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THE PERILS OF BUREAUCRATIC INERTIA: A STEPS TOWARD ENHANCING GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT

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Abstrack : *The aims of study is to investigate phenomenon of bureaucratic inertia within the Indonesian government system, which detrimentally affects government governance, administrative systems, and public services provided to the people. It is crucial to acknowledge the significant risk posed by the persistence of bureaucratic inertia in the absence of any proactive measures to address and advance necessary changes. This research employs a comprehensive literature review, incorporating 35 relevant scholarly sources that are closely aligned with the current study. The occurrence of bureaucratic inertia in Indonesia is a significant challenge since local institutions always face pressure from the central government, resulting in diminished authority, influence, and power. From an institutional standpoint, it is crucial to have transparency mechanisms in place to guide decision-makers. These mechanisms should allow for the authorization or restriction of actions, enforceable regulations and procedures, and appropriate incentives or penalties to ensure wise decision-making. By implementing such measures, institutions can gradually develop into responsible entities that prioritize transparency in meeting public demands. From a capacity standpoint, the key criteria for overcoming bureaucratic inertia include improving the organizational and managerial structure, facilities, and infrastructure, and promoting the establishment of an extensive network. Furthermore, there exists a significant prospect to engage in cooperation with exterior stakeholders to leverage solutions to compete with regions that possess greater advancement than others.*

Keywords *: government; governance; bureaucratic inertia; government management; decentralization; Indonesia.*

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INTRODUCTION

Decentralization is the consequence of an agreement to develop and move power away from the agreed-upon centrality model to provide regions confidence in governing and growing their areas in response to local social, economic, and cultural factors (Nas et al., 2019; Talitha et al., 2019). The available paradigms are arranged to form wise governance, growing from the regions/bottom-up, developing independently (Hodson & Marvin, 2009; Tommasi & Weinschelbaum, 2007); gradually transforming for the benefit of society (Watts, 2020); and rapidly developing outside of design (Sellers et al., 2020). As a result, an integrated approach is required to address demands by incorporating levels of society in managing circumstances, resulting in a more complicated and methodically planned acceleration of growth.

Many studies in the previous literature examined the importance of decentralization and local institutions in dealing with the problem of inertia in local bureaucratic systems; the

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instruments included are quite diverse, namely the role of local organizations and their capacity (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001), authority (Ostrom, 2005), leadership (Torfing & Ansell, 2017), and collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Consequently, numerous assessments were produced, particularly examining the role and preparedness of local governments, which offered good or negative assessments, as well as a diagonal opinion that the government's readiness to anticipate future difficulties was extremely poor. Excessive natural resource exploitation in Riau, Jambi, and Kalimantan (Purnomo, Ramdani, et al., 2021; Purnomo, Zahra, et al., 2021; Sundari et al., 2022); social and ethnic conflict (Jailani et al., 2023); and increasing local political quandaries ahead of the election (Lestari et al., 2023).

Conversely, several are capable of automatically undergoing transformations to enhance their institutional capacities. These include implementing electronic-based governance capabilities to address public needs, fostering collaboration through the integration of digital access as a contemporary resource and the proximity of local communities to govern the flow of information, resources, and knowledge (Alshehri & Drew, 2011; Scholta et al., 2019), and optimizing regional government management by implementing a more streamlined approach to information management. Awareness is gradually growing that the traditional government system must evolve in order to address increasingly complex public requirements and to improve its overall performance by fostering innovative, effective, and efficient practices.

We conclude that a comparison must be made between two components of the Indonesian government system that influence and contribute to its coloration. This comparison should foster competition among the components that can be contrasted to expedite the progress of government management in regions that are lagging. Naturally, regions characterized by a high degree of homogeneity will experience accelerated transformation due to the establishment of innovative and adaptable local institutions through open dialogue. This aligns with the viewpoint expressed by Brewer (1993), who posits that motivational strength is derived from the need for self-identity to contend with identifications beyond the social sphere. As a result, individuals reach a consensus to pursue a distinct, positive identity that elevates them above other social groups (Simon & Pettigrew, 1990).

On the contrary, this contradicts the conclusions drawn by Offe (1998), who argues that strategies that arise from societal homogeneity are susceptible to conflict as a result of conventional perspectives. This is the foundation for the notion that despite our shared characteristics as a group or ethnicity, collectively advancing is difficult and challenging (Diprose, 2009). All connections to local progress or the positive effects of decentralization, which are synonymous with social homogeneity in society, necessitate the availability of time, space, and capability for dialogue among actors to establish trust. Additionally, forethought regarding numerous challenges, including the obligation to exercise more prudent governance, is vital (Munck af Rosenschöld et al., 2014).

As a result, collaboration is required to build acceptable methods for local government management, which is must be applied prudently. However, considering attempts to overcome hurdles is dominated by a lack of resources, such as funding, expertise, training, and technology, which frequently confines local skills to conflict avoidance rather than rebuilding. Beginning with a review of the limited literature on local institutions, bureaucracy, and government management, the researcher began the discussion by examining issues for strengthening government management systems based on an assessment of local institutions through the development of government and interested actors' capacity.

The assessment of the government's endeavors to overcome bureaucratic inertia and inadequate government management, which impede the functioning of the administrative system and its supporting instruments, holds significant importance for researchers. Consequently, it is uncertain whether the causal factors stem from persistent organizational structure patterns, leadership conduct, or something else. Consequently, identification is

conducted by researchers according to two crucial institutional dimensions: authority and capacity.

METHODOLOGY

Decentralized policy and decision-making regarding public services, the environment, and development characterize the Indonesian government system; this appears to indicate an urgent need to improve the system as a whole, from the periphery to the core (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001). Thus, each region's regulation of its own model and characteristics is entrusted to a centralized system (Bunnell et al., 2013). However, it is important to acknowledge that decentralization faces numerous obstacles along the way, particularly concerning human resources, environmental resources, and local political factors that foster instability in the management system of regional governments. Consequently, this instability hinders the execution of controlled decision making.

Previous research looked at regions that were ranked and represented successful development through government decentralization, namely Surabaya, through a review of decentralization and its emergence, which is influenced by the magnitude of local political needs above local administration (Bunnell et al., 2013). Based on these findings, the researcher began by defining the features of local institutions of various regional government administrations in Indonesia, to identify weak bureaucracy and the hazards that stem from it. As a result, alternative solutions are required to implement a prudent and accountable government management system. Based on this issue, researchers evaluated three parts of local institutional norms developed by Agrawal & Ostrom (2001) and Ostrom (2001, 2005), including capacity and authority, as well as governance adopted to provide government management results that are flexible to public requirements.

The researcher explicitly examines and defines government management with the actions that local actors should take to avoid the problems of bureaucratic inertia that impact the local government management system through a literature review of 35 pieces of literature. As a result, despite conversation and many efforts to develop and transition towards a better government system, many areas have failed in decentralization and/or are advancing slowly with convoluted bureaucratic processes. The key study topic is how local institutions seek to change into a smart and responsible government management system to affect their quality, authority, and capacity to act.

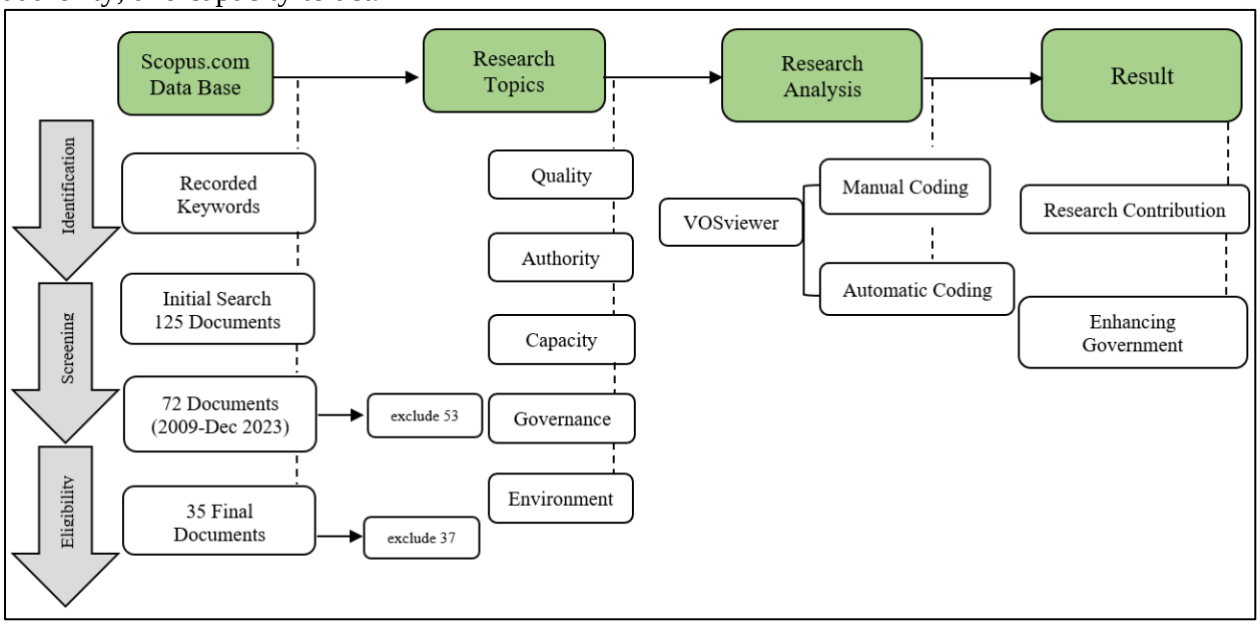

Figure 1. Research Flow

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Government Management from an Institutional Perspective

The institutional approach posits that there are distinct normative rings comprising both formal and informal institutions, which have common specifications in terms of norms and actors. From an institutional standpoint, there exist both formal and informal institutions that encompass customary conduct and regulations, which may be evaluated by external communities (Ostrom, 2005). Formal institutions encompass a legal system and a set of laws, whereas informal institutions encompass codes of ethics, habits, and conventions. Together, these institutions play a crucial role in shaping recurring and organized interactions within the social environment (Agrawal & Ostrom, 2001). Ostrom (2005) defines institutions as social arenas where stakeholders engage in interactions governed by certain norms and ethical principles. In addition, there are ongoing discussions over the factors that impact decision-making attitudes due to their various impacts, as well as the extent to which reliance might influence decision-making behavior (Torfing, 2019; Torfing & Ansell, 2017).

The author provides an example and analysis of government institutions, highlighting the presence of individuals from diverse backgrounds with varied interests. Consequently, the administration of government functions in a complex manner, leading to a weakened and sluggish bureaucratic system. Although there are existing restrictions pertaining to participation rights in influencing choices, these regulations specifically pertain to determining who possesses the right to vote on significant decisions. Despite doubts about the judgment, it is nevertheless being closely studied for potential punishment. Divergences and ideological disputes do arise inside governmental structures, although imperceptibly. If this trend persists and is embraced by several susceptible regional administrations, the intended decentralization for regional advancement will undoubtedly culminate in complete failure, along with the establishment of a novel local political power structure that undermines the management system of the regional government.

This is similar to the statement of Simons (2020) who understands the interaction process that occurs to support public policies that are controversial and not in the public interest. This is also indicated as a form of political power channel that influences the government management system through the lens of the internal market of local practical politics (Apospori et al., 2010). Therefore, the procedures used to represent local institutions and regulations wrapped in the concept of decentralization must be applied very carefully so as not to harm the set of norms and rules used to shape stakeholder behavior and expectations (Ostrom, 2001).

By analyzing and discussing these ideas and the developed concept, a comprehensive operational system is implemented to support the assembled concept. In response to the intricate divergence of policy opinions, researchers have developed a government management framework that incorporates ideas proposed by Ansell & Gash (2008), Bridgman & Davis (2004), Ostrom (2001 and 2005), Torfing & Ansell (2017). The policy development process allows the government to assess each course of action from the standpoint of institutional expertise and professionalism (figure 2).

The model provided is a step in a circle to encourage government management, cyclical, repetitive and sustainable in perfecting government management patterns that produce policies by utilizing cumulative input and experience, including: (i) Issue identification: issues arise through certain mechanisms that often influence the government system determined, so that it is vulnerable to internal and external pressures; (ii) development of government instruments: identification of appropriate government instruments including laws, programs, regulations, etc.; (iii) consultation: gathering external and independent expertise and information to provide input for policy development; (iv) coordination: once the position is settled, it needs to be coordinated through government mechanisms and machinations that include involvement in financial, cabinet and parliamentary processes; (v) decisions: decisions are made by the

collective of actors involved without pressure, and supervise each other; (vi) implementation: after a series of basic processes are fulfilled, they can be implemented in accordance with the applicable operating system; (vii) evaluation: an important process for measuring, monitoring and evaluating policy implementation.

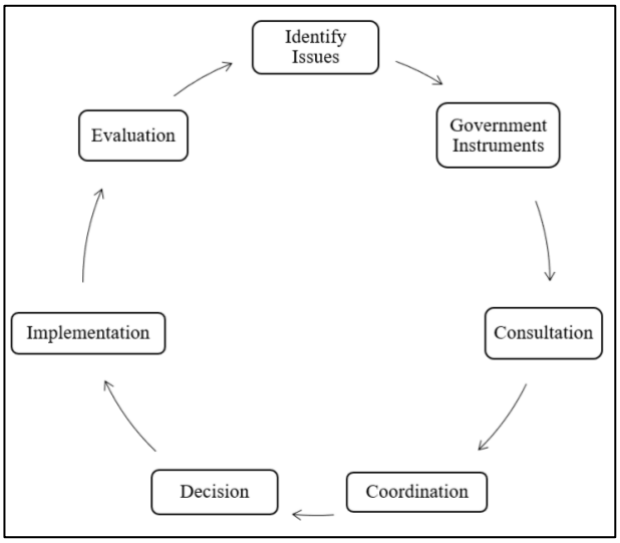

Figure 2. Government Management Cycle Towards Adaptive and Equitable Policy

Conversely, academics also acknowledge that every implemented pattern inevitably includes vulnerabilities that might undermine its effectiveness. Nevertheless, it can offer enhanced oversight mechanisms and robust legal authority over all relevant domains. To ensure that decision-makers are properly guided, it is necessary to have transparency instruments that establish clear guidelines for permissible and restricted actions. Additionally, there should be well-defined regulations and procedures that must be followed. It is also important to have appropriate rewards or punishments in place to incentivize responsible behavior. By implementing these measures, we can gradually establish high-quality institutions that are both wise and accountable for meeting the transparency requirements of the public.

Government's Capacity in Carrying Out Functions and Responsibilities.

Regional governments play a crucial role in managing various types of risks to satisfy the demands of the community. To ensure effective government management, it is necessary to enhance the capacity and competency of regional resources for planning and implementation (Anantasari et al., 2017). The capacity component pertains to the capability of the resources at an institution to serve as a means of accomplishing objectives (Kusumasari et al., 2010). Capacity building is the systematic process of enhancing the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of people, organizations, institutions, and society as a whole. Its purpose is to improve collective abilities, optimize goal attainment and functionality, streamline problem-solving, and broaden future perspectives (Atkinson, 2021). The primary objective is to enhance government capacity in terms of both quality and quantity, with a direct influence on the structure of the government. This involves effectively managing the government's output, including the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies while adhering to relevant procedures, all aimed at promoting societal well-being.

Researchers in Indonesia analyze various phenomena within the government system. They obtain different capacities by comparing and studying regions that are more advanced and competent in governance and human resource utilization. It is unsurprising that several regions on the island of Java and its environs exhibit more development compared to other locations, such as Sumatra, Indonesia. The researcher's evaluation involves a comparative

analysis of complex capacity development, specifically focusing on the cognitive abilities, skills, and high-quality practices of the regional governments involved. Additionally, it examines the extent of cooperation or collaboration among various societal levels, including media, academia, and business actors. Lastly, it assesses the effectiveness of a funding system that is both accountable and transparent.

Hence, the ultimate objective of this lens is to enhance the ability of the government to effectively handle both internal and external disruptions, enabling it to successfully carry out its predetermined tasks and obligations. Enhancing the capacity of regional government entails bolstering its capability to effectively execute functions, primary responsibilities, and objectives in order to enhance the institution's proficiency in governing the system. The fundamental idea of enhancing regional government capability is inherently linked to the caliber of human resources, proficiency in technology, fortifying organizational and managerial frameworks, and establishing extended networks.

Nelisson (2002) argues that growth and capacity building exhibit intrinsic qualities, including individuals and communities engaged in an ongoing process of self-development and enhancement. The enhancement of local government capacity relies on the process of augmenting capability and advancement in executing current activities, primary responsibilities, and aims in resolving issues, as well as enhancing institutions associated with governing (Wallis & Dollery, 2002).

Ultimately, the fundamental idea of enhancing and expanding regional government capacity is intrinsically linked to three essential elements: bolstering organizational and managerial frameworks, ensuring sufficient facilities and infrastructure, and establishing a comprehensive network. Capacity building aims to enhance the government's ability to effectively manage and fulfill planned tasks, duties, and obligations, so strengthening its resilience. The review specifically examines capacity practices, such as regular and proportional control and evaluation, in managing functions, finances, and responsibilities to enhance government capacity. It also aims to expedite the implementation of decentralization through regulations and ensure the effective and efficient utilization of human resources and regional natural resources. (table 1)

Globalization has led to a significant rise in the study and implementation of capacity building. This has resulted in the inclusion of indicator variables that attempt to adapt social structures and practices. The concept proposed by Douglas & Anastasia (2007) serves to strengthen the framework of thought that local governments must adopt in order to enhance their capacity as formal institutions responsible for organizing, managing, and developing human resources or society. The objective of capacity development initiatives implemented by regional governments is to enhance the robustness of the public sector, particularly in the realm of services.

The key aspect of enhancing capacity resides not alone in the utilization of variable indicator instruments, but also in the collective endeavors of all individuals engaged to engage in sustainable thinking and competition while addressing challenges. According to Douglas & Anastasia (2007) enhancing the capacity of local government necessitates several resources such as personnel, infrastructure, technology, financial assets, and effective management including leadership strategies, program procedures, and extensive networks. Junaid (2021) categorizes government capacity development initiatives as follows: enhancing management systems, establishing targets, fostering competition, and promoting internal responsibility. The primary objective of enhancing the management system is to provide a more adaptable and responsive organizational governance that can effectively and efficiently address and navigate through changes. This is achieved by enhancing critical elements of government administration, including institutional frameworks, operational procedures, information systems, and relevant protocols. Regarding the element of institutional structure, it is important

to modify the structure to align with requirements in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the work process.

Table 1. Key Issues for Integrating Evaluation Into the Government Management Cycle

Issues	Links Between Evaluation and Policy Cycle	Why it is Important ?
Political will	Interest of the top management in the evaluation process, and clear commitment about the role of the evaluation in the decision making process.	A clear political will about the evaluation process is essential to ensure sufficient resources will be dedicated to evaluation, and to support the legitimacy of the evaluation
Resource Allocation	The balance between resources dedicated to policy implementation and to evaluation. Possible synergies to optimize resource use and limit the risks of "evaluation burden"	Lack of resources is one of the most frequently reported barriers to evaluation, leading to a lack of evaluation or evaluations done in bad conditions leading to unreliable results. Good integration of evaluation into the policy cycle can minimize evaluation costs and show added evaluation value.
Evaluation, Planning and Preparation	Evaluation time vs decision making process. Policy design à policy theory à starting point for evaluation. Evaluation objectives must be based on the basic objectives that have been planned.	If the evaluation is not planned/prepared early enough, this will make it more difficult (and costly) and will make it challenge to get results when needed. Early or embedded planning helps evaluation to be reliable, timely and focused on relevant priorities. In other words: to be effective and useful.
Legitimacy	Involvement of policy stakeholders in the evaluation process. Stakeholders' perception (and reception) of the evaluation. Conditions for evaluation results to be accepted and used for communication, consultation and/or decision making.	If the evaluation (and its process) is not seen by stakeholders as legitimate, then there is low chances that its results be considered and used. Stakeholders may refuse to share information needed for the evaluation, oppose to the communication of the results, or contest them.
Communication and Mutual Understanding	Communication and mutual understanding between policy implementers/officers and evaluators (and also among different services, departments or institutions).	Lack in communication creates difficulties in the information flows (both ways: information needed by the evaluators from the implementers, and information provided by the evaluators to the implementers and decision makers). Mutual understanding is also needed in both ways: for evaluators to understand the policy background and elements, and for policy officers or makers to understand the evaluation results (including their limitations).
Communication about the evaluation and its results	Audience of the evaluation vs. parties involved or interested in the policy. Timing and forum to discuss evaluation results.	These aspects are essential to create the conditions for the evaluation to be acknowledged and used.

Source: Adopted from Ansell & Gash (2008); Bridgman & Davis (2004); Elinor Ostrom (2005)

Furthermore, fostering competition in the ways of institutional growth plays a crucial role in cultivating a feeling of responsibility and stimulating the oversight function in collaborative efforts among people and organizations. Competition for development among members can serve as a motivating incentive for people to enhance their capabilities since it necessitates ongoing innovation to compete and succeed. Furthermore, establishing goals that surpass existing boundaries serves to motivate individuals to exert greater effort and enhance their capabilities. Achieving this may be accomplished by establishing ambitious and attainable

objectives. Internal accountability seeks to embed the principles of responsibility into those serving in public positions.

Revealing the government's ability to administer itself is a crucial factor in promoting the implementation of a more effective and efficient government performance. This, in turn, will directly enhance the quality of public services and generate a positive response from the community towards regional government administration. Government institutions must engage in collaborative and tiered capacity building to guarantee comprehensive development of their capacities. In addition, proficiency in technology plays a crucial role in enhancing the efficacy and efficiency of government administration. The outcomes derived from "digital government" or "e-government" give rise to digital governance or "e-governance" and are a component of the amalgamation of information technology advancements with existing government processes.

While several studies indicate that capacity building primarily emphasizes the development of individual skills, it is important to note that groups of persons are also included in this process (Junaid, 2021). The government sector already has a well-defined and planned approach to capacity building. Essentially, it aims to ensure that all members have equal capabilities to support the capacity of institutions or services that have essential and distinct roles (Bridgman & Davis, 2004; Diprose, 2009). Continuous capacity development involves enhancing and refining capabilities to consistently improve the execution of current functions, primary duties, and objectives to address problems and enhance the performance of government institutions. Key concepts for establishing and enhancing capacity, particularly in local government, are intimately tied to three essential elements: fortifying organizational and administrative frameworks, suitable facilities and infrastructure, and broad networks (Millen, 2004).

CONCLUSION

The author's investigation on bureaucratic inertia in government management highlights the major obstacles it poses and emphasizes the need for basic research to address this issue. Ingrained opposition to alterations in bureaucratic frameworks can impede agility and impede the capacity to adjust in order to address the changing demands of society. In order to surmount these obstacles, it is crucial to implement measures focused on enhancing governmental administration. Efforts such as promoting an environment that encourages new ideas, allocating resources to ongoing education and skill-building for employees, using technology, and adopting flexible decision-making methods have the potential to overcome the constraints of inaction.

Moreover, establishing internal systems of accountability and transparency is crucial for fostering a feeling of responsibility and confidence in governmental organizations. Through the use of proactive measures, governments may effectively negotiate the intricacies of modern governance, guaranteeing flexibility, effectiveness, and a steadfast dedication to fulfilling the changing needs of their citizens. The pursuit of enhancing government administration necessitates a resolute shift away from bureaucratic stagnation, ushering in an era characterized by receptiveness, ingenuity, and efficient provision of public services.

Ultimately, establishing cooperative alliances with external stakeholders and using technology-driven solutions can accelerate the progress of government agencies towards a more adaptable and responsive future. By using the outcomes of prior assessments and setbacks, governments should be capable of streamlining procedures, enhancing decision-making capacities, and eventually enhancing service delivery. Policymakers and executives must maintain a state of constant vigilance, regularly assessing and adjusting plans to counteract bureaucratic stagnation and guarantee that government administration stays agile and efficient in a constantly evolving environment.

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