



# I nternational Journal of Innovation and Thinking

Journal Website: [ij-it.com](http://ij-it.com)

E-ISSN: 3066-4047

---

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### Educational Decentralization: Forms of Regional Government Administration in the Era of Regional Autonomy

**Abdurrahman Kader<sup>1</sup>, Hakim<sup>2</sup>**

Universitas Muhammadiyah Maluku Utara, Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

Universitas Nuku Tidore, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>

\*Corresponding Author: [rahmankader78@gmail.com](mailto:rahmankader78@gmail.com)

---

#### ARTICLE INFO

##### *Keywords*

educational decentralization,  
regional government affairs,  
regional autonomy

#### ABSTRACT

With the decentralization of governmental authority in the implementation of regional autonomy, it is expected that the application of the concept of good governance in government administration, development, and public service can be realized, including in the field of education. The method used in this research is a literature study. The data used in this research are primary data sourced from various research reports and journals, as well as secondary data sourced from various books and legislation. The results of the research show that through the concept of educational decentralization, educational management is able to shift from a top-down to a participatory bottom-up management pattern. As a result, management develops and organizes educational administration in a comprehensive and integrated manner. Educational institutions, as the organizers of education, build networks and develop communication and cooperation with various elements, including the government, society, and the private sector. Through the concept of educational decentralization, schools are able to design school policies according to the school's vision and integrate them with their environment, both the social community and the natural environment.

---

## INTRODUCTION

The government, in essence, is a servant of the people. This means that the government exists to provide services to the public, not to be served by the public. This paradigm shift has occurred due to changes in regulations related to the governmental system and public services. As stated by Widodo (2001), there has been a shift in the government administration paradigm from "rule government" to "good governance."



Under the “rule government” paradigm, government administration, development, and public services rely more on existing laws and regulations. In contrast, “good governance” involves all components, both within and outside the bureaucracy (Widodo, 2001; Kader, 2019), such as the community and other development stakeholders, in government administration, development, and public services. This paradigm shift is also driven by the development of science and technology, especially in the field of public administration.

Furthermore, this paradigm change explains the balance and relationships between central and regional governments, government and the private sector, as well as government and society in making the best use of public resources. The relationship among these three elements involves processes such as accountability, transparency, and democratization as manifestations of good governance and clean governance (Kader, 2024).

This paradigm shift began with changes in regional government in Indonesia, marked by the enactment of Law Number 22 of 1999 on Regional Government, later revised by Law Number 32 of 2004, and then by Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government. These changes brought a breath of fresh air to intergovernmental relations. The central government, which previously was the center of all policy-making, transformed itself into a guide and distributor of human resources and budgets to regional governments. The result of this shift from a centralized to a decentralized system of government is explained by Wetterberg and Brinkerhoff (2013) as follows:

"Among them was a rapid decentralization program, beginning in 1999, that progressively transferred the bulk of authority for fiscal and legislative decisions, as well as service delivery, to the district level. Public sector reform programs, funded by international donors, supported the country's ambitious decentralization, and sought to increase administrative efficiency and effectiveness, and to reorient the public administration toward citizen responsiveness

The momentum of regional autonomy has given hope to regional governments and local communities to make changes and improvements in regional development. Through regional autonomy, regions are given various authorities to make and implement policies according to their potential, wisdom, and creativity. This has been the hope and dream of regional governments and communities since the centralized and concentrated system was implemented by the central government during the New Order era. The philosophy of regional autonomy, among others (Rasyid et al., 2003), is to shorten the span of government control, bring the government closer to the people, and improve the quality of public services provided by public institutions to society. The ideal expectation of such regional autonomy policies is to improve the performance quality of public officials, which in turn enhances the quality of public services, including in the education sector.

Through decentralization and regional autonomy, the involvement of the private sector and civil society in regional government management is encouraged. On the other hand, the government empowers state apparatus and restructures public organizations through bureaucratic reform and excellent service programs.

Regional governments, with the autonomy authority provided by the Regional Government Law and the authority to manage regional finances through the Law on the



Financial Balance between Central and Regional Governments, should be able to create more effective and efficient regional public management. The fulfillment of the interests and needs of local communities, such as transportation, health, education, appropriate technology, and other public needs, can be maximized. However, with decentralization, regional governments sometimes become local rulers, giving rise to regimes of power at the regional level and becoming highly susceptible to corruption, collusion, and nepotism. As a result, public needs are neglected and become more expensive. This reality is described by Wetterberg and Brinkerhoff (2013) as follows:

"While local officials have gained experience with decision-making since the late 1990s, their orientation toward performance has varied. Declines in the quality of some public services, such as health care, are evident, while performance has improved in others, such as education (Kristiansen and Santoso 2006; Suryadarma 2012). Some researchers have attributed service delivery drops in availability and quality to problems of elite capture and corruption, and tend to be pessimistic about prospects for the success of NPM-based public sector reforms

Furthermore, Wetterberg and Brinkerhoff explain that the success of local governments in reforming regional government and improving public service performance greatly depends on the awareness of local governments and the role of local elites in utilizing the existing decentralization.

"Local government performance increasingly varies depending on the extent to which local government took advantage of the opportunities offered by decentralization. A significant number of local governments have forged ahead with reforms and became the locus for innovative forms of governance and better public services. Elsewhere, however, local political contexts became charged with malfeasance, fraud, lack of accountability and failure to respond to the needs of local residents. (Eckardt in Wetterberg and Brinkerhoff, 2013)

Through the Regional Government Law, which grants authority to regional governments to manage their own affairs—including education—decentralization of education is expected to address long-standing issues such as quality, equity, relevance, efficiency, and management.

The strengthening of educational decentralization aspirations cannot be separated from the conceptual and implementation weaknesses of the national education system, namely: 1) highly centralized and uniform national education policies, which in turn ignore the diversity of Indonesia's economic and cultural realities in various regions; 2) national education policies and implementation are more oriented towards achieving certain targets, such as curriculum targets, which ultimately ignore effective learning processes and the ability to reach all aspects and potentials of students (Hasbullah, 2007).

Centralized management in the basic and secondary education system during the New Order government did not empower the role of schools and communities in supporting the management and implementation of education, thus stifling the creativity and innovation of schools as educational institutions. Through Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, schools are granted the authority to manage themselves.



## METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this study is a qualitative method with a descriptive approach, utilizing literature review or library study. Putrihapsari & Fauziah (2020) explain that a literature study is research conducted by examining various literatures necessary for the research. The data collected and used in this study consist of primary data sourced from various research reports and journals, as well as secondary data obtained from various books and legislation. The data used in this research are relevant to the research theme, namely the administration of educational affairs by regional governments in the era of regional autonomy.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **Administration of Regional Government Affairs in the Era of Regional Autonomy**

According to Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, regional autonomy is the right, authority, and obligation of autonomous regions to regulate and manage their own governmental affairs and the interests of the local community within the system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. Furthermore, the law explains that an autonomous region is a legal community unit with territorial boundaries that has the authority to regulate and manage governmental affairs and the interests of the local community based on its own initiative and the aspirations of the people within the system of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

In the system of regional autonomy, regional governments, in exercising their authority, cannot exceed the authority and power of the Central Government. Regional governments may only carry out all regional affairs in accordance with the authority granted by the Central Government based on the prevailing laws and regulations. In other words, regional autonomy is an instrument given by the central government to the regions to manage themselves autonomously based on the paradigm of decentralization.

Therefore, it can be said that, in essence, regional autonomy means: first, regions are given the authority to manage their own affairs without always depending on the Central Government. Second, in the Indonesian context, regional autonomy is an effort to maintain the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) from the threat of disintegration. As explained by Lewis (2005), one of the driving factors for decentralization in various developing countries is the signs of national disintegration, so decentralization is seen as a way to unite the country. Third, through regional autonomy, the government seeks to bring itself closer to the people and strives to provide optimal public services. Fourth, regional governments, in implementing the principles of autonomy, must be based on the authority and affairs delegated by the Central Government in accordance with the prevailing laws and regulations.

Based on Article 9 of Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, governmental affairs consist of absolute governmental affairs, concurrent governmental affairs, and general governmental affairs. Absolute governmental affairs are the authority of the central government and include: foreign policy; defense; security; judiciary; national monetary and fiscal matters; and religion (Article 10 of Law Number



23 of 2014). Concurrent governmental affairs are those shared between the Central Government, provincial governments, and regency/municipal governments. Concurrent governmental affairs delegated to the regions form the basis of regional autonomy implementation.

Furthermore, Article 11 of Law Number 23 of 2014 states that concurrent governmental affairs under regional authority consist of mandatory governmental affairs and optional governmental affairs. Mandatory governmental affairs include those related to basic services and those not related to basic services. Mandatory governmental affairs related to basic services include: education; health; public works and spatial planning; public housing and settlement areas; public order, public peace, and community protection; and social affairs (Paragraph 1, Article 12 of Law Number 23 of 2014). Mandatory governmental affairs not related to basic services include: manpower; women's empowerment and child protection; food; land affairs; environment; population administration and civil registration; community and village empowerment; population control and family planning; transportation; communication and informatics; cooperatives, small and medium enterprises; investment; youth and sports; statistics; cryptography; culture; libraries; and archives (Paragraph 2, Article 12 of Law Number 23 of 2014). In addition to these mandatory affairs, regional governments have optional governmental affairs, including: marine and fisheries; tourism; agriculture; forestry; energy and mineral resources; trade; industry; and transmigration (Paragraph 3, Article 12 of Law Number 23 of 2014).

Referring to the delegation of authority by the central government to autonomous regions as stipulated in the Regional Government Law, it can be explained that the central government has granted power to the regions as autonomous regions to carry out the authority to manage these affairs. According to Muluk (2009: 32), the division of power between the government is an instrument to achieve societal values or goals. In the context of a modern democratic state, Muluk (2009: 32) explains that the fundamental values upheld by modern democratic countries are liberty, equality, and welfare. In the perspective of regional development, Suryono (2012: 167) states that these three values are important in the paradigm of development based on local wisdom. Furthermore, Suryono (2012: 167) explains that in development based on local wisdom, the values of broader quality of life are important, namely: the values of freedom, justice, and social solidarity.

In addition to the authority in development implementation that belongs to regional governments, based on Article 7 of Government Regulation Number 38 of 2007 concerning the Division of Governmental Affairs between the Government, Provincial Governments, and Regency/Municipal Governments, there are 34 affairs decentralized to Provincial and Regency/Municipal Governments, consisting of 26 mandatory affairs related to basic services and 8 optional affairs that are significant and have the potential to improve community welfare according to the conditions, uniqueness, and superior potential of the respective regions. This Government Regulation is a derivative and elaboration of Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government, which was later replaced by Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government. The division of power between the central and regional governments is referred to by Muluk (2009: 34) as the areal division of powers or vertical division of power.





In this era of regional autonomy, regions are given broad and real autonomy. Broad autonomy is the authority granted by the Central Government to Regional Governments to administer all aspects of life, except for absolute governmental affairs as regulated in Article 10 of Law Number 23 of 2014. Broad autonomy encompasses all aspects of government administration, from planning, implementation, supervision, control, to evaluation. Real autonomy is the flexibility of regions to exercise governmental authority at the regional level based on the affairs delegated to autonomous regions.

As explained above, regional autonomy provides regions with the flexibility in the form of rights and authority, as well as obligations and responsibilities, for government bodies to regulate and manage their own regional affairs as a manifestation of decentralization. As a consequence of granting autonomy to regions in the form of the right and authority to regulate and manage their own affairs, regional governments are automatically obliged to be accountable to the state, nation, and local communities.

With the spirit of regional autonomy, which provides sufficient space for regional governments and communities to manage their own regions, this has also influenced the field of education and led to the concept of educational autonomy. Educational autonomy is a tangible manifestation of development in the education sector, using a decentralization approach to improve the quality of Indonesia's human resources.

### **Implementation of Educational Decentralization in the Era of Regional Autonomy**

After the implementation of Regional Autonomy on January 1, 2001, through Law Number 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Government, which was later amended by Law Number 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government and Law Number 23 of 2014, authority was granted to regional governments to manage their own affairs, including the authority over education. This led to the issue of educational autonomy, particularly the autonomy of school institutions as education providers. Educational autonomy is a real form of educational decentralization as regulated in the Regional Government Law. This educational decentralization was then strengthened by Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System.

The demand and need for educational decentralization emerged and developed as part of the global agenda for democratization and decentralization of government in order to realize good governance (Rohman and Wiyono, 2010). In other words, educational decentralization is a condition and demand for change in the administration of educational affairs that cannot be separated from global demands. Decentralization has become a strategic political agenda for education in countries around the world, especially in the last two decades (Gershberg, 1999). This shows that the issue of educational decentralization is not a domestic issue in a particular country, but has become a global issue.

The concept of educational decentralization is a process in which a lower-level institution receives the delegation of authority to carry out all tasks related to education, including the use of all available facilities as well as the formulation of policies and financing (Bray and Fiske in Depdiknas, 2001). The lower-level institution in this context refers to the regional government.

One form of educational decentralization is the implementation of autonomy in education administration. Educational decentralization expects that the delegation of



authority in the administration of education from the central government to the regional governments under it is the essence of educational decentralization. Through decentralization, which is implemented as regional autonomy, the community plays a key role in the administration of education in the region. In this context, community empowerment in the administration of educational affairs at the regional level becomes important. The community holds a position as one of the key elements in the implementation of educational decentralization.

Community participation in education is essential because education is a shared responsibility between the community and the government. Thus, improving the quality of education in Indonesia becomes a shared responsibility between the community and the government. Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System outlines several roles that the community can play in the administration of education, including:

#### 1. Rights and Obligations of the Community in Education

In the National Education System Law, Article 8 states, “the community has the right to participate in the planning, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of educational programs.” Article 9 states that “the community is obliged to provide support in the administration of education.”

#### 2. Community Participation in Education (Article 54, National Education System Law)

a. Community participation in education includes the participation of individuals, groups, families, professional organizations, entrepreneurs, and community organizations in the administration and quality control of educational services.

b. The community can participate as a resource, implementer, and user of educational outcomes.

Through the policy of educational decentralization, it is expected that the educational problems that have been faced—such as issues of quality, equity, relevance, efficiency, and management as explained in the introduction—can be resolved. In other words, the centralized management of the education system during the New Order government, which did not empower the roles of regional governments and communities in supporting the management and administration of education, especially at the school institution level, stifled creativity and innovation in education, particularly in schools as educational institutions.

Educational reform, although considered psychologically and politically too late and technically too rapid, is essentially one of the commitments and breakthroughs of the Indonesian nation that must be maintained to improve the quality of Indonesia’s human resources. Various negative labels, events, and cases that Indonesia has experienced, such as being labeled a nation of corruption, collusion, and nepotism, are partly the result of mismanagement and the application of a centralized management system in national education that neglects the role and potential of the community.

As an effort to improve the quality of Indonesia’s human resources, the Indonesian government is implementing reforms and democratization in the administration of education, as outlined in Law Number 25 of 2000 concerning the National Development Program. In addition, the government has issued various regulations in the field of



education with the hope that the management of education in Indonesia will become more effective and efficient.

Sidi (2000) outlines four policy issues in the administration of national education that need to be reconstructed in the context of regional autonomy, related to improving the quality of education, management efficiency, educational relevance, and equitable educational services as follows:

First, efforts to improve the quality of education are made by setting educational goals and competency standards through national consensus between the government and all levels of society. Competency standards that may vary between schools and regions will result in national competency standards at the minimum, normal, and superior levels.

Second, improving the efficiency of educational management is directed towards school-based management, by seeking broader trust in schools to optimize available resources to achieve the desired educational goals.

Third, improving the relevance of education is directed towards community-based education, increasing the role of parents and the community at the policy (decision-making) level and at the operational level through school committees. The committee consists of the principal, senior teachers, parent representatives, community leaders, and student representatives. The role of the school committee includes planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of school programs.

Fourth, equitable educational services are directed toward fair education. This relates to the application of a transparent educational funding formula, efforts to equalize educational quality through minimum competency standards, and equitable educational services for students at all levels of society.

Furthermore, Subakri and Supari (2001) explain that if we examine more deeply the decline in the quality of education in Indonesia, it can be seen in the management systems used in schools, including learning activities, school management, and community participation.

## CONCLUSION

In the administration of government, development, and public services, the rule government approach—which relies on applicable laws and regulations—is a necessity. However, with the development of thought, concepts, and theories in the field of public administration, and the emergence of the good governance concept, the administration of government, development, and public services now involves all components, both within the internal bureaucracy and external bureaucracy, such as the community and other development stakeholders.

The decentralization scheme in education management must be able to transform education managers from a top-down management pattern to participatory, bottom-up decision-making. Education is not a gift from the government to citizens, but rather a right of citizens that is regulated by the government as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution.





The role of district/city governments in the decentralization of education management is no less important than that of provincial governments. Regional governments play a role in developing a comprehensive and integrated format for managing education. They develop networks with school principals and teachers, as well as foster communication and cooperation with various elements in the community and within regional government ranks. On the other hand, through the concept of educational decentralization, schools as education providers design school policies according to the school's vision and integrate them with their environment—both the social community and the natural environment.

## REFERENCES

- Depdiknas. 2001. *Manajemen Peningkatan Mutu Berbasis Sekolah*. Jakarta. Depdiknas.
- Gershberg, A. I. (1999). "Education 'Decentralization' Processes in Mexico and Nicaragua: Legislative versus ministry-led reform strategies". *Journal of Comparative Education*, Vol. 35.
- Hadiyanto (2004). *Mencari Sosok Desentralisasi Manajemen Pendidikan di Indonesia*. Jakarta. Rineka Cipta.
- Hasbullah (2007). *Otonomi Pendidikan, Kebijakan Otonomi Daerah dan Implikasinya terhadap Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan*. Jakarta. PT. RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Ikoya, P.O. (2007). "Decentralization of Educational Development reforms in Nigeria: A Comparative Perspective". *Journal of Educational Administration*, Vol. 45.
- Kader, Abdurrahman. (2019). *Dinamika dan Problematika Manajemen Publik*. IRDH, Malang.
- Kader, K., & Kader, A. (2019). Partisipasi Masyarakat dan Pengintegrasian Kearifan Lokal dalam Pengelolaan Pendidikan Sebagai Bentuk Pelaksanaan Desentralisasi Pendidikan. *Journal of Ethnic Diversity and Local Wisdom*, 1(1), 32–40.
- Kader, Abdurrahman. (2024). *Pembangunan Sumberdaya Ekonomi Daerah*. K-Media, Yogyakarta.
- Lewis, B.D. (2005). Indonesian Local Government Spending, Taxing and Saving: An Explanation of Pre-and Post-decentralization Fiscal Outcome, *Asian Economics Journal*, 19 (3): 291-317.
- Muluk, M.R. Khairul, (2009). *Peta Konsep Desentralisasi dan Pemerintahan Daerah*. ITS Press, Surabaya.
- Putrihapsari, R., & Fauziah, P. Y. (2020). Manajemen Pengasuhan Anak Usia Dini pada Ibu yang Bekerja : Sebuah Studi Literatur. *VISI : Jurnal Ilmiah PTK PNF*, 15(2), 127–136.
- Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 38 Tahun 2007 tentang Pembagian Urusan Pemerintahan Antara Pemerintah, Pemerintah Daerah Provinsi dan Pemerintah Daerah Kabupaten/Kota.
- Rasyid, M. Ryaas, Afan Gaffar, dan Syaukani. (2003). *Otonomi Daerah dalam Negara Kesatuan*, Yogyakarta. Bumi Aksara.
- Rohman, A. & Wiyono, T. (2010). *Education Policy In Deceantralization Era*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Sidi, Indra Djati. (2000). *Kebijakan Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Otonomi Daerah Bidang Pendidikan*. Bandung. PPs UPI.
- Subakri, Supriono dan Achamad Sapari. (2001). *Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah*. Surabaya. SIC.



- Suryono, Agus, (2012). Birokrasi dan Kearifan Lokal. UB Press, Malang
- Undang Undang Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional.
- Undang Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2014 tentang Pemerintah Daerah.
- Widodo, Joko. (2001). Good Governance: Akuntabilitas dan Kontrol Birokrasi, Insan Cendikia, Surabaya.
- Wetterberg, Anna and Brinkerhoff, Derick W. (2013). The Political Economy of Adopting Public Management Reforms: Patterns in Twenty Indonesian Districts. Governance and Economic Development Division, International Development Group (IDG), RTI International, No. 2013-02.