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Administrative Reform in Mahakam Ulu Regency in the Context of Supporting Border Area Development

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Abstract: Administrative reform is a demand that the Indonesian Government must carry out in organizing government. Various aspects of state management are required to undergo improvement. With the development of the existing paradigm, the essence of administrative reform also targets border areas. The reason is that the border region is an area that has a strategic position and role in maintaining the existence of the nation and state. After the expansion of East Kalimantan Province with the formation of North Kalimantan Province, the only state border area in East Kalimantan Province is currently in Mahakam Ulu Regency. As a state border area with open gates, Mahakam Ulu Regency certainly has a geostrategic and geopolitical role that is worth taking into account. Based on a literature review, this article analyzes administrative reform in Mahakam Ulu Regency in supporting the development of Mahakam Ulu as a border area. The research results show that administrative reform has a very priority place in efforts to support development in Mahakam Ulu Regency. Administrative reform within the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government includes strengthening institutions, strengthening the HR management system, strengthening performance accountability, strengthening governance, strengthening the supervision system, and improving public services. Government officials are also required to master various applications and systems that are built to simplify and transparently carry out their duties, develop ASN competencies, monitor and evaluate, and support village governments. All administrative reform commitments are supported by the political will of the Regent of Mahakam Ulu himself.

Keyword: Border areas, development, administrative reform

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia faces many problems related to public services in this era of globalization. Problems related to the performance of government officials are often found in various public service agencies in Indonesia which causes public dissatisfaction and disappointment (Fernandes & Fresly, 2017; Pratama & Nurhidayah, 2019; Yusriadi & Farida, 2019). An administrative system pattern that is too complicated is the keyword behind this dissatisfaction and causes service duration that is too long.

The problem of public services in Indonesia cannot be separated from the hierarchical character of the bureaucracy which tends to be unresponsive and rigid to the demands of the development of the strategic environment of the Indonesian bureaucracy due to the long-standing adoption of a bureaucratic elite system which is a form of bureaucratic centralism (Iskandar, 2021; Cheung & Scott, 2003). The behavior and attitudes of government officials who are less oriented towards serving the community are caused by the character of the bureaucracy which is identical in placing the position of the officials higher than the community. Adaptation and change in government apparatus by taking into account such background and conditions is a very urgent need, so policies that require the government to pay attention to carrying out administrative reform are a logical consequence (Turner, Prasajo, & Sumarwono, 2022; Brinkerhoff & Wetterberg, 2013).

With the development of the existing paradigm, the essence of administrative reform also targets border areas. This is because the existence of the nation and state can be maintained through the strategic role and position of border regions (Donnan & Wilson, 2021; Anderson & O'dowd, 1999; Janparvar et al., 2013). This is because the internal conditions of a country or nation can be represented by the conditions of its border areas. The living conditions of the people and the physical conditions within the territory of a country can be demonstrated by looking at its borders. Moreover, resources in the form of people, goods and services between countries can experience inflow and outflow through doors called border areas (Ngo & Hung, 2019; Ishikawa, 2012).

For Indonesia's national interests, border areas are areas of strategic value. Fundamental aspects that are closely related to the survival of the Indonesian nation and state are included in these strategic values, such as defense and security aspects, political aspects and economic aspects (Kennedy et al., 2018). The success of national development can be supported by the strategic value possessed by border regions, because of the various activities that are characteristic of the border region itself, such as: the urgency of aspects of state sovereignty which are influenced by activities in the border region (Rudolph, 2005), the socio-economic welfare of the community surrounding areas which can be encouraged by various development activities in border areas (Cappellano & Rizzo, 2019), have a mutualistic symbiotic relationship between one region and another or even between countries as a result of activities carried out in border areas (Åslund & Engdahl, 2019), as well as aspects of defense and security that cannot be separated from the impacts caused by activities in border areas (Arieli, 2016), both regional and national scales.

Interestingly, in developing countries, government management in border areas is related to efforts to change the socio-economic conditions of society to become more prosperous, just and equitable, which in its orientation shows differences with the focus of border management in developed countries (Anderson, & Wever, 2003; Cuaresma & Heger, 2019; Therefore, in developing countries, various sectors such as the economy, health and education are the focus of border region development. Not only government initiatives, various efforts involving community participation are also being encouraged to increase the development of these three sectors. In Indonesia, for example, the conditions shown in the form of underdeveloped areas with very limited social and economic facilities and infrastructure characterize some of its border areas (Atmojo & Fridayani, 2018). In fact, according to another opinion, these characteristics can be seen in most border areas in Indonesia (Sunarya & Sudaryono, 2011). This characteristic cannot be separated from the border development paradigm which prioritizes a security approach rather than welfare which emerged in the past due to the view of border areas as areas that need to be closely monitored because they are hiding places for rebels. With the development of border areas being disoriented towards prosperity, people in border areas are generally poor, many are oriented

towards neighboring countries, and in some areas are not touched by development (Risal et al., 2022).

To maintain the sovereignty of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, the constitution has provided its constitutional basis. One of the conditions for the establishment of a state is the territory of the state which is formulated by explaining the condition of the territory and this is stated in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (UUD NRI 1945) Article 25 A. Establishment of Law Number 43 of 2008 concerning State Territory is one way to regulate state territory in Indonesia. Law Number 43 of 2008 is a reference in national regional regulations which, among other things, concern land, air, waters, space, the environment and natural resources, so that it is able to uphold sovereign rights, sovereignty and the use and management of state territory. The hope is that with this law, a harmonious relationship will be created in the pattern of actions and attitudes in protecting the territory of Indonesia.

On that basis, an integral part of state management is border management, which operationally is the activity of handling and/or managing territorial boundaries and border areas. Moreover, the large number of land and sea borders with a number of countries due to the vast territory of Indonesia as an archipelagic country, makes the implications and problems of national boundaries very complex. The social, political, cultural and economic life, as well as the defense and security of the Indonesian nation, will greatly depend on the realities that occur in border areas and relations with neighboring countries. The case of loss of state territory is a lesson regarding the need for good management in the development of border areas, so that this case does not happen again (Maydhina, 2021; Utama & Maulana, 2019). In order to optimize development in border areas and manage border areas, Border Management Agencies at the central and regional levels were formed as a step in line with the reorientation of development policies in border areas, through Law Number 43 of 2008 concerning State Territories.

Even though there is a special mandate in border management, regional governments remain at the forefront of this management because the government system implemented is regional autonomy (Prabowo et al., 2022; Arifin & Rupita, 2021; Wibowo, 2021). Development authority in the region is largely the responsibility of the regional government. The geographic location of the region so that it is categorized as a state border area is only a dynamic that is considered in the implementation of development by the relevant regional government.

With such a context, the area in Kalimantan is one of the areas bordering Indonesia. One of the provinces in Kalimantan that borders other countries is East Kalimantan Province which shares a land border with Malaysia. After the expansion of East Kalimantan Province with the formation of North Kalimantan Province, the only state border area in East Kalimantan Province is currently in Mahakam Ulu Regency. Mahakam Ulu Regency is one of ten districts/cities in East Kalimantan Province. As a state border area with open gates, Mahakam Ulu Regency certainly has a geostrategic and geopolitical role that is worth taking into account. This includes cross-border security stability, especially after the establishment of the Archipelago Capital (IKN) in the North Penajam Paser Regency area, which is not too far from the Mahakam Ulu Regency area.

Geostrategically, Mahakam Ulu Regency is very important for IKN because it is an open gates area or open state border with the State of Sarawak (Malaysia), the closest open border to IKN. This border is in Long Apari District, the northernmost part of Mahakam Ulu. This area will certainly be an important spotlight for IKN, both in terms of state security, including in utilizing state borders as a new economic gateway that can bring significant changes to Mahakam Ulu Regency.

In general, border areas have identical problems, such as development gaps between inland/border areas and cities, poverty, environmental problems, and employment problems. Therefore, the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government has the vision of 'Building Mahulu for All, Prosperous with Justice'. To achieve this vision, the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government understands the importance of administrative reform, so that one of the missions to achieve this vision is embodied in aspects related to administrative reform, which is stated in the 4th Mission in the form of 'Creating Clean, Distinguished, Transparent Governance, and Accountable'.

Taking into account the explanation above, it is interesting to write an article analyzing administrative reform in Mahakam Ulu Regency in order to support the development of Mahakam Ulu as a border area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term administrative reform is a concept used by developing countries in carrying out efforts to reform government administration which is considered incapable of implementing development sponsored by world donor agencies (Riggio & Garcia, 2009). Efforts to use administrative reform in developing countries focus on analyzes aimed at increasing administrative capacity (development of administrative reform), namely state administration.

Administrative reform is a general term in public administration and its practice has dominated government activities across countries since ancient times (Farazmand, 1999). Kroll and Pasha (2021) explain that public organizations must carry out administrative reforms in response to innovation and stakeholder demands for better services. It is not surprising that the practice of administrative reform continues to occupy a central position in government activities until modern times. This is due to increasing public demand for better service delivery, which then puts pressure on the global administrative system (Azizuddin, 2012). From a conceptual point of view, administrative reform is difficult to conceptualize because it means different things to different people. Even among scholars, this concept has attracted different understandings because scholars have different understandings (Caiden, 2014). Interestingly, its core purpose is undeniably global to "remove barriers and create better ways of doing things". Administrative reform as an activity remains the main thing in the life of every country (Liviu, 2015).

Administrative reform in public administration is very important to encourage good governance (Sangita, 2002). To provide insight into the discourse on the meaning of administrative reform, there are various conceptual perspectives on administrative reform. For example, Caiden (2014) understands administrative reform as "an artificial stimulus of administrative transformation against resistance – which has existed since humans thought of better ways of organizing their social activities". In addition, Jooste (2008) understands administrative reform as an effort to increase governance efficiency, organizational effectiveness in public administration, and increase capacity in the delivery of public services. Likewise, Igbokwe (2017) describes administrative reform as "a mechanism for transformation or institutional change, transfusion of innovation, political control and achievement of efficiency and economy".

Nevertheless, much literature confirms that quite a few reforms have failed to produce the desired results (Kroll & Pasha 2019). For example, Kamaruddin et al. (2017) emphasized that most reform initiatives on many occasions do not produce substantial changes. Simply put, they often provide unsatisfactory results. Ramos, Milanese, and Ibarra (2021) argue that most reform outcomes do not provide the expected benefits, except in a few cases. As a result, this worsens the quality of the services provided. In the context of service delivery,

this situation aptly represents what is called a governance crisis (the state's inability to meet society's basic needs).

The government's inability to manage foreign loans is the background for administrative reform in developing countries. The correlation is the advice given by aid-giving countries to revitalize and reorganize public organizations, modernize management in the process, and in essence administrative reform. The ultimate goal of these activities is to modernize government administration in order to increase its capacity for state development and improve people's living standards. A similar view was expressed by Farazmand (2020), in efforts to improve the structure and process capabilities of the administrative system, the emphasis is more on fundamental changes and updates. This demand for reform also comes from changes and pressure from political, economic, social and donor institutions; Apart from being caused by the incompetence of the government itself.

From the various thoughts above, it can be concluded that administrative reform has the following characteristics: (a) Administrative capacity becomes something related to development efforts, (b) Government administration becomes the focus of emphasis, and (c) Better people's lives through improvement the ability of government administration in state development is the goal.

However, according to the ideas of Illichman and Bhargava (Riggio & Garcia, 2009), it is necessary to see that the efforts made by the government must be approached in a comprehensive, systemic and integrated manner, because the characteristics of administrative reform are related to development in a broad sense. Because development also depends on social, political, economic and social structure goals. Therefore, in the administrative reform process a balance is needed. This means that administrative reform is not only related to a collection of separate subsystems as a building block, but also concerns the interaction and interdependence between other subsystems. To this extent, it can be seen that administrative reform concerns modernization (real actions and paradigms) in state and social life related to various fields, including social, cultural, economic, political and bureaucratic.

METHOD

This article is based on qualitative research to understand various phenomena related to administrative reform practices in border areas, especially Mahakam Ulu Regency. The data collection process was carried out through reviewing related documents/publications and interviews with a number of relevant stakeholders in Mahakam Ulu Regency. Therefore, this research is also categorized as descriptive research according to the type of research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mahakam Ulu Regency was born from the mandate of reform and change in the government system from centralized to decentralized (Regional Autonomy). Mahakam Ulu was previously part of West Kutai Regency, then expanded into Mahakam Ulu Regency at the end of 2013 with the issuance of Law Number 2 of 2013 concerning the Establishment of Mahakam Ulu Regency. In general, bringing services closer to the community, equitable development, and realizing social justice for all people are the foundations and aspirations for the expansion of Mahakam Ulu Regency.

In the Long Term Regional Development Plan (RPJPD) of Mahakam Ulu Regency for 2005-2025, the main objective of the district's development is "Realizing Mahakam Ulu Regency as a Prosperous, Environmentally Friendly, Natural Resource-Based and Local Wisdom Border Area". The 2021-2025 RPJPD also states that in Mahakam Ulu Regency to achieve this main goal, it is described through the following main development targets:

- First Target: "Implementation of government governance that applies participatory, transparent, effective and efficient principles",

- Second Target: "Increasing the capacity of professional apparatus resources and in accordance with regional development needs",
- Third Goal: "Increasing effective and quality public services",
- Fourth Target: "Development of agricultural business activities that produce products that have comparative and competitive advantages",
- Fifth Target: "Achieving food security for the community",
- Sixth Target: "Development of ecotourism and cultural tourism based on local wisdom",
- Seventh Target: "Increasing regional investment",
- Eighth Target: "Development of superior products of high value in border areas that are environmentally friendly and support the community's economy",
- Ninth Target: "Increasing accessibility and connectivity in remote/border areas, between sub-district areas and between surrounding districts",
- Tenth Target: "Creation of basic, social and economic infrastructure that supports regional socio-economic activities",
- Eleventh Target: "Realize the development of integrated residential areas in Mahakam Ulu Regency, especially in border areas",
- Twelfth Goal: "Improving the quality of human resources",
- Thirteenth Target: "Creating a society with culture and character based on noble local cultural values",
- Fourteenth Target: "Development of community capacity in utilizing natural resources oriented towards environmental sustainability",
- Fifteenth Goal: "Improving the quality of the environment", and
- Sixteenth Target: "Maintain the Heart of Borneo area in Mahakam Ulu Regency".

By paying attention to the main targets above, the issue of administrative reform is of great concern to the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government, moreover it looks like a priority target that it wants to achieve because it places it in order 1 to 3. Placing the main development targets which are directly related to administrative reform at the top of the list is related with one of the challenges facing the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government currently and in the future is low regional competitiveness. Regional competitiveness is closely related to the availability of infrastructure, the quality of human resources, and the utilization of regional potential as an economic resource. This is what continues to be the Regent of Mahakam Ulu's concern, especially in responding to the presence of the Indonesian Capital City (IKN) in East Kalimantan. This was demonstrated by the statement by the Deputy Regent of Mahakam Ulu, Drs. Yohanes Avun, M.Si., in his speech at the moment of publishing the 2023 Mahakam Ulu Regency Overview, which stated:

"The government also continues to focus on improving the quality of services to the community through a bureaucratic reform agenda which we hope will create an apparatus that is more professional, accountable and transparent in carrying out its duties. We also continue to strengthen in terms of program planning, implementation, and evaluation, so that programs initiated by the government have impacts and benefits for the community."

In fact, the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government continues to strive to increase the capacity and quality of the apparatus in accordance with statutory directions, as well as the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government's 4th Mission, namely 'Creating Clean, Authoritative, Transparent and Accountable Governance'. This is also reinforced in the Action Program for the Regent and Deputy Regent at point 10, namely 'Clean, Transparent, Professional and

Accountable Government Arrangement and Management'. Improving the quality and capacity of government officials is one of the priority programs of the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government. The aim is of course to maximize the performance of the apparatus in development efforts as a border area in Mahakam Ulu Regency. Apart from that, carrying out duties and responsibilities professionally, accountably, transparently and free from KKN is also encouraged so that the level of public trust in the government continues to improve. Regarding this matter, the Regional Secretary of Mahakam Ulu Regency, Dr. Stephanus Madang, S. Sos., M.M., stated:

"In the field of government administration, we also continue to develop dynamically towards a clean, accountable, transparent and professional government. This is demonstrated through various achievements and appreciation given to the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government. The Mahakam Ulu Regency Government has also succeeded in obtaining an Unqualified Opinion (WTP) for the last four years in a row from the BPK RI. "This is certainly an encouragement for all officials to provide the best service for the people of Mahakam Ulu."

Administrative reform is one of the strategies carried out by the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government to achieve clean, authoritative, transparent and accountable governance. This reform is carried out starting from the institutional level, governance, HR management system, supervision, performance accountability, public services. Apart from that, capacity building through education, seminars, workshops and others is also carried out so that the quality of the apparatus is at the desired condition.

There are six (6) main strengthening strategies implemented to achieve administrative reform within the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government. These six things include:

1. Institutional strengthening. Organizational effectiveness and efficiency are the goals of this strategy so that the size of the organization is right (right sizing) according to the needs of implementing functions and tasks.
2. Strengthening the HR management system. The professionalism of human resource personnel is the goal of this strategy which supports transparency and competence in the recruitment and promotion system.
3. Strengthening performance accountability. The accountability of the performance and capacity of each apparatus is the goal of this strategy.
4. Strengthening management. In each regional apparatus organization (OPD), an effective and efficient system is created, clarity of procedures and work processes so that they are measurable, effective and efficient are the goals of this strategy.
5. Strengthening the supervision system. Increasing good and clean government is the goal of this strategy so that it is free from the practices of corruption, collusion and nepotism (KKN).
6. Improved public services. The implementation of Minimum Service Standards (SPM) and increasing the quality of public services are the goals of this strategy.

These strategies were implemented without encountering obstacles. In its implementation, the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government continues to strive to achieve optimal results in implementing the main strengthening strategy for administrative reform. Therefore, routine evaluation and supervision is carried out by the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government.

Apart from routinely carrying out evaluations and supervision, in carrying out service duties in the current era of advanced technology, government officials are required to master various applications and systems built to make carrying out their duties easier and more transparent. Some of them are as follows:

1. Applications and systems related to finance and accountability. Some applications and systems related to this are the Regional Financial Management Information System (SIPD), the Government Agency Performance Accountability System Application (E-SAKIP), the Audit Results Follow-up Monitoring Information System (SIM-TLHP), the Realtime Budget Realization Evaluation and Supervision Application (TEPRA), Audit Results Follow-up Monitoring Information System (SIM-TLHP), QRIS for Land and Building Tax Payments (PBB).
2. Applications and systems related to ASN competency development. Some applications and systems related to this are the Personnel Services Application System (My SAPK), Education and Training Information System (SIKILAT), Position Analysis (Anjab) Workload Analyst (ABK) Simona.
3. Applications and systems related to monitoring and evaluation. Some applications and systems related to this are the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting System Application (Simevlap), Digital Signatures to speed up service.
4. Application for Village Government supporters. Some applications and systems related to this are the Village Government Financial Transaction Application (ATKPD), Village Financial System Application (Siskeudes), Village-Owned Enterprise Administration Information System (SIA BUMK), and Village Asset Management System (Sispades).

The commitment to administrative reform above cannot be separated from the political will of Regent Mahakam Ulu. The Mahakam Ulu Regent's seriousness in developing his region must of course start from improving the quality of administration, planning, reporting and monitoring the performance of government officials. Even though it is only supported by minimal office infrastructure, the Regent still demands that the apparatus work optimally, starting from the planning, implementation, to reporting stages so that it must be carried out in accordance with statutory regulations. As a result, even though it is classified as a New Autonomous Region (DOB), the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government has succeeded in obtaining a WTP (Unqualified) Opinion from BPK RI for Financial Reports for four consecutive years since 2020. Likewise, the quality of public services has almost increased. Every year it receives appreciation from the government, including for providing basic services such as education and health. In 2019, the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government received the SAKIP Award from the Ministry of Apparatus Empowerment and Bureaucratic Reform (KemenPAN-RB).

Apart from that, there is a commitment to improving the quality of Mahakam Ulu's human resources, one of which is through a program providing scholarships to hundreds of local children who are currently studying at 23 well-known universities in Indonesia to accommodate Mahakam Ulu's children for D3, S1 and S2 education levels. Some of these well-known campuses include the University of Indonesia, Hasanuddin University Makassar, Atma Jaya University, Udayana University, Ukrida, Mulawarman University (Unmul), Surabaya State University (UNESA), Sanata Dharma University, Kasih Sehati Foundation, Samarinda State Polytechnic, Stikes Dirgahayu Samarinda, Semarang Medical Electrical Engineering Academy, UPBJJ Samarinda Open University, STKPK Bina Insan Samarinda and other universities.

CONCLUSION

As a border area, administrative reform has a very priority place in supporting development in Mahakam Ulu Regency. The implementation of the principles of effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and participation in the implementation of government governance, the capacity of human resources in the apparatus increases and is in

line with regional development needs, and the quality and effectiveness of public services increases are the main targets for the development of Mahakam Ulu Regency which are directly related to the administrative reform agenda. Several main strengthening strategies were implemented to achieve administrative reform within the Mahakam Ulu Regency Government, which included strengthening institutions, strengthening the HR management system, strengthening performance accountability, strengthening governance, strengthening the supervision system, and improving public services. Government officials are also required to master various applications and systems that are built to simplify and transparently carry out their duties in the form of applications and systems related to finance and accountability, developing ASN competencies, monitoring and evaluation, and supporting Village Government. The most important thing in all of these administrative reform commitments is the political will of the Regent of Mahakam Ulu himself.

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