# Policy Model Implementation for Village Community Empowerment in Wajo Regency

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This study aimed to analyse the implementation of an empowerment program in Wajo Regency and to elaborate the model for the implementation of an empowerment program in Wajo District. The study used qualitative methods with a Grindle implementation model analysis approach. Data-collection strategies were observation, interviews, document studies and focus group discussions. Data components analysis included data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions. The results showed that the implementation of the empowerment policy in Wajo fluctuated due to the policy context and policy environment, which contribute to implementing empowerment policies. Empowerment policies are still difficult to implement in the field, but certain villages have implemented empowerment program policies that have been going well. The fluctuating situation is triggered by several things, including the interests of the target group. The social environment is a catalyst for policy implementation as it can accelerate the realization of community empowerment policies.

**Key words:** Policy implementation, model implementation, community empowerment, village.

## Introduction

In Indonesia, narratives about past development failures have not yet seen the light of day. This is related to past traumatic development issues, especially those that took place during the New Order regime. Many government projects/programs have been carried out to encourage the economic development of rural communities in an effort to alleviate poverty. They are undertaken by individual departments or between departments. In general, the projects that are rolled out are focused on providing physical assistance to the community, in the form of irrigation facilities, *saprotan* assistance, pumping machines, construction of clean

water facilities and so on (Gajurel, 2014). Often, though, when the project ends, its output is no longer functioning or has even gone missing. Several factors can influence the failure of the project, including: (1) inaccuracy and inconsistency between community needs and assistance provided; (2) project packages that are not equipped with supporting skills; (3) no planned monitoring activities; and (4) no institutions at the community level to continue the project (Rahayu, 2010).

Hadi (2016) notes that the development process has again failed to empower village communities. In Agus's (2006) observation, since the New Order government, the government has launched various poverty-alleviation and community-empowerment programs. One is Program Inpres Desa Tertinggal (IDT), which is aimed at improving the quality of the welfare provided to the poor through the development of human resources, capital, and productive business and institutional development. The IDT program concerns the socioeconomic activities of people living in disadvantaged villages (Nugroho et al., 2013).

Accelerated socioeconomic activities are carried out through the development of economic resources in rural areas, the supply of basic needs, the provision of services and the creation of a supportive environment for the process of poverty alleviation (Adams, 2008). In addition to providing financial support of 20 million rupiah per disadvantaged village, the IDT program also provides support in the form of training, supervision and assistance, and helps to develop infrastructure such as roads, bridges, sanitation and clean water in accordance with needs (Hadi et al., 2009).

However, the various empowerment programs that were implemented were not enough to alleviate poverty in the villages. The failure of development is aligned with the empowerment that takes place in a village as a result of a development model that is too centred on capital, technology, machinery and money to be the main instrument in development activities. Human involvement reaches only a small group of capital owners, political rulers, experts and a few others as production power (Mukherjee & Shatifan, 2010; Li, 2016). In the end, this kind of development strategy results in dehumanisation – it leads to people losing their lives, livelihoods and initiative, becoming passive and powerless. A lack of access to these resources causes the public to be unable to enjoy a variety of opportunities, such as employment and participation in politics, education, social services and other public services (Munandar, 2010).

These problems have an indirect impact on poverty in the regions, including in Wajo Regency. According to BPS data, there were 29,460 poor people, or 7.47 per cent, in 2017. From these figures, it can be concluded that a strategy is needed to overcome development

problems, to reduce these numbers. One way that is considered successful is to pay considerable attention to village development.

In 2018, village funds in Wajo will reach 104,219,771,000 rupiah. This means each village received an average of around 733,942,049 rupiah. These funds do not appear to have a positive impact on development in the villages. The poverty rate, for example, still includes 7.47 per cent of the total population in Wajo Regency.

In general, the existence of a village fund program in Wajo has had a positive impact on the socio-economic improvement of the village community. The implication is that this will improve the welfare of the community, including by improving the level of health, the environment and job availability, and increasing community income. Previous research conducted by Farida and colleagues (2017) shows that the implementation of empowerment policies has not been optimal in terms of providing positive socioeconomic impacts. Sholahuddin and Sadhana's (2018) research also shows that the focus on village development has not been running optimally, demonstrating that a large budget does not guarantee the success of the program. Umanailo and colleagues(2019) research also shows that the implementation of the program has not been particularly effective in terms of alleviating poverty. This situation continues to be examined in this study so that a complete picture of the implementation of the empowerment policy is obtained, specifically reviewing the implementation model in order to find a way to alleviate poverty in Wajo.

The review provides a clearer sketch of the problem. On one hand, trillions of rupiah worth of village funds are channelled into villages, but this funding is not matched by a reduction in the relative poverty rate. It therefore becomes important to look more closely at the problems occurring between development and empowerment in the villages of Wajo Regency. The purpose of this study was to analyse the model implementation of the empowerment program in Wajo and to elaborate on the implementation of the model implementation.

**Methodology**

This study has used a qualitative research method. The research design is based on the case study method, to examine empowerment in Wajo Regency. Informants were selected in a purposive way. Data obtained from interviews and literature exploration were also analysed using direct observation in the field.

In the context of this research, several data collection strategies will be applied: observation, interviews, document studies and focus group discussion. This study used an analysis process conducted simultaneously with data collection (flow model of analysis) and interactive analysis models (Miles & Huberman, 2002). The description of the data and the reflection on

it are arranged in a field note. After the data unit is complete, it is followed by three components of analysis: data reduction, data display and conclusion.

**Results and Discussion**
*Implementation of Empowerment Programs in Wajo*

The results of the interviews reiterated the Grindle analysis regarding the implementation of policies that will easily be realised when the program of empowerment activities is in tune with the activities of the community in the village. The district of Pitfeedua has a majority of agricultural professionals. Using Grindle analysis again, the success of the empowerment activities taking place in this sub-district is inseparable from the relational correlation between the empowerment activities programs. This can be seen from BPS data showing that the population in the sub-district is dominated by this profession. About 96 per cent of the community's livelihood comes from farming. With regard to other data that later strengthened the field findings holistically, according to BPS, Wajo Regency is one of the districts in South Sulawesi with a relatively high level of agricultural potential, with the contribution of the agricultural sector reaching 30 per cent.

Meanwhile, sub-districts with villages that tend to experience difficulties in empowerment activities have community activities that are separate from empowerment activities. For example, in Tanasitolo sub-district, the people make their living as weavers of silk cloth. This activity is practised by every woman in the village. However, ironically, the empowerment activities that are carried out operate in sectors that have absolutely no connection to weaving. This situation is called Grindle's relational relationship disconnection. The empowerment activities program policy has no connection with the village activities of the target community. In fact, according to Grindle it is very important to pay attention to community activities on a real village basis, because the policy needs to be a manifestation of community activities in a particular social environment. In the context of the Grindle empowerment policy, the results in villages that fail in empowerment activities is due primarily to disconnection.

This field finding shows that the interests of the target groups referred to by Grindle's view are impacted by the potential differences between the target groups and the program policies. Further, almost every village in Wajo has a very high level of community pluralism, which has a domino effect on the policy target groups, which are also extremely varied.

The empowerment activities that take place in Wajo can be assessed by looking at aspects of the target group's interests, which are quite varied. In some villages in the research location, empowerment activities were carried out successfully in the village, by involving the community and providing financial assistance to the village. However, there is another side to

the empowerment activities taking place in the village that must be corrected. In several villages, the field findings showed that the empowerment activities program was imposed without paying attention to the daily activities of the community. As a result, projections about empowerment activities being able to develop the independence of rural communities to free them from the shackles of poverty are increasingly difficult to realize. This does not mean that the empowerment activities that have been taking place in Wajo village have failed completely, of course. There are also those who have succeeded in establishing the interests of the community and implementing appropriate programs of empowerment activities.

### *Model Implementation of the Empowerment Program in Wajo Regency*

Examining the implementation of the empowerment policy in Wajo using the Grindle analysis revealed that the two fundamental things that must be considered are the policy context and how the policy environment contributes to the implementation of policies, especially in the arena of policy implementation. Broadly speaking, the implementation of the policies in Wajo contributed to the level of community welfare. This can be seen from the poverty rates of Wajo, which are generally reported by BPS to have continued to decline. The contribution of empowerment is one of the breakthroughs made by the government in overcoming the problem of poverty through various kinds of empowerment activities.

Nevertheless, at a micro level, the policy implementation in Wajo experienced a number of problems. Grindle showed that the implementation of the government intervention policy had a number of issues. The battle of ideas between the government as a regulator and the community as a target group had the potential to create policy conflicts. The policy setting agenda needs to be discussed as an integrated set of policies, including policy implementation. The difference in interpretation becomes its own dynamic, and this is likely to bring the government and society together. The government uses more of a top-down approach, while the people want a bottom-up approach. The government approaches the problem based on its own sub-districts, while the community formulates a different problem. This difference in perspective has a domino effect on the public policy, and its further impact on policy implementation.

Another aspect that is very controversial in terms of Grindle's ideas relates to the interpretation of the target group. Here the debate concerns who is intended to be the target group. Whether the target groups will differ from one another depends on who the policy implementers are. This is because the policy formulation regarding empowerment in Wajo and in several villages in the research location does not explicitly mention the target groups for the empowerment activities. Almost none of the villages explicitly described a target group in the policy document. As a result, policy implementation becomes more biased.
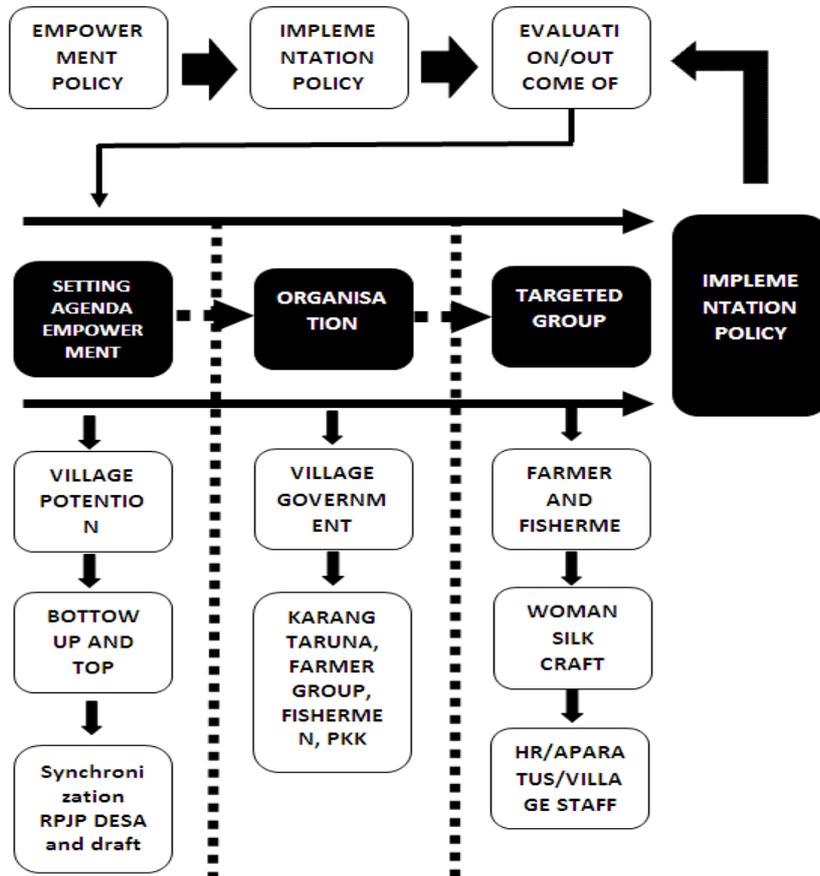
**Figure 1.** Model of the empowerment policy scheme

In the context of Wajo, the more dominant implementing organisations were initiated by the village government, which has a neutral role in realising empowerment activities in the village. Successful implementation of empowerment policies depends on how active the government organisations involved in empowerment activities have chosen to be. When government organisations tend to be passive in encouraging empowerment activities, the implementation of policies for empowerment will also be slower.

Meanwhile, organisations outside the government, such as the village community associations, have not made a major contribution realising community empowerment activities in the village. Some villages that have been successful in terms of empowerment activities so far have also been initiated by government organisations, which encourage the involvement of rural communities so actively that they can be involved in empowerment activities in the village. Even so, the pattern of empowerment implementation that took place in the district of Pitfeedua was far better than that in the districts of Takkalalla and Tanasitolo. In Takkalala sub-district, community organisations are almost non-existent. The existing community organisations are only social organisations, which fall far behind

government organisations. With such a situation, it is also very difficult to be able to imagine initiatives that arise from the community in terms of empowerment activities.

The next point that needs attention from the analysis developed by Grindle (1980) relates to the local potential of the community. This is related to the potential of what is owned by the village to be developed into something with added value. Adding value from the local base or local potential can open up the space for village community involvement in empowerment activities. The greater the potential of a village, the greater the empowerment activities that can be carried out in the village. Conversely, when a village has little potential that can be developed, there are very limited opportunities for empowerment activities. The existence of regional potential is a very important part of policy implementation. The belief was expressed by Grindle that the regional potential became the basis for a policy that would have a domino-like impact on policy implementation.

Conversely, some villages are successful in carrying out empowerment activities because of empowerment activities policies such as programs that are connected to the real potential contained in the village. Community empowerment has become a major issue in national development programs. Empowerment is one of the development models that prioritises the human element as the most important object of development (Rahayu, 2010). There are two main reasons for this paradigm. The first is a state-driven development strategy and poverty-alleviation model that has been shown to be ineffective in solving the main problem; the second reason is that the development model trends in developed countries that have then shifted from a development model that prioritises economic productivity to one that is based primarily on human capability (Munandar, 2012). The emergence of failure to alleviate poverty is caused by development strategies that override human aspects as the main problem in development in Indonesia (Srinivas et al., 2015). The absence of empowerment or human involvement in the development that has taken place all this time encourages development that has the potential to create a gap between villages and cities (Kusdarjito, 2016). It is well known that in developing countries such as Indonesia, it is necessary to focus more on rural areas. The problems arise when development occurs separately from the village community.

Based on the findings and results of the analysis, the contextual model of policy implementation for empowerment in Wajo is more about strengthening program implementation on the basis of a real sector-based program. This idea is a modification of the Grindle model, as illustrated in Table 1, which shows the limitations and strengths of the model of policy implementation for the empowerment program in Wajo.

**Table 1:** Limitations and strengths of the model of policy implementation for the empowerment program in Wajo Regency

| Policy elements | Aspect | Excellence | Weakness |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Agenda setting of empower-ment policies** | Village potential | Wajo has village potential, especially in the fisheries, agriculture and silk sectors. | Exploration on Sutra has not been connected with empowerment activities in the village. |
| | Bottom up | Space involvement and social opportunity is great | Community villages in Wajo do not yet have an initiative that is high; the bottom-up approach has not been optimal. |
| | Top down | Space involvement and opportunities of the government are great. | Community access and opportunities are very limited. Implementation is too rigid and very monotonous at Juklis. |
| **Implement-ing organisations** | Village government | A relatively large source of funds (village funds). | Availability of human resources is not qualified. |
| | Karang Taruna, famer group, fishermen group, PKK | Giving opportunity to village leaders in addition to village officials. | Too dependent on the village government. |
| **Target group** | Farmers and fishermen | Distributed to social groups in the village. | The sectors rely on one aspect – for example, farmers concentrate on agriculture alone. |

**Source:** Primary data, 2019.

Observing the empowerment activities taking place in the Pitakatua sub-district, the empowerment activity program launched by the local government relies heavily on the agricultural sector, although it has not always effective in improving the agricultural sector's

economic contribution to the village. Field findings show that the results of empowerment activities have contributed to the village's original income. The empowerment program has also triggered other empowerment activities. Because the empowerment relates to real community-based activities, it has the potential to contribute to an increase in village PAD, which is then used to strengthen empowerment activities. This pattern occurs by providing a financial scheme with a larger amount than in the previous year. This cycle of empowerment activities is carried out continuously until finally the empowerment activities in the village are able to reach all levels of society.

## Conclusion

The findings of this research show that in some locations the empowerment policy research is still difficult to implement in the field, but in certain villages empowerment program policies have been working well. The fluctuating situation is at least triggered by several things, including the interests of the target group. In villages where empowerment program policies are aligned with the interests of the community as the target group, the implementation of policies in the field tends to be better than it is in villages whose empowerment policy programs experience what Grindle refers to as a dislocation of target groups. This has an impact on the types of benefits to be obtained, either by the government as the implementer or the catalyst of the policy, or by the community as the recipient of the policy. Therefore, the second aspect that determines whether the policy can operate successfully in the field is the resulting benefits.

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