

The Advantage and Disadvantage of Implementation of Regional Autonomy in Indonesia, 1999-2017

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia (1999-2017). The research approach used is literature review approach (descriptive-literature). Based on the result of the research, it was concluded, firstly, in the field of administration, regional autonomy has advantages, able to encourage the realization of good governance), transparency, better service, accountable government, and the realization of democracy at local level better. The disadvantages, causing overlap in the delivery and implementation of authority between the central government to the local government. Second, in politics, regional autonomy has its advantages, giving citizens political rights to elect their future leaders and participate in the development process. The disadvantage, which led to high-cost politics, money politics, gave birth to small kings. Thirdly, in the field of law, regional autonomy has the advantage of providing discretion and innovation authority to the regions, enabling greater representation in local regulatory processes, and building better legal justice. The weakness is triggering irregularities by heads of regions so that they are dragged into legal cases, and enlarge potential conflicts of authority between the central government and local governments. Fourthly, in the economic field, regional autonomy has the advantage of being able to encourage each region to better optimize its potential, increase economic growth in the regions, and encourage the improvement of people's welfare. The disadvantages are not being able to reduce the level of poverty in the region, and the more unbalanced income in the region

Keywords: regional autonomy, positive aspects, negative aspects of decentralization

1. Introduction

A decentralized system of government, which gives up some of the responsibilities of government at the local government level, both provincial and regency or city, has enormous benefits in accelerating the development process in the region, although the development of a State at the same time.

The experience of centralized governance during government in the old order era (1945-1965) and the New Order (1966-1998), did not provide any flexibility to provinces and regency or city to undertake development, in accordance with their own natural wealth and great or small of the Local Income. All income of local government was entirely accepted by the central government, and the local government receives only general allocation funds from the central government without any transparency and fair proportion. Consequently, there is always fiscal and subsidy dependence and central government assistance as a form of powerlessness of local income in financing regional expenditure.

As a result, all provinces at the provincial and regency or city level were highly dependent on the central government, and the central government had enormous power and it was not distributed to the regions at all. Both regions that were rich in natural resources and poorer regions will have substantially different regional income because they were determined by the central government.

The region as a buffer of the central government's revenue had absolutely no authority to regulate its own household, and could not all claim their right of equitable distribution of income according to their natural wealth. All budgets of income and expenditure of regional were heavily dependent on the central government. The regional had absolutely no authority to make development plans in all fields because all the final decisions were in the hand of the central government.

All Governors, Regents or Mayors at Indonesia were elected by the Regional People's Representative Council through directly, publicly, freely and secretly election but it was not transparent, undemocratic and unaccountable.

With the political condition of the centralized government, Pancasila democracy becomes unfashionable. A presidential system of government had been interpreted and practiced in an authoritarian governmental process. So that the government runs for three decades there was no balancing, there was no control, and there was no opposition. Entirely silenced, under the pretext of the nation and state development. The centralized government at that time had instilled an understanding to all Indonesians to promote security and involvement in order to make development successful.

The centralized government at that time always intervened against the Regional on the grounds to guarantee the national stability and the weakness of human resources in the Regional. Because of these two reasons, the centralization of authority was seen as a prerequisite for creating national unity and unity and promoting economic growth. At first, the view proved true (Mardiasmo, 2002)

When a centralized government was overthrown and replaced by a decentralized government, democracy grew, local governments had broad autonomy in determining the direction of development, free to explore legitimate sources of local revenue, free to define the regional budget and the local budget, and carried out the Direct election of the regional head.

In the process of democratic transition, people's euphoria became uncontrollable. People feel free to do anything in accordance with their rights. Human rights and democracy that had been blocked became wide open. The community feels that they have the right to speak publicly and freely to democracy. All regions proposed to expand, created new autonomous regions (DOB), regardless of their real capabilities. It was done because, on the one hand, the political opportunity was very wide open; on the other hand there was a belief that regional autonomy would be able to accelerate the pace of development in areas that had been hampered.

Reading the background above, there is a need for an in-depth analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia (1999-2017), in the hope of finding in-depth descriptions of the advantages and disadvantages of regional autonomy, both in aspect of administration, politics, law, and economics .

2. The Literature Review.

The main argument constructed in this study begun with the consideration that, "Democracy in the real sense of popular sovereignty never truly exists." (Grindle, 2007). It can be understood that democracy in the true sense in the form of people's sovereignty actually never existed. "In practice, those who run the government are not the people, but are generally part of the ruling elite." (Batley and G. Larbi, 2004). In practice, they who run the government were not the ones produced through a democratic process, but they were generally part of the ruling elite. "Democracy, polyarchy, or freedom is delineated into two dimensions of aspect: political rights and civil liberties." (Alisjahbana, 2011). Here, democracy, shared power, or freedom are portrayed in two dimensions: political rights and civil liberties.

In this connection, Rauf, et.al. (2011) said that "The relationship between the role of state and development in welfare state paradigm emerges a steady evolution. The classic literature teaches the readers that State only plays its role to keep public order."

In Asia Index Democracy (2011) explained that "The idea of state-led development was attractive. Although the State intervention is considered to confuse socialism, welfare state is believed as the way in which it develop as s system of massif State intervention, as a web of bureaucratic control with strands clinging to every niche and corner of society and of private life, out of a society in which the dominant ideology was of individualism.

In the really relevant with the opinion of the National Development Planning Agency (2013) which said that "The case for state-led development was not only imitative but also built on a response to local circumstances. In related to it, Mariana (2013) said that "The latter part of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century tagged the changed views of the role of government. The intervention of government is noticed to perform fewer functions on its own and build a partnership with other actors. Somehow the welfare State paradigm has evolved, as the personification of a powerful organization, the role of government to provide public services is relevant.

It is in accordance with Bagir Manan's opinion that, "Reminds that in welfare state paradigm efficiency and effectivity central on public services, therefore it is known as the service state (Democracy Index, 2011). Furthermore, he said that in the efficiency paradigm of state welfare and the center of the effectiveness of public services, therefore known as the state of service. Therefore, the vertical distribution of power is designed between central and local government to enhance effectivity, efficiency, and widespread democracy. However, according to the existence of local government is a subsystem of State, in Unitary State the authority of the government is not an original power, but derivative power.

In relation to the system of representation in the democratic system, Michael L Mezey is one of the experts who strongly opposed the concept of representation by asking questions, "Why is democracy in the real sense of popular sovereignty considered never truly existed?" To answer it, Mezey said that, "The author tries to contradict the value of democracy and how it has developed. Simplifies democracy, as popular sovereignty", by saying that the people have the final say about the policies that govern their lives. In short, in principles and character of democracy citizens, by majority vote, decide the public policies that will govern their behavior. The power of the majority is limited only by the requirement that the political right of the minority rights such as freedom of speech and the press and the right to assemble be protected." (Democracy Index,

2011). Then, Mezey explained that “According to his opinion, what we refer to as democracies are more accurately described as republics. In republics, the people do not govern directly as they do in democracies. Influenced by trials political doctrine, almost common modern States have a Parliament to express representative systems.”

Mezey explicitly said that “Representative systems are not democratic because of self-government, which is what democracy means, is not the same thing as government by someone else, even if you elect that someone to do the governing on your behalf. In spite of representation is believed as indirect democracy, some political theorists have argued that representation frustrates democracy by removing political decision-making from the hands of the people and giving it over to a select group of citizens who actually govern.”

In related to the decentralization of power in the regional autonomy system, Abdillah and Mursinto (2016) explained that “Decentralization policy consists of three different perspectives, namely political decentralization, administrative decentralization, and financial decentralization. From a political perspective, decentralization distributes the authorities owned by the central government and local governments evenly. From an administrative perspective, the central government “shares” some of its authorities to be managed by local governments to simplify and speed up public services while from financial perspective decentralization attempts to reduce fiscal disparity among local government (horizontal imbalance) and fiscal disparity between local government and central government (vertical imbalance).”

The dealing with financial decentralization, Musgrave, and Musgrave, (1989) said that “The implementation of fiscal decentralization is expected to lower poverty rate and disparity among provinces because fiscal decentralization will distribute centers of economic growth that once centered in Java (especially Jakarta). Musgrave and Musgrave, (1989) also said that “In fiscal decentralization, each province has the authority to manage its own financial matters and improve financial independence of the region through tax collection.”

Meanwhile, Roy Bahl and Jorge Martinez-Vasquez (2002) explained that “Decentralization has become a global phenomenon. Roy Bahl and Jorge Martinez-Vasquez argued that a well- designed decentralization may bring the efficiency of public services and make public service closer to the target (i.e. local community) thus decentralization may help to develop the region and reducing its poverty rate. However, the implementation of decentralization may be hard at first because it closely relates to political, fiscal, administrative, and institutional policies.”

Prud’homme Remy (1995) Showed another side of democracy, “He concludes despite global trend tends to implement decentralization, the actual condition of decentralization may contradict standard theories on fiscal decentralization. He finds that decentralization has its own negative sides. By considering these negative sides or disadvantages, a government has a better option to implement decentralization. Instead of totally decentralizing all of its authorities, a government may choose what functions or sectors to be decentralized and by what regions.”

In the perspective of regional autonomy, “Recent academic debates often talk about the correlation between economic growth and decreasing poverty rate. The main question in these debates is whether economic growth advantages the poor. During the late 1990s, the term “pro poor growth” became popular as the economists started to analyze the policies to decrease the poverty rate faster through economic growth and income distribution. Pro poor growth is defined as economic growth that absolutely decreases poverty rate.” (OECD, 2001; UN, 2000).

In the perspective of regional autonomy, economic growth is understood will benefit the poor. The Pro-poor growth is a policy to reduce poverty more quickly through economic growth and distribution income. The Pro poor growth is defined as an economic growth that actually lowers poverty levels (OECD, 2001; UN, 2000). World Bank (2005) indicated “Negative correlation between poverty rate and economic growth.” This finding was supported by other studies, including those conducted by the World Bank (2005). In its study, the World Bank (2005) showed a negative correlation between poverty levels and economic growth.

3. Method

The method used in this research is literature review approach (descriptive-literature). The literature used is the most up-to-date literature, including various literature from experts, documents issued by the government and National Development Planning Agency, various autonomy books, local autonomy laws, government regulations, and various laws and regulations which are still implemented.

4. Results and Discussion

Based on the study of experts basically, regional autonomy basically has many advantages and disadvantages. To clarify the following study, the two descriptions are described.

a. The Advantage of Regional Autonomy

According to Noor (2012), the regional autonomy has many advantages and disadvantages. The advantages, 1) encourage each region to more optimize the potential that exists in their respective regions. Each regional head of the various levels is authorized to administer his/her own 'household'; 2) able to build a competitive climate between local heads in the welfare of society. Heads of regions are encouraged not to rely on central financial resources. The heads of regions always try to convince investors to invest in their area; 3) Encourage the realization of good governance. As well as encouraging the regional heads to develop a more transparent leadership, accountable through bureaucracy reform; and 4) the local government has functioned as a guardian of the conduciveness of the party system at the local level as well as guarding the process of direct election of regional heads; 5) decentralization not only strengthens local government authority and generates democratic progress at the local level, but also sustained empowerment of both provincial and regency / city municipal governments.

Furthermore, it was explained by Indrayana (2012) that in regional autonomy, the regional head is given the authority of discretion and innovation regional to develop the area, and if found the violation, then there are steps of prevention and legal action that can still be implemented.

Asrinaldi (2016) explained that since its implementation in Indonesia, the regional autonomy has benefited local communities because regional autonomy encourages local democratic participation. With regard to economic problems, according to Noor (2012), the regional autonomy system has had a significant impact on economic growth in the regions, and be able to encourage the improvement of people's welfare.

In the economic field, according to Nur (2013) there were advantages i.e.: 1) in most regions, the income per capita of the population was increasing, 2) the head of the region allowed to develop its territory according to its characteristics, 3) the regional head more freely take care of the region according to the advantages owned, allowing the area can build itself more leverage.

According to Zuhro (2013), in general, the application of regional autonomy can: 1) encourage regional leaders to make breakthroughs and fight the bureaucratic freeze that has occurred at this time, 2) improve the quality and quantity of public services and community welfare, 3) create efficiency and effectiveness Management of local resources, 4) empower and create space for the public to participate in the development process; 5) capable of producing figures considered capable of becoming an alternative Indonesian leader in the future. Meanwhile, Haris (2013) said that the regional autonomy as embodied in Article 18 of Constitution in 1945 showed a central recognition of the existence of regional leaders in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Purnomo in Wijaya (2013), said that the regional autonomy can improve the quality of public services and strive to fulfill the rights of the people to get good service from the government continuously and be able to increase the capacity of local government in implementing the principles of good governments as well as possible. Meanwhile, Abdullah Azwar Anas in Son (2013) indicated that the regional autonomy can be used as a means to meet the increasing public expectations of local government.

According to Kasmudi (2016), the regional autonomy is able to encourage the maximum utilization of economic resources available to local government, able to increase people's purchasing power, improve the good investment by opening employment or new labor-intensive projects, increase per capita income and reducing percentage unemployment. Politically, the regional autonomy gives full authority of local government to manage their own household, capable of causing strong integration between regions in strengthening the unity and the unity of the Republic of Indonesia, able to encourage local government to work as well as possible, which will eventually lead to the establishment of Good Governance which is free of Corruption, collusion and nepotism, provides a good space for the Leaders of Region to create good governance in the constitutional system as a whole, creating a good, transparent, and accountable local government

According to Abdillah and Mursinto (2016) from a political perspective, decentralization has a positive meaning to distribute the authority possessed by the central government to local governments equally. From an administrative perspective, the central government "divides" some of its authorities to be managed by local governments to simplify and accelerate public services. From a financial perspective, decentralization attempts to reduce fiscal differences between local governments (horizontal imbalance) and fiscal differences between local government and central government (vertical imbalance). Junaenah (2015), the regional autonomy is expected to: 1) actualize the Welfare State perspective on civil liberties and political rights, 2) ensure the elimination of conflicts caused by improper civil liberties, 3) ensure the availability of policies, infrastructure and systems to facilitate compliance Rights progressively with the innovative leaders of regional .

Rondinelli and Cheema (1983), Explained about the advantages of regional autonomy by saying that), "In a significant early text on decentralization and development, citing a number of reasons why decentralization can be a positive route forward for developing countries. To begin with, they argue that it allows for the greater representation of different political, religious, ethnic, and tribal groups in development decision-making processes. This representation, they believe, can then lead to greater equity in the allocation of government

resources and funding.” Furthermore, Rondinelli and Cheema (1983) explained of the advantages of decentralization by saying that), “State that decentralization can increase political stability and national unity by allowing different populations to partake more freely in decision making, thus increasing their ‘stake’ in the political system. Decentralization can also reduce the costs of providing public services by reducing diseconomies of scale considered to be inherent in centrally planned systems.”

b. The disadvantage of Regional Autonomy

Noor (2012), indicated that regional autonomy had various disadvantages, namely: 1) The absence of harmony between the interests of central and regional interests. There was still an interesting attraction between the interests of central and local governments. The central government did not seem willing to make its own policies, 2) more or less 173, 3) as many as 85 percents of leaders of regional are troubled by the procurement of goods and services, and 4) regional leaders acted as budget brokers and licenses, especially natural resources. Even according to Indrayana (2012) there were irregularities in the implementation of regional autonomy, i.e. it was inseparable from the problem of decentralization, politics, and also law enforcement cases. The regarding the issue of decentralization there was overlap in the transfer and exercise of authority between the central government to local governments. Political Issues, direct election of regional leaders would cost a great deal, in other words, the cost of an expensive campaign and encourage the rise of money politics. The problem of irregularities by the head of the region could not be resolved when the legal apparatus was involved in the deviation.

Related to the legal matters, according to Noor (2012) there was a potential for conflict of authority between the central government and local government because there was a law established by the central government but has not been followed up with the implementing rules. Haris (2013), the regional autonomy had a disadvantage because the decentralization of development that became the main spirit of autonomy only live on paper. It has not been present in society as expected. The regional autonomy was only a formality.

Asrinaldi (2016), explained that the regional autonomy causes the disintegration of local communities and social and political turmoil that threaten national integration. As a result, the central government seeks to oversee regional autonomy in order to align with the state's goals by strengthening the central political power. In using this authority, especially the authority of infrastructure, the central government tried to implement the regulations that relevant with the interests of the state. Through these regulations, local autonomy is directed to support the central government policies. The regional autonomy is also a source of problems that cause fragmentation in society. Therefore, in order for the implementation of the regional autonomy in accordance with the mandate of the Constitution in 1945, the government must monitor it. One of the most common ways of implementing this control is the strengthening of the government's role in controlling the practice of regional autonomy. Its question is how did the government do it? Among the strategies used is to reorganize the implementation of the regional autonomy. This arrangement is related to the implementation of the function of state regulation-the principal function which characterizes the sovereign state in the life of society

According to Faris (2013), the regional autonomy only gave birth to small kings who create many corrupt practices in the region. Many regional heads abuse the authority to enrich themselves and their cronies.

In the legal field, according to Reydonnyzar Moenek in Putra (2013) had a disadvantage, especially from the aspect of law, it provided until 2013, nearly 300 heads of regional were entangled in legal cases, about 70 percent of whom were criminalized by corruption. Likewise, the members of Regional People's Representative Council who exposed to legal cases of 1,050 people (40.07 percent) identified cases were budgetary aberrations. By the end of 2012, at least 1,364 government employees were trapped in corruption, with the status of the suspect to the convicted. Furthermore, he explained that the disadvantage of the regional autonomy in the political field was the lack of capacity constraints, especially candidates for the head of the region to make who has large funds, Can nominate only with money. Although unpopular, lack of capacity, capability, and quality, and integrity, the someone can be elected to the government. This open recruitment model what creates the potential for everyone to fall into a violation.

Irfan Ridwan Maksum in Son (2013), said that the number of regional leaders or council members trapped in legal cases is caused by institutional and non-institutional factors. Institutional factors, because regional heads and council members were less understanding of the state financial system and local government. The Regional leaders and members of council do not understand how to govern and account for the budget. Non-institutional factors, ie social systems that nourish corrupt practices, such as tribute culture and patron client.

Abdillah and Mursinto (2016) clarified that decentralization has various disadvantages. Through the results of his research, they show that) “Fiscal decentralization applied on the regions are not able to reduce poverty rates in the regions in short term period. On the other hands, there is a positive correlation between income imbalance and poverty rate. In this sense, the higher income disparity the higher regional poverty rate.” Rondinelli (1990), indicated that decentralization, as has been experienced in developing countries to at the time,

decentralization may not necessarily facilitate the development or outcome of undemocratic political development

Bossuyt and Gould (2000), explained the disadvantages of decentralization. namely “ In fact, most literature that evaluates decentralization shows that tangible success stories are rare and that decentralization is seldom an effective poverty-reducing strategy, have illustrated. For example, in Ethiopia and Mozambique”. Related to it, Azfar et al. (1999) explained that, “Decentralisation has actually reduced the quality of service provision in some cases, widened existing regional disparities in others, and may increase corruption.

The research which related to opinions above, it also carried out by Blair (2000: 25) it showed that “In six countries (Bolivia, Honduras, India, Mali, the Philippines, and Ukraine) found that although more autonomy in local government did indeed favour increased participation in governance, it failed to help alleviate poverty or address problems of the very poor. This was because “local elites get most of the power [through decentralization] and steer benefits to themselves.” The decentralization also did not guarantee better governance structures or democratic governance conditions (Eaton, 2001: 101). However, the decentralization had the capacity to help accelerate the development of the country in all sectors at the local level (Eaton, 2001: 101).

5. Conclusion

Based on the research result, can be concluded that the regional autonomy has many advantages and disadvantages. The various advantages and disadvantages that occur from the administrative, political, legal, and economic aspects can be summarized as follows.

1. In the administration field, the regional autonomy has advantages, which are capable of encouraging: the realization of good governance, transparency, better service, accountable government, and the realization of democracy at the local level better. The disadvantages, namely causing: a) overlap in the delivery and exercise of authority between the central government to local governments; b) disagreement between the interests of central and regional interests, and c) decreasing the quality of service delivery to the community.
2. In political field, the regional autonomy has the advantages, i.e. giving citizens political rights to elect their candidate leaders and participate in the development process; Increasing political stability, maintaining the conduciveness of the party system, creating a full constitutional system, eliminating conflicts, accelerating the development of the state in all sectors at the local level. The disadvantages are: a) high-cost politics, b) money politics, c) reducing the capacity of regional heads, d) giving birth to small kings, e) fostering corruption practice in the regions, and f) abuse of authority to enrich themselves and their cronies.
3. In the law field, the regional autonomy has the advantage, namely providing discretionary and innovative authority to develop its territory, enabling greater representation in legal decision-making processes, and building better legal justice. The disadvantages are a) triggering irregularities by the regional heads so that they are dragged into legal cases, and b) enlarge potential of conflicts of authority between the central government and local governments.
4. In the economic field, the regional autonomy has the advantage. i.e. being able to encourage each region to more optimize the existing potentials in their respective regions, promote economic growth in the regions, and encourage the improvement of people's welfare, increase income per capita of the population, create efficiency and effectiveness of managing local resources, convincing investors to invest in their regions, raising public purchasing power, improving the good investment climate and creating job opportunities and reducing the percentage of unemployment. The disadvantages are: a) causing the regional heads to become a budget broker and licensing the utilization of natural resources, b) unable to reduce the poverty level in the region, and c) the more unbalanced income in the region.

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