

Increasing Trust in Local Government Financial Management and Building Integrity: Efforts Reform in Indonesia

I Gede Eko Putra Sri Sentanu

College of Public Administration, Huazhong University of Science and Technology

10037, Luoyu Road, Wuhan – Hubei, P.R. China

E-mail: sentanu.murthi@gmail.com

Abstract

In most general terms this article addresses the issue of the trust in the local government area in terms of financial management and integrity. This is important because it relates to the implementation of the obligations and functions of local government to the people by adjusting its financial capacity. Financial capacity of local governments to determine the ability of local governments in carrying out its functions as a public service function, development function and protective function. The low fiscal capacity will lead to negative effects, i.e., low levels of public services and can lead to the decline on public trust in local government performance. In summary, unresponsive governance has been responsible for the continuing decline of trust in government. The challenge now is to make government more trustworthy through improvement of basic services and access, emphasizing equality and fairness in providing services, take the solution to reduce graft and corruption seriously, improve integrity in governance, innovative leadership, pressing a waste of public resources, improve institutional representation, and involve civil society. The final challenge is to increase the trust in the government to make a deal trust between government and citizen, i.e., the integrity pact, and citizen charters. Therefore, this article describes several areas include the following: (1) The political culture and democratization; (2) Reform efforts such as professionalism, commitment and innovation; (3) Trust and integrity in the public service, i.e., accountability, transparency and anti-corruption. We begin by reviewing various examples in the local government for the financial management of local government including continuing efforts to address graft and corruption, red tape, and inefficiencies. In order to achieve effective governance, processes and procedures become an important instrument through an institutional reform. The absence of credible government agency is likely as a result of the high incidence of it. Therefore, institutions, processes and procedures changed for the better and have a standard of performance that can be compared with the services of the private sector.

Keywords: increasing trust, integrity, local government, public service, innovation

1. Introduction

Trust is how to build interpersonal relationships and complex organizations (Carino, 2007; Duck, 1997; Job, 2005; Kramer and Tyler, 1995). Trust is usually seen in a positive light, but trust as a virtue has its limits. For example, one may trust an untrustworthy person and be led to ruin (Carino, 2007). A trusting person, group or institution will be “freed from worry and the need to monitor the other party’s behavior, partially or entirely” (Levi and Stoker, 2000, p. 496). The trust is very important for good governance. Trust is an interpersonal relationship and the concept of complex organizations (Bok, 1997; Kramer and Tylor, 1995). Trust occurs when certain parties who have a lucrative perception of each other which allows relationships to achieve the expected results. Someone trusts, groups or institutions will be free from worries and the need to monitor the behavior of the other party, in part or in full. In that sense, trust is an efficient means for lowering transaction costs in any social, economic and political relationship (Fukuyama, 1995). Trust is also much more than that. It is the foundation of all human relationships and institutional interactions, and beliefs play a role whenever a new policy is announced (Ocampo, 2006).

The primary object of trust in this paper is government. Government is a large-scale institution, covering many aspects of it. However, this agency possible and has been trusted by the citizens to manage the common interests and can carry out that trust. Such trust may arise from characteristics of both the trusted and the trustee, the citizens as well as government. On the part of the citizens, trust may be engendered or repressed by cultural characteristics, or by such socio-demographic qualities as level of education, income status or even gender. Higher income, education and social status all seem to work against the ability of individuals to trust government institutions (Albritton and Bureekul 2005, cited in Carino 2007, p. 2). Trust is generally considered from the utilitarian perspective, especially where government is concerned, but it can also be viewed as one of those soft

aspects of human action (Job 2005).

Improving social trust and political policy through the application of sound economic governance is also essential for a good and effective. Increasing trust through effective economic policy making to bring good governance only if the linkage of economic efficiency. In other words, the government in implementing policies that enhance competitiveness, should consider the issue of social inequality. Furthermore, the legitimacy of the political relationships that build trust towards political good governance. The relationship between trust and political legitimacy on good governance.

On the other hand, the widespread public belief will influence policy and public conductivity. When the public no longer has trust in the policy actors, it will be difficult for the policy to be implemented correctly. Carrying capacity of the public will be low, and that possibility is apathy and prejudice against the policy, and more away again no compliance or adherence, as expected. In this situation, any form of policy that is built will always be in question. Another problem is when the very party that does not have a public inner to the outer public trust. Public (outer) will always be considered as a party should always set a formal, public undisciplined, low quality responsibilities, individualistic and self-centered, and so on. Situations like this certainly will make policy makers stuck in a formalistic thinking, detail, and rigid in formulating policy. The impact that arises is the charge policy details that ultimately lead to rigidity and stiffness in their implementation. This is often perceived in the current public situation.

Restoring public trust is not easy, though not as well as an impossible thing. Public trust is a necessity that can be constructed in many ways and strategies. The problem is there any seriousness to build, maintain, and develop it for the benefit of the nation and the State. Public policy is one tool/instrument that can be used to build the public trust. When public policy is produced as a product of government policy, whether the policy has been tailored to the needs of society, political needs, and the needs of the nation and the country more broadly. Then, in a more narrow scope, whether public policies made by the government, has been able to embody a range of issues at the level of government administration, so that the policy is actually going to become a tool for the creation of an orderly administration of governance, efficient service, and programs and activities. In this case, as a matter of policy implementation is the key.

Problem of Trust

Problems in trust characterized by the development priorities that do not touch the basic needs of its citizens, leaders begin to lose identity to fight for the welfare of the people, lack of community participation, the problem of corruption that seemingly never stops and political feud between the executive and legislative or political elite. Corruption is a disease that is very dangerous because it is actually a criminal act that took the rights of citizens in obtaining welfare and prosperity. Modes of corruption include making abuse of authority for personal gain or to others, do markups and markdowns in public procurement budgeting, thus causing a lack of effective budget itself.

The main cause of the lack of effective budget in the prosperity of the Indonesian people is the amount of leakages due to corruption. The leak occurred on both sides of the budget, the revenues and expenditures. Budget in terms of revenue leakage occurs because the government is not able to handle the tax mafia. On the expenditure side, public budgets are also experiencing such severe leakage. Leaks come from the political corruption involving members of Parliament, political party officials, ministry officials, members of parliament and local government officials. At the local level, many legislators who make money politics during the elections and ask for allotment of executive officials and private-sector partner for any construction project approved in the area. Budgeting system implemented after the fiscal decentralization it caused a lot of the complexity of the problems that led to the budget is not responsive to the needs of development.

The current budgeting system is relatively open and the government since 2002 has launched the development of performance-based budgeting, budget substance proved to be not touching the most basic development needs of the people, namely education, health, social services and increased prosperity evenly. There are three issues that could be addressed related to the budgeting system: 1) the mechanism of state and local budgets are not synchronized, 2) the large proportion of the public budget is spent on operational costs of public bureaucracy, 3) The pattern of allocation of public expenditures tend to be less effective as more piled up at the end of the fiscal year; and 4) public budget absorption decreases with worsening budget accountability. Increasingly smaller proportion of capital expenditure in the state budget and the budget shows that the public budget is still oriented to the narrow interests of the officials and yet so many benefits to the public.

2. Political Culture and Democratization

Trust in general has two main variants. Trust assessed in political terms is the so-called political trust. Political trust happens when citizens appraise the government and its institutions, policy-making in general and/or the individual political leaders as promise-keeping, efficient, fair and honest (Blind, 2007). The ongoing political trust and become a habit that will become a culture maintained, namely political culture. The political culture is the pattern of individual behavior and orientation toward political life. Political culture is different from political civilization more emphasis on technology. Political culture seen from the behavior of the public political support or antipathy between behaviors also influenced by the general orientation or public opinion. Dahl (1997, p.34) reinforces the notion that the consolidation of democracy requires a strong democratic culture that gives emotional maturity and rational support to implement democratic procedures. He bases his emphasis on the importance of democratic culture on the assumption that all political systems, including democracy, sooner or later will face a crisis, and a culture that is embedded with a stronger democracy that would help the democracies of the crisis passed. The implication is that the process of democratization without deep-rooted democratic culture becomes vulnerable and destroyed even when faced with a crisis such as an economic downturn, regional conflict or social conflict, or political crisis caused by corruption or fragmented leadership.

Government budgets (both APBN and APBD) are an important instrument for the government to set development program priorities at both the national and local levels. We could even say that the government budget is a reflection of political decisions between the executive and the legislature. These political decisions obviously have a tremendous impact on the living standards of the public, depending on how well the development budget allocations promote efforts to provide better basic services to residents, especially women and the poor. Therefore, the budget is also a measurement tool to evaluate the government's support for its citizens. Powerful legislative conditions have led to pressure on the executive to be great, which is often difficult to reject the legislative recommendations in the allocation of resources that provide benefits to the legislature, so the outcome of the budget was not optimal and adverse the public.

Samuels (2000) mentions there two possible changes that could be made by the legislature to the proposed budget submitted by the executive, namely: first, change the amount of the budget and second, changing the distribution of expenditures / expenses in the budget. In Indonesia, the preparation of the draft budget or the budget by the executive based on the direction and general policies (AKU) and the strategies and priorities (SP) which is derived from the strategic plan (Renstrada). SP is expressed in a memorandum of agreement between the executive and the legislature. At the formulation stage is relatively no conflict between the executive and the legislature, while at a later stage, when the draft budget is proposed to be set budget should normally be through debate and negotiations between the two sides. In budgeting in several regions in Indonesia there is a conflict between the legislature and the government. For example in the case of (1) the preparation of the budget, especially in the post budget to Parliament, (2) the financial position of Parliament to PAD, (3) the position of protocol legislators and their facilities, and (4) discussion of the annual accountability report regional head (Yudhoyono, 2003: 39)

Budgets Absorption

In the framework of realization of good governance is needed public accountability in governance practices. One of the goals of public accountability is the public finance sector. The main renewal in the financial sector is focused on budgeting system to reform its budgeting is a change from the traditional budget to performance-based budgeting. Specifically, there have been several reforms in public financial management as a result of the implementation of the performance-based budgeting, including financing system reform, reform of the accounting system and audit systems reforming government. Within the framework of performance-based budgeting, the actual absorption of the budget is not a budget allocation targets. Performance Based Budget is more focused on performance rather than absorption itself. It's just our current economic conditions the dominant variable driving consumption growth is a factor, so that government spending is government consumption contributed to the growth determinants. Failure absorption target budget will indeed result in the loss of the benefits of shopping. Since the funds that have been allocated was not everything can be utilized which means there idle money. If the efficient budget allocation, the limited financial resources owned by the state can be optimized to fund strategic activities. The basic concepts of economics, the basic problems faced by humans is the lack of financial resources as a means of meeting the needs faced with the needs of the unlimited amount.

Basic problem is also faced by countries including Indonesia. The sources of state revenue are limited, faced with the needs of people who are unlimited, requiring the Government to set priorities and budget allocation activities effectively and efficiently. Therefore, when the absorption of the budget failed to meet the target, there

is a budget allocation inefficient and ineffectiveness. Therefore, the realization of budget absorption (APBN/APBD) needs to be optimized as a commitment of the state ministries / agencies and local levels in the acceleration of economic growth and the optimum public service provision.

3. Building Public Trust: Efforts at Reform

Public Administration is an executive body of the government through which the government implements its plan, program, and projects. Over the years, we have seen how public administration and governance institutions have become unresponsive to the overall goal to rendering public service to the people. Challenges ranging from graft and corruption to failure or reorganization processes to lack of people participation to simply citizens apathy, and lack of trust in government have hounded reform efforts. Locating this in a broader context, reform of public administration has become a continuing imperative for all the countries (Leong, 2006; Uphoff, 1996, cited in Brillantes, 2011, p.11; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992).

Public administration reform is directed at the implementation of the overall management functions of government based on the need for increased speed and effectiveness of quality of service in accordance with the dynamics of social progress and development challenges. Strong public administration also has meaning has credibility and accountability of government to solve problems in an increasingly complex and fundamentally sustainable, especially in efforts to achieve improvement in order to enhance the competitiveness of establishing themselves in the era of regional autonomy and decentralization of local governance.

In the perspective of public administration, bureaucracy reform is a necessity, which it was had to live up to the position, duties and role in the development of more advanced administrative discipline. Targets to be achieved is the establishment of a professional government bureaucracy, ethical and effective and can meet the public demand for quality of service requirements. Why should the bureaucracy? Because as the driving wheels of government bureaucracy responsible for the implementation of the public management functions of government and relate directly to the citizens. With the increasing need for services to citizens it is necessary to be accompanied with an understanding of the importance of the accountability of all policies and measures taken by the government, including the apparatus therein. Citizens will sue the bureaucracy that has responsibility in carrying out their duties in order to meet the needs and interests of the public. The government's success in programs implemented will be able to grow the trust of citizens, so it will be able to accelerate the development process.

Reforms aim to bring about significant improvements in public service that makes it more efficient, effective, and economy. Reforms also make the public service more accountable and transparent (Brillantes, 2011). He also explained that a broader framework for public administration reform is suggested to go beyond the traditional targets of reform (organizations, structures and process) but also to include the imperative to reform public servants' behavior, mindsets and values, bring about transformational leaders coupled with political will, and encourage – and even agitate – the citizens to engage themselves in governance. All the above four dimensions of reform have to move towards a common vision; to bring about effective and responsive governance and to restore public trust in government. The problem that often occurs is decreasing of trust (trust deficit) to the government. Thus, there have been moves on administrative reform to reduce the “trust deficit” (Brillantes, 2011). Administrative reform should be the answer to get out of the chasm of distrust in order restoring what is called the "trust" and of course, build a strong integrity in public service.

One of the most challenging imperatives in restoring trust in the government is reforming the behavior and mindsets of the people both from the supply side and the demand side (Brillantes, 2011). He argued that changing mindsets as well as behavior is difficult in general, especially, in a country where there is still a strong overlap of traditional social systems with modernization efforts. For instance, when it comes to administrative reform, merit reform is resisted in order to practice nepotism in civil service appointment and promotion. Additionally, public employment patronage that finances competition between political parties and factions continues to be a dominant feature. There will be a high practice of political appointments and compulsory political levies on civil service (Shepherd 2003). Culture in particular is a challenge. There is this so-called “culture of corruption” that is deeply imbedded in the system of the bureaucracy. Reforming mindsets refers to the molding of the individual and collective perspectives or paradigms of public officials in line with the demand of the changing context. It is also called reforming the “culture” (Pant, 2007, p. 82). There are two ways of reforming mindsets: individual mindsets and collective mindsets. Individual mindsets include desirable work behavior, positive thinking and attitude, emotional intelligence (self and social awareness – matured behavior), and moral intelligence (integrity, honesty, compassion, and forgiveness).

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Build public trust is not easy, though not as well as an impossible thing. Public trust is a necessity that can be constructed in many ways and strategies. The problem is there any seriousness to build, maintain, and develop it for the benefit of the nation and the State. Public policy is one tool/instrument that can be used to build the public trust. When public policy is produced as a product of government policy, whether the policy has been tailored to the needs of society, political needs, and the needs of the nation and the country more broadly. Then, in a more narrow scope, whether public policies made by the government, has been able to embody a range of issues at the level of government administration, so that the policy is actually going to become a tool for the creation of an orderly administration of governance, efficient service, and programs and activities. In this case, as a matter of policy implementation is the key.

In order to realize good governance can be supported by several pillars of trust (OECD, 2014):

a. Reliability of Government

Governments have an obligation to minimize uncertainty in the economic, social and political environment. The financial crisis and other recent disasters have raised questions over the level of citizens' trust in governments to protect them against natural disasters and economic crisis (OECD, 2014). Sound fiscal management is a key element in restoring trust. The budget is a central policy document of government, showing how it will achieve its annual objectives. The budget is a contract between citizens and state, showing how resources are raised and allocated for the delivery of public services. Such a document must be clear, transparent and credible if it is to command trust and to serve as a basis for accountability.

b. Responsiveness

Trust in government can depend on citizen's experiences when receiving public services. The interaction between citizens and the state is a crucial factor of trust in government. Under tight fiscal constraints and growing expectations, governments are increasingly engaging with citizens to ensure quality, responsiveness and ultimately trust in public services. Governments are also exploring how improved service delivery can boost confidence and trust in the public sector.

c. Openness

Open government policies that concentrate on citizen engagement and access to information can help increase public trust and initiatives are receiving traction in an increasing number of Member and non-Member countries

d. Integrity and fairness

Integrity is a crucial determinant of trust. Evidence suggests a link between trust in politicians, both from the business community and citizens, and the perception of corruption. Integrity policies, aimed at preventing corruption and fostering high standards of behavior, help to reinforce the credibility and legitimacy of those involved in policy decision making, safeguarding the public interest and restoring confidence in the policy making process.

e. Better regulation

Building, maintaining and validating trust is a permanent agenda for many countries which is addressed through implementing good regulatory practices.

f. Inclusive policy making

Moving from an approach that focuses principally on policy measures to one that understands better "how" policies are designed and implemented will help strengthen institutions and in turn promote greater trust between citizens and government.

The government should establish a conducive policy-making process priority and trustworthy. concerns over undue influence of certain personal and group interests over the decision-making has led to increased demand for transparency and a greater commitment to safeguard the public interest. Spirit and efforts to ensure that any policy-making process is open, inclusive and equitable will improve the quality of policy decisions and public trust. A policy-making process conducive to trust is built on informed decisions using reliable and relevant information that are in the public Interest, and are carried out with high standards of behavior.

Local Government Leadership and Innovation

In the area of financial management of innovation and entrepreneurship is also required from the head of the region to improve the financial capability to meet the needs of local finance that is not only dependent on transfers from the central government. The Head of the Region should be observant in capturing opportunities potential of the region so as to generate greater regional original revenue (PAD) in order to the welfare of society. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of national politics lately and corruption case that ensnared some unscrupulous Regional Head, there are still many governors, regents and mayors who excel and have innovations in advancing the region, including the Municipality under the leadership of Solo, Joko Widodo (2005-2012) , he did a budget and management innovation focus, the most evident is the revitalization of traditional markets and street vendors localize with the goal of increasing revenue (Kompas March 21, 2011 cited in Damayanty, 2013, pp.358-359). Another example is the Regent of Ogan Komering Ulu Timur (OKU Timur), Herman Deru. Publishes Regulation on the Badan Amil Zakat (BAZ), the funds collected in 2010 and recorded in the budget about Rp 2 billion, and managed to revitalize approximately 350 homes for the less fortunate. Because of this innovation program Ministry of Housing assess the surgical program and cheap houses for civil servants in OKU Timur deserves a model for other regions.

Dimensions of leadership has long been a particularly interesting study on the success of leadership in an organization. Leadership competencies can be known from one's success in leadership for the achievement of organizational goals. A leader must be able to bring the apparatus required public organizations that provide quality leads. The role of the leader in building public trust includes internal scope relating to mobilize efforts and resources to ensure the entire apparatus of high-performance, and external organizational scope in an effort to examine people's expectations and good external communication regarding service performance measures are defined, an attempt has been, is and will be performed, as well as the performance of services that have been generated. Intelligent leader is not a guarantee to lead an organization that is effective and efficient, as a leader in addition to having the knowledge and skills required to lead also behave as a role model for subordinates (building the trust). In order to achieve maximum performance, leadership apparatus must be based on the credibility that is formed on the basis of professionalism and honesty. Honesty in leadership is the root and the capital of avoiding actions that are contrary to the social norms and state, whether conducted by the leader himself and his followers.

4. Conclusion

Key public trust in government is located on people's satisfaction with the performance, integrity, responsibility and quality of services provided. Public trust in government is a complex mix of ideology, experience, stereotypes and images, consisting of but not limited to certain aspects of the organization and functions of the public sector. Relational aspects of trust has powerful feature. It should be noted that the trust in local government organizations and social trust remains highly significant as a predictor of trust in government organizations remote even when there is a negative perception of the government, such as corruption or lack of honesty. Although government organizations might behave badly, if people have a basic faith or belief that another person against their intentions are not malicious, they would still trust the government. Brillantes (2011) argued that people think how they see and understand things. In other words, their mindsets and behavior are the equally important factor in either contributing or hindering corruption. Trust between citizens and their government officials and elected representatives is a vital element of a well governed society. In the absence of trust, citizens become cynical about their political system and disaffected with the existing order (Diamond, 2007).

The level of trust of citizens in their government is high if the latter performs effectively as expected. Conversely, as indicated by Margaret Levi (1998, p. 88) earlier, citizens are likely to distrust their government if it “breaks its promises, is incompetent, and antagonistic toward them” (Quah, 2010). In order to achieve effective governance, processes and procedures become an important instrument through an institutional reform. The absence of credible government agency is likely as a result of the high incidence of graft and corruption, inefficiency, bureaucratic pathology, and lack of public services. Therefore, institutions, processes and procedures changed for the better and have a standard of performance that can be compared with the services of the private sector. Increased accountability of political and bureaucratic reform is essential to ensure that the formulation of public policy and the allocation of the public budget is really able to solve the problems that exist in the society. The leader at various levels within a public organization should provide support and commitment to subordinates and the recipients of public services by continuing to innovate in government to create good governance, especially in public financial management.

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