduct in-depth studies exploring how these policy networks can be strengthened, thereby enhancing collaboration and resource sharing among stakeholders. Addressing these issues will ultimately lead to a more resilient and effective policy network. Based on this description, this study aims to analyze policy networks and the effectiveness of public policy implementation from the perspective of a special autonomous region in Jayawijaya Regency. This research is

expected to provide theoretical contributions in the development of policy network studies in the context of special autonomy as well as practical contributions for local governments in strengthening more effective and sustainable public policy implementation.

Literature Review

Policy Network

Policy networks are an approach that views public policy as the result of the interactions of various interdependent actors. Rhodes (1997) defines a policy network as a relatively stable pattern of relationships between governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the policy process and possessing different interests and resources. In this context, the state no longer acts as a single actor, but rather as part of an interdependent network.

Marsh and Rhodes (1992) suggest that policy networks can be distinguished by their level of openness, the intensity of interaction, and the distribution of resources between actors. Closed networks tend to be dominated by specific actors, while open networks allow for broader actor participation. In the context of policy implementation, policy networks influence how coordination, communication, and role allocation between actors occur.

Ansell and Gash (2008) emphasize that effective policy networks require collaborative governance, characterized by face-to-face dialogue, facilitative leadership, trust between actors, and shared commitment. This approach is relevant in the context of special autonomous regions with diverse actors and interests.

Public Policy Implementation

Public policy implementation is the process of translating policy decisions into concrete actions. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973) stated that policy implementation often faces various obstacles, so policy outcomes do not always align with initial objectives. The success of policy implementation is greatly influenced by coordination between actors, clarity of objectives, and the availability of resources.

Van Meter and Van Horn (1975) suggested that policy implementation is influenced by several variables, including policy standards and objectives, resources, characteristics of implementing agents, inter-organizational communication, and social, economic, and political conditions. In this context, policy networks serve as a coordination mechanism that can strengthen the effectiveness of public policy implementation.

Modern approaches to policy implementation emphasize the importance of the involvement of non-governmental actors. Hill and Hupe (2002) assert that policy

implementation is not merely administrative but also an interactive process involving various actors within the policy network.

Special Autonomy and Regional Governance

Special autonomy is a form of asymmetric decentralization that grants specific authority to certain regions to regulate and manage government affairs according to local characteristics. In the Papuan context, special autonomy aims to accelerate development, improve public welfare, and respect the social and cultural values of indigenous communities.

According to Rondinelli and Cheema (1983), decentralization, including special autonomy, is expected to increase the effectiveness of public services and public participation. However, in practice, special autonomy also faces challenges, such as limited institutional capacity, weak coordination, and regional social and geographical complexity.

Pierre and Peters (2000) explain that in a decentralized and asymmetrical government system, governance tends to shift toward governance, where policy networks become a crucial instrument in implementing public policy. Therefore, the study of policy networks is relevant to understanding the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomy regions such as Jayawijaya Regency.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical approach. The qualitative approach was chosen to deeply understand the role of policy networks in supporting the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomy regions, particularly in Jayawijaya Regency, which has unique geographic, social, and institutional characteristics. The research location was Jayawijaya Regency, Papua Province. The focus of the research was directed at the policy networks formed in the process of public policy implementation, including patterns of relationships between actors, coordination and collaboration mechanisms, and the influence of policy networks on the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomy regions.

Results and Discussion

The results of field research found several problems that caused the public policy network model to be less than optimal, including :

1. Public policy implementation in Jayawijaya Regency still faces weak coordination between actors, both within Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD) and between the local government and non-governmental actors. The policy networks that have been

formed tend to be sectoral and unintegrated, resulting in partial and unsynchronized policy implementation.

2. The capacity of local government officials to implement public policy remains relatively limited, particularly in technical and managerial aspects, and in their understanding of special autonomy policies. These limitations impact the low effectiveness of policy implementation, particularly in the public service and social development sectors.
3. Although special autonomy emphasizes recognizing the role of indigenous communities, in practice, the involvement of indigenous communities and civil society organizations in public policy implementation remains limited. Non-governmental actors are often only formally involved and have not yet become active members of the policy network.
4. Jayawijaya Regency's mountainous geography and limited transportation and communication infrastructure are major obstacles to public policy implementation. These obstacles impact program distribution, monitoring of policy implementation, and coordination between actors in the field.
5. Access to public policy information is not evenly distributed throughout Jayawijaya Regency. Communities in remote areas often lack adequate information about government policies and programs, resulting in low levels of public participation and support for policy implementation.
6. The use of special autonomy funds in public policy implementation has not been fully integrated with local needs and priorities. In some cases, program planning and implementation are not supported by strong policy networks, resulting in less than optimal use of special autonomy funds.
7. The relationship between local governments and communities, particularly indigenous communities, remains characterized by low levels of trust. This situation impacts public acceptance of public policies and hinders the formation of collaborative and sustainable policy networks.

Discussion

1. Coordination issues among policy actors in Jayawijaya Regency indicate that the established policy network remains fragmented. Relationships among Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPDs) and between the local government and non-governmental actors have not been systematically managed. From a policy network perspective, weak coordination hinders the exchange of information and resources

needed to support the effective implementation of public policies. The local government needs to establish and strengthen a policy network coordination forum involving OPDs, indigenous communities, civil society organizations, and other non-governmental actors. This forum serves as a space for communication, alignment of interests, and joint decision-making in public policy implementation.

2. Limited capacity of implementing officials is a major inhibiting factor in public policy implementation in Jayawijaya. The imbalance in capacity between actors leads to an imbalance in the roles within the policy network. Government actors tend to be dominant, while non-governmental actors and indigenous communities are unable to participate optimally in policy implementation. Capacity building of government officials and non-governmental actors is necessary through training, mentoring, and institutional strengthening. This capacity building aims to create a balanced role between actors within the policy network.
 3. As a special autonomous region, Jayawijaya has social and cultural characteristics that place indigenous communities as important actors in public policy. However, the minimal involvement of indigenous communities in policy implementation indicates that the policy network is not yet inclusive. This impacts the low legitimacy and acceptance of policies at the local level. The local government needs to institutionalize the role of indigenous communities in public policy implementation through formal, institutionally recognized mechanisms. The active involvement of indigenous communities will increase the legitimacy and effectiveness of policies at the local level.
 4. The geographic conditions and limited infrastructure in Jayawijaya complicate the process of public policy implementation. These obstacles are not only technical but also affect interaction patterns within the policy network. Limited access to transportation and communication hinders policy coordination and oversight, making it difficult for the policy network to function effectively. Public policy implementation needs to be adapted to Jayawijaya's geographic and infrastructural conditions. Utilizing a region-based approach and simple information technology can help strengthen the policy network in conditions of limited access.
 5. The use of special autonomy funds has not been fully integrated into a strong policy network. Program planning and implementation are often conducted top-down, without adequate involvement of local actors. As a result, special autonomy funds have not optimally supported the implementation of public policies that meet the needs of the Jayawijaya community. Management of special autonomy funds needs to be integrated
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into policy planning and implementation based on policy networks. Involving local actors from the planning stage will increase the effectiveness and accountability of special autonomy fund use.

Trust is a key element in effective policy networks. Low levels of trust between local governments and communities, particularly indigenous communities, hinder collaboration in public policy implementation. Without trust, actors tend to be passive and reluctant to actively participate in policy networks. Facilitative and transparent local government leadership is key to building trust between actors. Strong trust will encourage collaborative commitment and strengthen policy networks in public policy implementation.

Conclusion

This research demonstrates that policy networks play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomy regions, particularly in Jayawijaya Regency. The complexity of geographic, social, and institutional conditions means that public policy implementation cannot rely solely on the role of local governments but requires the involvement and collaboration of various actors within the policy network.

The research findings reveal that public policy implementation in Jayawijaya Regency still faces various challenges, including weak coordination between actors, limited capacity of implementing officials, minimal involvement of indigenous communities, geographical and infrastructure barriers, suboptimal integration of special autonomy funds, and low levels of trust between the government and the community. These issues indicate that the established policy networks have not functioned effectively and inclusively in supporting public policy implementation.

Based on these findings, this research confirms that strengthening policy networks is a key prerequisite for increasing the effectiveness of public policy implementation in special autonomy regions. This strengthening can be achieved through increased cross-actor coordination, institutionalizing the role of indigenous communities, increasing actor capacity, adapting policy implementation to local conditions, collaborative management of special autonomy funds, and building trust between actors. With a strong and collaborative policy network, the implementation of public policy in Jayawijaya Regency is expected to be more effective, responsive and sustainable.

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