



## Local Government Capacity Model in Education Policy Innovation

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Regional autonomy provides opportunities for local governments to be creative in advancing their regions in various fields, including education. The education policy innovation that is produced depends greatly on the ability to innovate and the willingness to innovate. Hence, this article aims to analyze the capacity models of local government that have the potential to produce educational policy innovations along with the supporting factors for the presence of an innovation in education policy. The research method employed is a qualitative method with data collection instruments namely in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation, including literature studies. The results achieved are an overview of the capacity models of local governments that can produce innovations (novelty) in formulating and implementing education policies. Further, there are various factors identified that support the presence of a policy innovation.

**Keywords:** *Local Government Capacity, Education Policy Innovation*

### Introduction

Decentralization of education is essentially an effort to delegate some or all of the authority in the field of education that should be carried out by a central unit or official to the regional government or from the government to the community. One manifestation of the principle of decentralization is the existence of regional autonomy. Regional autonomy provides free space for the regions to determine their own destiny, including how the region regulates and organizes educational affairs.

An autonomous region must be brave and capable of being different (*the capacity to create difference*) from other regions. Regional autonomy provides space for regional governments to be creative in advancing their regions in various fields, including education. Educational



policy innovations produced by local governments depend heavily on the *ability to innovate* and *willingness to innovate*. Local governments have a large role in regulating and controlling their regions through various policies and programs in accordance with the *local choice* and *local voice* of the community. Therefore, the ability of public officials to innovate will be a decisive role in solving problems in the community. In other words, the capacity of a local government will largely determine the performance of the public policy produced. UNDP (1998) states that capacity can be interpreted as the ability of individuals and organizations or organizational units to carry out their duties and functions effectively, efficiently and sustainably. Capacity can also be interpreted in the context of a system where an entity works to achieve a common goal based on certain standard processes and rules (Çoban, & Yildirim, 2018). In this context, capacity is an illustration of the ability of the regional government, both as a whole, the units of the regional government apparatus, as well as individual regional government officials to produce the expected performance of the education policy.

Educational policy innovation is a necessity where every substantive principle will provide an improvement in the quality of education itself, while responding to all issues related to education. Previous research on the importance of local government capacity in producing educational policy innovations had been conducted by Eko Prasajo and Teguh Kurniawan (2004) and explains the dominance of the role of regents in educational policy innovation programs through school tuition free programs. The domination of the role of the regent is shown through *political will* and high *commitment* to eventually change the culture of innovation at the bureaucratic level. M.A. Ajibola (2008) conducted research on the innovation of basic education curriculum development policies in Nigeria. His research criticized the lack of the government's role in creating a realistic and child-centered curriculum. Finally M.A. Ajibola recommends that the Nigerian Government develop educational policies that have *inter-disciplinary courses, open ended systems, inter-generational and inter-professional relationships, multi-culturalism and sustainability* at all levels and units of education Cihan, (2018).

This article aims to analyze a local government capacity model which has potential to produce educational policy innovations and supporting factors for the presence of innovation in education policy.

## **Method**

This study used a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through *in-depth interview, focus group discussion (FGD)* and *documentation* including literature studies related to research. The research participants were selected *purposively*. The participants are the Mayor of Padang, the Head of Department of Education of Padang City, the Head of the



Basic Education Section of Padang City, and the education observer. Data was analyzed qualitatively. The validity of research data is obtained through *credibility*, *transferability*, and *dependability* and can be confirmed (*confirmability*). To analyze the data qualitative data analysis steps were used including data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Local Government Capacity and Educational Policy Innovation.***

The capacity of local governments to develop education policy innovations at the local level has received major attention due to the transfer of authority from the center to the regions. The basic concept in explaining more about the role of local government capacity to innovate is explained by M. Grindle (1997) in his work: *Getting Good Government: Capacity Building in the Public Sector of Developing Countries*. *Theory of Capacity Building* concerns the development of the dimension of *human resources*, the dimension of *organizational strengthening* and the dimension of *institutional reform*. The capacity in question is the ability of the regional government, both as a whole, the unit of the regional government, and the individual regional government apparatus that exists to produce effective, efficient and sustainable performance.

Furthermore, according to Grindle (1997) the dimension of human resources focuses on the availability of professional apparatus / bureaucracy that has a variety of technical capabilities. Meanwhile, the dimension of organizational strengthening focuses on how to know the management of management systems and tasks that are structured in detail. Furthermore, the dimension of institutional reform focuses on changing the system and institutions involved in it.

Educational policy innovation becomes an indicator of the success of the performance of local government in carrying out educational affairs in the era of decentralization while demonstrating the quality of the government's innovation management capacity. Educational policy innovation is reproduced in accordance with the needs and desires of the regional community itself and adapted to the characteristics of the regime. In Padang City, West Sumatra, as stated in its long-term development plan, the vision of the Mayor of Padang City 2014-2019 is to realize the City of Padang as a city of education, trade, and tourism that is prosperous, religious, and cultured. Meanwhile, one of the missions of Padang City is to realize quality education to produce human resources who are faithful, creative, and competitive. The vision and mission of the Mayor of Padang concerning education was further elaborated by the Padang City Department of Education as the Regional Work Unit (SKPD) which assist the regional head in the administration of regional governance in the



field of education. In carrying out its duties the Department of Education of Padang City has the following functions: (1) formulating technical policies in the field of education; (2) organizing government affairs and public services in the field of education; (3) guidance and implementation of affairs in the field of education; (4) coaching the implementation unit of the official technique; and (5) the implementation of other duties given by the Mayor in accordance with their duties and functions.

To carry out their duties and functions, an organization and official work system has been prepared as regulated through Regional Regulation No.14 of 2012 concerning the Establishment of the Organization and Work Flow Arrangement of Padang City Regional Office and Padang Mayor Regulation No.12 of 2012 concerning the Elaboration of Main Tasks and Government Service Functions Regions assisted by: (1) Secretariat in charge of: (a) sub-division of general and staffing; (b) financial sub-section, and (c) program sub-section; (2) The Field of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) which supervises: (a) the section for the development of early childhood education; (b) section for courses and training, and (c) section for community education; (3) Basic Education Sector, supervising: (a) basic education curriculum section; (b) elementary education student section; and (c) the section for basic education technical personnel; (4) Secondary Education Sector, supervising: (a) secondary education curriculum section; (b) secondary education student section; (c) section of secondary education technical personnel; (5) Fields of Facilities, Infrastructure and Assets, supervising: (a) section of basic education facilities; (b) section of secondary education facilities; and (c) asset section. In addition to the secretariats and fields, organizational completeness is also supported by the existence of several regional technical implementing units.

Based on the vision and mission of the Mayor of Padang as well as the vision and mission of the Regional Work Unit, which takes care of the education sector, it is reflected in the strong will of the authorities to create educational policy innovations in Padang City. The role of the regional government in developing its capacity to produce innovative policies in the education sector can be observed in the flagship programs of the Mayor and the education department. The 10 Mahyeldi-Emzalmi's flagship programs related to education are: conducting Islamic boarding school education during Ramadan, religious activities, quality arts and sports, free education for elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools, and State Vocational Schools (SMK) and scholarships for all outstanding students from poor families. From the Mayor's flagship program, a number of educational policy innovations have been made including the Padang memorizing (Hafidz) Al-Quran Program launched by the Mayor of Padang since October 13, 2015 as an implementation of the Mayor's policy/regulation No.33 of 2013 concerning the Hafidz Qur'an Education Program. This program is carried out on all levels of education and in this case both formal and non-



formal education. This policy is assumed as an innovative education policy since the Hafidz Qur'an Education Program has always been imposed in a non-formal education style such as *Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an* (TPQ), *Madrasah Diniyah Awaliyah*, and other community-based institutions. Meanwhile, the targets are elementary school-age children as viewed from a junior high school or high school perspective.

The next policy is about Regional School Operational Funding (BOSDA). This policy is a realization of the free education policy of the flagship program. The policy regarding BOSDA was initially regulated in the Mayor's Regulation No.17 of 2014 and lastly regulated through Mayor Regulation No. 35 of 2017 which was a change of Mayor Regulation No.4A in 2017. BOSDA funds were used to accommodate various needs in the field of education that were not accommodated with funds from School Operational Funding (BOS) from the central government. The free school program is implemented through the BOSDA fund which is the Padang Mayor program for the 2014-2019 period.

The next education policy is about Padang Mayor Decree No.149 of 2018 and has been valid since January 2, 2018 regarding Non-permanent Teachers who are not Civil Servants for the fiscal year 2018. This Mayor's Decree was issued in order to meet the need for teacher shortages in Padang City. Furthermore, those teachers were promoted to get the serial number of education and education personnel as well as teacher certification allowances and not as a requirement to be appointed as Candidates for Civil Servants (CPNS). Another education policy for Padang City is the Circular of the Head of the Padang City Office No.421.2 / 4676 / DP / Bid.Dikdas02 / 2018 concerns the Use of Teacher Certification Allowances which states that the use of certification benefits received by teachers is for the following: (1 ) improving the teacher's educational qualifications concerned at a higher level; (2) independent professional development activities; (3) attending seminars, workshops or technical guidance on developing and/or improving the quality of learning; (4) the development of the Teacher Working Group (KKG) as well as the Subject Teachers Meeting (MGMP) at the cluster, district, city, provincial and national levels independently; (5) purchase of teacher knowledge support books, especially reference books for the benefit of learning/education; (6) the purchase of learning tools or media to help establish ideal teaching and learning process, such as: laptops, LCDs, and computers that are the personal property of the teacher concerned; (7) electronic media subscriptions, especially the internet that is installed in the teacher's home, as well as newspapers and magazines subscriptions that support education. From various examples of education policies that have been disclosed previously, the government's ability to regulate and manage various educational affairs is innovative.



The capacity of local government in managing educational policy innovations according to Gabris, et al. (2009) is largely determined by three strategic factors: firstly, credible leaders (*leadership credibility*). Leaders who have credibility are leaders who have skills and behaviors that can be learned, practiced, and used to achieve high organizational performance. A credible leader is a leader who has a clear vision for which direction the organization will go. The vision must also be communicated to subordinates who need to commit to follow and realize the vision together.

Secondly, there must be a *strong management* team. This implies the existence of a professional bureaucratic structure and can work in accordance with its main tasks and functions. Furthermore, the third factor is the *governing board functioning*. This emphasizes the work of representatives of citizens, for example in formulating solutions to various problems of society without discrimination.

Furthermore, Kim et al (2007) explained the innovating capacity model of government, namely: (1) innovative leadership; (2) the quality of the work team; (3) systems/structures that support the innovation program; and (4) management of outside influences.

## 2. *Supporting Factors for Educational Policy Innovation.*

Educational policy innovations can be produced with the following conditions:

- a. Leadership that has the will to produce *novelty* while having management skills to produce policy innovations.
- b. There is political support through local regulations for the presence of an educational policy innovation.
- c. Institutionalization of a productive and positive organizational work culture based on national culture.
- d. Increasing organizational/institutional governance capacity.
- e. Increased budget capacity, facilities and infrastructure to support the presence of innovation.
- f. Provision of work operational standards that can become technical guidelines for implementing tasks based on structure and function.
- g. There is a shared commitment to continue working on bringing innovation.

Strong leadership encourages staff / employees to work optimally. Rivai and Mulyadi (2009) explain some of the characteristics of leaders who provide support including recognizing the achievements of team members, encouraging and facilitating members to work and try, and have commitment. Furthermore, the existence of political support through local regulations is a concrete manifestation of the power of legitimacy. Marshall and Gerstl Pepin (2005)



explain that educational policy innovation is the choice of government action to implement binding political decisions.

Meanwhile, a productive and positive work culture based on the noble values of national culture such as discipline, politeness, mutual respect, communication and value systems, work motivation that is always evolving, is also a determining factor in the presence of an innovation. On the other hand, the development of organizational governance capacity according to Milen (2004) is an internal process of the organization to be able to continue learning to realize a good government in accordance with common goals. Characteristics of organizational capacity development can be realized through the mechanism of working together with internal and external parties.

Next, increasing budget capacity, facilities and infrastructure is a task of the local government to be able to facilitate the planning of innovation programs such as sufficient funds, transportation and communication equipment, as well as the availability of office tools that support the implementation of tasks. The provision of work operational standards is also an important matter that facilitates the technical implementation of bureaucratic authority and duties. This will be better if there is the application of modern work methods based on science and technology in the administration of government.

Finally, there is a shared commitment to continue working on bringing innovation. Milen (2004) states that the development of local government capacity to bring innovation requires a long-term commitment from all parties involved.

## **Conclusion**

The model of capacity building for local government that plays a role in bringing innovation in education policy in the Padang City is very dependent on the willingness to innovate and the ability to innovate from the regional head and Department of Education as its leading sector. Therefore, it is necessary to maintain the factors that support the presence of educational policy innovations, especially aspects and organizational culture to continue to grow and learn together to build commitment.

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