

The Perception On The Problems Of Local Autonomy: Responces of west sumatra to the implementation of the law no. 22/1999

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Abstract

Penelitian ini menganalisis persepsi tentang permasalahan otonomi daerah, sebagai respon terhadap implemenasi Undang-Undang No. 22 Tahun 1999. Pengumpulan data melalui survey terhadap 480 responden dari 8 kota/kabupaten. Berdasarkan analisa ditemukan bahwa tidak ada masalah yang berarti dengan otonomi daerah, baik di kabupaten maupun di kota berdasarkan persepsi responden. Tiga besar sebagai masalah adalah tentang keuangan daerah, pembagian kewenangan, dan isu putera daerah. Persentase keseluruhan dari tiga besar tersebut berkisar 25 – 41 %.

A. Introduction

When the Suharto regime collapsed in Mid 1998, there was huge hope that Indonesia would be able to establish a new economic and political system ensuring social and economic justice as well as the promotion and the protection of human rights. Responding to this hope, the Jakarta Government embarked on a program to decentralize many of the functions of government to district and municipalities (*Kabupaten/Kota*) in January 1999. Law No. 22/1999 on Local Government (*Pemerintahan Daerah*)² states, that

decentralization is "the transfer of authority of the government by the Central Government to the Autonomous Regions within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia". This law was intended to restructure the political and the organizational arrangement of the sub-national government systems and their relationship to the central government. The key feature of the law is local government autonomy (municipalities/districts or *kota/kabupaten*). Local government heads must report the annual

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² The decentralization law was originally envisages in May 2001 as starting point for decentralization, however, this was moved forward in order that decentralization would come into effect as of 1 January 2001 to coincide with the beginning of the new financial year

accountability speech (LPJ the *Laporan Pertanggungjawab*) to locally elected assemblies (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah kota/kabupaten*) rather than the provincial governor, meanwhile, provincial government continues to report to the central government. In addition, deconcentrated units of central ministries, except for specific national responsibilities, was became the control of the province or local government as appropriate. Defense, security, foreign policy, monetary and fiscal policy, judiciary affairs, and religious affairs have been the responsibility of the central government.

The Perception of local autonomy is influenced by dynamics of the implementation of policy of decentralization in any country. The tracing of the modern Indonesian history, both Sukarno and Suharto regime centralized all policies in the hand of the central government. In Sukarno Era, the centralization caused in political and economic unrest. Some regions rebelled against the central government, like rebellions in North Celebes and Central Sumatra around 1957-1958. During the New Order of Suharto, the central government enacted Law No. 5/1974 on the Basic of Local Government (*Pokok-pokok Pemerintahan di Daerah*). This law stipulated that autonomy was real, dynamic and responsible system. However, in practice, this was another kind of centralization, many tasks were delineated from the central government to regional office (*kantor wilayah*) in province and department

office (*kantor departemen*) in the city/district.

The perception of local autonomy problems is affected by the implementation of local autonomy in any region. That perception, in turn, influences dynamics of the implementation of decentralization policy.

B. Research Method¹

This survey carried out in 2002. To collect data the first step was to choose 8 districts/municipalities from 15 by simple random sampling technique. Two subdistricts (*kecamatan*) were selected from each district/city purposively. The first subdistrict, located in the central of district/municipality, was an urban subdistrict. The second subdistrict had more rural communities (*desa rural*) than urban ones (*desa urban*), was selected as a rural subdistrict. Two *dusun/RW* were selected from each community, namely less and more advanced *dusun/RW*. Respondents were selected by simple random sampling technique, taken from the list of households in each decided

¹ This research was conducted by a team of University of Gadjahmada (UGM) and the writer was a local researcher. This research focused on many aspects of the implementation of local autonomy policy in Indonesia. This project named Governance and Decentralization (GDS) 2002 by UGM. Funding for the GDS 2002 was provided by the Partnership for Governance Reform, Partnership for Economic Growth (PEG-USAID), and the World Bank.

dusun/RW. By this method, we collected 480 respondents. This research was conducted in 2002.

To understand the latest dynamics of the implementation of decentralization policy, we collected data and information from local newspapers, namely Padang Ekspres, Singgalang and Haluan. Besides that, we did literature study about the result of research in this topic.

C. The Perception on the Problems at the Beginning of the Implementation of the Law

The questionnaire of Governance and Decentralization Survey 2002 included some questions on dominant problems in the local

autonomy Era indicated by the implementation of Law No. 22/1999. The answers of those questions covered the issues of people originated from the place (*PAD the putra asli daerah*), inter regional conflict, human resources of local government apparatus, inter institutional conflict, organizational structure of local government, local financing, delegation of authority, and behavior/ethic of apparatus.

The respondent's answers to those questions are subjective and reflect their perception of reality. There could be any hope to ideal reality in the future. Although their answers were their perception, there could have some bearing on dynamics of the implementation of decentralization policy.

Table 1. The Perception of Dominant Problems of Local Autonomy

Dominant Problems	District	City
	%	
Issues of People Originated from the Place	25.37	23.88
Inter Regional Conflict	2.93	2.99
Human Resources of Local Government Apparatus	17.56	8.96
Inter Institutional Conflict	3.41	2.99
Local Financing	40.98	20.90
Organizational Structure of Local Government	15.12	23.88
Delegation of Authority	36.10	41.79
behavior/ethic of apparatus	5.37	5.97

Source: GDS 2002

Table 1 demonstrates that there is no significant perception of problems of the implementation of local autonomy in West Sumatra both in cities and districts. Higher percentage of the answers are

concerned with the issues of people originated from the place (25.37 % and 23.88 %), local financing (40.98 % and 20.90 %), and delegation of authority (36.10 % and 41.79 %).

Table 2. The Perception of Dominant Problems of Local Autonomy in Each District/City

Dominant Problems	PPar	PSel	Sik	TD	LK	Psm	PPan	Pyk
Issues of People Originated from the Place	27.78	22.22	21.88	5.56	40.63	36.36	24.24	23.53
Inter Regional Conflict	0.00	2.78	0.00	0.00	3.13	12.12	3.03	2.94
Human Resources of Apparatus	19.44	25.00	3.13	16.67	15.63	24.24	6.06	11.76
Inter Institutional Conflict	0.00	11.11	0.00	0.00	6.25	3.03	0.00	5.88
Local Financing	38.89	35.11	50.00	52.78	28.13	39.39	21.21	17.28
Organizational Structure of Local Government	13.89	13.89	12.20	16.67	19.75	15.15	27.27	17.27
Delegation of Authority	27.78	22.22	56.25	36.11	28.13	48.48	30.30	52.94
Behavior/Ethic of Apparatus	0.00	2.78	3.13	2.78	9.38	15.15	3.03	8.82

Source : GDS 2002

Note : PPar = Padang Pariaman PSel = Pesisir Selatan
 LK = Limopuluh Koto PPan = Padang Panjang
 Pyk = Payakumbuh Sik = Solok

The perceptions, as showed by table 1, are also supported by table 2, describing perception of autonomy problem of local financing and delegation of authority 50 % and more. The rests are below 50 %. Issues of People Originated from the Place (PAD) don't reach 50 %, but it is the third dominant problems respondents. In Limopuluh Kota district it reaches 40.63 %.

Although there is no significant dominant problem, it is important to know what's going on behind those percentages. The higher percentage showed by the

table 1 is 41.79 %, namely for delegation of authority. Why did West Sumatran people percept the delegation of authority as a dominant problem ? Higher percentages are in Solok, Payakumbuh, and Pasaman (56.25 %, 52.94 %, and 48.48 %). There are some reasons behind this perception. The first, regent (*bupati*) of Solok always states that delegation of authority from the central government to local one is not fair. Some authorities that were given by the central government to local one was taken over by the central government. Because of

socialization, local official's ideas spread into society. Second, in Payakumbuh this perception was influenced by conflict between the mayor (walikota) and local assembly about authority. Third, group of business people, especially in Payakumbuh and Pasaman, saw local government's regulations, particularly those related to business, is not clear.

Table 2 shows that Tanah Datar and Solok have higher percentage of the perception of local financing as a dominant problem (52.78 % and 50 %). This is related to Tanah Datar district became as a pilot project of local autonomy in New Order of Suharto's Era. Because of the project, Tanah Datar had experienced autonomy problem of local financing. While Solok official distributed fund to nagari² as a general allocation fund (DAUN) that absorbs much district's budget.

At the time at the implementation of law No. 22/1999 in 2001, some districts/cities like Tanah Datar, Limopuluh Koto, Padang and Padang Panjang carried out district/city head election. In these districts/cities, many people wanted to have their people who originated from the place (PAD) to be elected as the head of their district/city. All elected bupati/walikota, in those regions are indeed people who originated from the place. Why is PAD regarded as a problem? The concept of people originated from the place is a discriminative concept, because it excludes people who have career there, may be they born

there, but they originally came from other district, to become as a regent or mayor. That PAD concept refers to ethnic group that is regarded as indigenous of a given place.

D. The Real Problems until the End of the Implementation of the Law

The implementation of the law created real problems there were corruption, issue of PAD and coordination. Most important problem of written by all of local newspapers was corruption by members of assembly at the provincial and the members of the assemblies districts as well as cities. Level the corruption was related to the interpretation of regulation on assembly budget. The central government attempted to limit the regional budget (APBD) of regional legislature through Government Regulation (PP the *Peraturan Pemerintah*) No. 110/2000. This regulation canceled the West Sumatra government's budget that allocated generous remuneration to regional parliamentarians. Majority of assemblies in West Sumatra didn't follow the Government Regulation (PP) No. 110/200. Because of the provincial assembly's rejection on that PP, a NGO of anti-corruption in West Sumatra sued the members of provincial assembly to district attorney. The District Court (*Pengadilan Negeri*) as well as the Provincial Court (*Pengadilan Tinggi*) declared that they were guilty. At the beginning of August 2005 the Supreme Court declared also that they were guilty. Now they are

² Nagari is now the lowest unit of government in West Sumatra.

following another law action, namely the PK, *Peninjauan Kembali*.

Almost all heads of districts or cities who were elected according to Law No. 22/1999 were people who are originated from the place. At the time of the recruitment of district/city head candidates by a party, many people came to parties to urge them to choose candidates who were from the district/city. Majority of their proposed candidates didn't live the district/city, although they were originated from the place. Consequently, many elected district/city head didn't live in the place. Many people who were regarded non-PAD, but they had career there, didn't have a chance become district/city head a candidate.

The coordination between governor and heads of districts and cities is also a big problem in the implementation of local autonomy in West Sumatra. Almost there is no coordination of development policy between the provincial and districts/cities government. When the provincial official invited the heads of districts and cities to attend the meeting on provincials development (*Musbangda, Musyawarah Pem-*

angunan Daerah Provinsi), there was approximately no the regional heads come to those meetings. When district or city need official help or any supervision from provincial ones to solve their problem, for example a water conflict between Sungai Tanang, Agam district and Bukittinggi, the provincial officials didn't do anything. Why the provincial official did anything? The factor was the focus of local autonomy. Based on Law No. 22/1999, local autonomy focused on the district or city and was no obligation for district/city officials to have agreements from the provincial one, if they did something.

E. Conclusion

In conclusion, the survey found that there is no significant perception of local autonomy problems. According to perceptions of respondents the three big problems are local financial, delegation of authority, and the PAD. The real problems of the implementation of local autonomy until the end of implementation are the PAD, corruption, and coordination between the province and the district/city.

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