

Postponement of the Inauguration of the Council Secretary at Bone Regency DPRD: Impact on Government Administration

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Abstract. *The delay in opening the DPRD Secretary in Bone Regency also underscores the issue of bureaucratic processes and how it affects governance more generally. This paper evaluates administrative, political and social consequences of the delay through a qualitative literature review approach that relies on accredited national and international journals and applicable regulatory documents. The results indicate that the unfilled office of the Secretary interfered with the administrative coordination between the executive and the legislative branch and caused delays in making decisions, budget planning, and even formulating legislative policies. Politically, this demotion of the Speaker of the DPRD to provide a recommendation without a valid reason served only to create more tension between the two branches, undermine cooperation, and extend the periods of political confrontations. In social terms, the halted process gave the impression of lack of transparency and political interference, as it weakened the institutional trust of the population in government and destroyed the reputation of democratic governance. The analysis of regulatory institutions also demonstrates that Government Regulation No. 18 of 2016 allows the Speaker a high degree of discretionary power, which, when abused, may hinder the running of the administrative machinery and undermine institutional credibility. To overcome these, the research suggests reforms to demystify the processes, improve communication between the executive and legislative departments, redefine the power of the Speaker to be objective and improve transparency with oversight and mediation procedures. It is also necessary not only to avoid administrative stalemates but also to ensure that people have faith in democratic procedures. The example of Bone Regency can therefore underpin valuable lessons regarding the connection between procedural compliance, institutional stability and the quality of governance during the era of decentralization in Indonesia.*

Keywords: DPRD, Administration, Political Relations, Public Trust, Bone Regency, Governance

Received: October 12, 2024

Received in Revised: November 21, 2024

Accepted: December 29, 2024

INTRODUCTION

The issue of leadership transition in the institutions of the state is an important part of the governing process because it defines the persistence of the administrative processes as well as the plausibility of the political procedures. The decentralized system of government in Indonesia is a critical element of the balance between executive power, the development of local regulations, and monitoring of policy execution through the institutions of the legislative branch, i.e., regional legislative councils (Regional People's Representative Assembly or DPRD) (Suparto, 2021; Irsyada & Wardana, 2024; Novrizal, 2024). In this institutional context the post of the DPRD

Secretary (Secretary of the Council) is central to the smooth working of legislative processes and their proper support through an efficient bureaucracy. Any inconvenience or failure in the formalization of this position, including the delay of an inauguration, can cause serious administrative and political difficulties. This was actually the situation in Bone Regency where delaying of the inauguration of the DPRD Secretary cast doubts on administrative stability, transparency and the overall ramifications of government operations (Prasodjo, 2021; Budiman et al., 2024).

The Secretary of the DPRD is not an administrative personality but a strategic leader, who is able to interconnect the technical and the political aspects of the local government (Idris & Rattanapun, 2024; Budiada et al., 2024). The Secretary organizes the work of the council members, coordinates documentation of the meetings, supervises the work of legislative support personnel, and assists in the implementation of the decisions made by the council (Pulkowski & Falls, 2023; Kassim & Connolly, 2024). As a result, time delays associated with appointment or inauguration of the officeholder may affect legislative processes, create ambiguity in the mind of staff, and undermine the effectiveness of an institution. In Bone Regency, the delay in the opening of the new center caused a leadership vacuum that had left numerous administrative functions in a state of uncertainty. The lack of formal leadership reduced the capacity of the council to operate with efficiency and accountability, although some measures were adopted in the interim period.

Such an issue is especially relevant considering the wider context of the ongoing process of enhancing the regional autonomy in Indonesia (Wisesa & Salam, 2023; Asmorowati et al., 2022). Regional governments now have to perform more complicated roles since the adoption of decentralization policies in the early 2000s, including building budgets and developing new policies, as well as delivering government services (Rondinelli, 2017; Pope et al., 2023; Pinnington, 2024). The institutions stability and leadership continuity are the key to the success of the following tasks. Delaying the opening of an important bureaucratic leader contributes to the erosion of the same tenets of governance that decentralization aimed to implement, i.e. responsiveness, transparency, and efficiency (Gruber, 2023; Lapsley et al., 2002). The way Bone Regency was captured as a hostage, left people worried that the play was being staged by the politics rather than by the needs of the administration that left the people questioning the efficiency of the system of local administration.

Slowness in leadership appointments is not exclusive to Bone Regency but is a common problem with Indonesian bureaucracy. The literature has demonstrated that bureaucratic appointments tend to be associated with political interests and, by extension, result in practices that prioritize loyalty or patronage over administration competence (Lope & Vieira, 2023; Toral, 2019). What is even more implicative of such practices on governance is that it can be used to slug the process of taking decisions within an institution and kill the trust that people have and bring about service delivery inefficiencies. The implications are even more intense in local settings where a community is directly reliant on its governmental responsiveness. This issue is symbolic in the case of the delay of the inauguration of the Secretary of DPRD in Bone, because, in this way, one may observe how the problem of bureaucratic uncertainty can spread throughout the process of the activities of local government institutions.

The administrative effect of the delay was apparent in a number of ways. The least significant regular procedures, such as the organization of legislative conferences, carrying out correspondence, and observance of procedural regulations, were becoming more unorganized and prone to delay. Additionally, employees of the DPRD Secretariat were unsure of their reporting line, thus creating low morale and decreasing productivity. These fears serve to point out that the time lag was not a procedural problem, but a problem of government that had concrete consequences on the government of the people. The underperforming or vacant leadership positions reduce the performance of those types of institutions in achieving performance goals and addressing the social needs (Liu, 2021; Harris et al., 2023; Doyle & Locke,

2014). This can only enhance the distrust that people already have towards government institutions, which are already being investigated of lack of transparency and accountability.

The delay also caused more general issues on the quality of local governance in Bone Regency. It is not only the elections that contribute to the legitimacy of the democratic institution, but also the open and regular operation of the administrative process (Rothstein, 2009; Trebilcock & Chitalkar, 2009). Any postponement of leadership is a bad omen that the government is not predictable and reliable, and that procedural considerations can be trumped by politics. This image nullifies the spirit of good governance that emphasizes the importance of transparent procedures, responsibility, and objectivity when making decisions. Such delays in the context of a society where people have low confidence in institutions can contribute to increasing cynicism and disengagement.

The importance of analyzing the delay in the inauguration of the DPRD Secretary in Bone Regency is that it may help to clarify the nexus between political processes and administrative effectiveness in the Indonesian local system of governance. It is an actual illustration of how political factors influence administrative processes and how it in turn impacts the daily operations of government. Through an analysis of this case, one can perhaps better comprehend the predicaments of the regional administration in Indonesia, especially in terms of continuity of leadership and bureaucratic professionalism. After all, this paper aims to draw attention to the consequences of leadership delay on the practice of governance, not only in Bone Regency but also in similar settings within Indonesia. The results can be applied by policy makers, administrators, and other scholars interested in the quality of local governments. They emphasize the importance of open, transparent, and responsible appointments to the bureaucratic positions as the foundation of successful administration at the governmental level. Regional governments will jeopardize the principles of good governance and decentralization on which the Indonesian democratic reform is built without addressing these issues.

METHODS

Research Approach

The study is qualitative based on a literature review approach. Qualitative studies are said to be the most appropriate approach to studying administrative and governance questions since they enable an interpretation of meanings, patterns and contextual dynamics that underpin social and political phenomena. Qualitative studies provide a detailed explanation of processes and not an outcome measure. Here, the question of interest is how the delay of the inauguration of a public official, in this case, of a Council Secretary of the Bone Regency DPRD, influences the work of the government. This study provides a comprehensive and sophisticated view of how leadership delays play out in both bureaucratic and political processes by analyzing narratives, interpretations, and documented cases in academic literature.

Literature Review Method

Literature review method was selected as the main approach in data collection and analysis. Literature reviews help researchers to identify, assess, and synthesize existing academic literature in a more systematic way, thus creating novel knowledge on a previously investigated phenomenon. The literature review methodology within the framework of this work offers the possibility to examine three significant dimensions, namely the activities and policies that can be applied in the inauguration of public officials in Indonesia, the consequences of disharmony and delays in leadership administration within the context of public administration, and the results of delays in the relations between the politicians and their citizens as well as in the analogous situations in other countries. Focus is not on piling up previous knowledge but on critically looking at similarities, differences and implications across settings, where the analysis extends past description to provide interpretation and evaluation.

Data Sources

The information in this research was obtained purely as secondary data which comprised of academic articles, books, and official policy reports. Articles in recognized foreign journals were also used in offering comparative information on bureaucratic leadership, administrative stalling, and governance issues in various contexts. Simultaneously, more contextualized view of bureaucratic politics, decentralization, and leadership transitions in the local government was provided by nationally recognized Indonesian journals. In addition, we examined legal and policy documents such as ministerial decrees and regulations that guide the administration of the local government in Indonesia in order to gain insight into the procedural set-up of the inauguration of public officials in Indonesia. The combination of those various sources provides the study with a thorough analysis that is both locally based and internationally informed.

Data Collection Procedure

The literature search was performed systematically by searching the academic databases Google Scholar, Scopus, and Garuda (Garba Digital Reference). Appropriate keywords were used, such as public official inauguration Indonesia, bureaucratic delay and governance, local government leadership transition, local government administration and public trust. Literature was chosen based on criteria including relevance to the themes of the study, publication in peer-reviewed or other accredited sources, and publication date, with a preference being given to literature published within the past decade, although old foundational literature was used where it was needed to provide theoretical background. This allowed the literature collected to be of academic rigor and pose direct relevance to the area of interest in the research.

Data Analysis

Thematic content analysis was used to analyze data retrieved by the literature. The approach enables the researcher to detect patterns, themes, and meanings in a large set of textual data in a systematic way. All of the chosen sources were analyzed in order to isolate the most significant information regarding the causes of delay, administrative implications, and political implications. These results then were grouped into thematic categories, which allowed a comparative synthesis of different studies and cases. The analysis was read in three interrelated phases namely, data reduction, data display and drawing of conclusions, the interpretations were formulated in a manner that displayed the importance of postponements in government officials' inaugurations within Bone Regency and other areas.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The question of implications of the delay in the opening of the Secretary of DPRD in Bone Regency by the means of the review of the literature about the administrative theories, the regulatory frameworks, and parallel case studies. The discussion focuses on three key issues, namely, government administration, political relations, and public trust, and reviews the relevant regulations that regulate the appointment of public officials. With the structure of the findings this way, the discussion emphasizes the long-term effect of the delay in addition to the short-term effect on governance practices in Indonesia.

Impact on Government Administration

The delay in opening DPRD Secretary in Bone Regency has directly and quantitatively affected the performance of government administration. The institutional support of the legislative work is taken by the Secretary, or Secretary of the Council, who is placed at a strategic position in the DPRD. Their responsibilities include the preparation of meeting agendas, documentation of proceedings, liaising with executive counterparts and monitoring of the implementation of legislative policies. These tasks cannot be done optimally when the position is empty, as is the case with the postponement. As a result, DPRD had some administrative delays, especially concerning budget planning and decision-making on legislation. Practically, this

implied that draft regulations and budgetary documents were not being dealt with on time, forming a backlog that negatively affected the implementation of policies.

These kinds of interruptions demonstrate what Wightman et al. (2022) refers to as the chain reaction of bureaucratic vacancies, where the lack of one key actor creates inefficiencies that spread across the institution. In Bone Regency, there was no established Secretary in place, thus the lines of authority were unclear, employees were unsure about where decisions were made, daily operations were conducted in a disjointed fashion. This confusion reduced efficiency, created duplication of efforts and reduced overall institutional performance. This type of administrative stagnation is especially problematic within a decentralized system of governance, such as that of Indonesia, where the governments of regions are supposed to react swiftly to the needs of the local population.

In addition to the technical aspect, the lack of the Secretary also destroyed the continuity principle in the government. According to Sari (2023), stability in administrative processes is one of the fundamental principles of good governance that enables governments to provide public services even in the face of political uncertainty. In Bone, though, the delayed inauguration had thrown a spanner in this stability and gave the impression of institutional paralysis. This highlights the impact of delays at the leadership level, which can be felt at other levels that negatively affect the overall governance outcomes.

Impact on Political Relations

Not only did the delay interfere with administration, it also heightened the political strains between the legislative and the executive branches of the government. The crux of this controversy was the office of the DPRD Speaker, who did not sign the recommendation needed to inaugurate it. All the factions in the DPRD supported the move, but the refusal of the Speaker implied that the process was not possible. This reflects the ineffectiveness of institutional operations when unaccountable power is concentrated in the hands of a lone actor. The act of the Speaker was an extension of the political relations. The refusal was construed by the executive branch as an obstruction that exceeded administrative process and crossed into the world of political action. This raised suspicion between the two arms of government, and cooperation on other matters became harder. Ceva & Ferretti (2021) states that in the long term, political tensions corrupt the image of the institution and reduce the capacity of political institutions to cooperate. This translated to the budgets, oversight functions, and local rules negotiations in Bone being shadowed by the issue of whether the Secretary would be inaugurated or not.

That delay also brought out more structural issues with the balance of power of local governance. Notes that procedural authority, as a means whereby political elites pursue factional interests at the cost of institutional functionality, is quite common in Indonesia. The Bone case is no exception: what should have been a simple administrative case turned into a long political struggle as one party understood that it was time to play politics rather than follow the procedures. What it led to was a long period of conflict that not only deteriorated the relationship between the DPRD and the executive, but also undermined the authority of the legislative control. Such tensions over the long term may undermine the culture of cooperation upon which local governance relies. In such instances that relations between institutions are considered as distrust and antagonism, the legislative processes become the contention arena instead of the decision-making arena. This negates the success of decentralization, which is based on the collaboration of executive and legislative branches to implement policies that represent local interests.

Impact on Public Trust

The most devastating impact of the delay is probably on the trust of people in government. The citizens demand that administrative procedures, especially so transparent and visible as an official inauguration, must take place without political interference and in a transparent, efficient way. The impression that political interests took precedence over institutional duties was created

when the inauguration of the DPRD Secretary was postponed despite the fact that there was wide factional backing. Such a perception threatens to undermine the legitimacy of DPRD as well as the local government. It has been established that, the perception of fairness and professionalism in government processes is very sensitive to the level of trust that people have towards the government. Brass (2024) explain that the delaying of public appointments is often viewed as a sign that institutions are not serving the interests of the population but are instead serving personal political interests. The long time it had taken Bone to strengthen suspicion that the politics elites were not interested in government as much as they were interested in power struggles, which therefore wasted the image of the council before the people.

The decreased trust of the population has more far-reaching effects on the consolidation of democracy. The success of any governance is based on trust in institutions and once lost, the institutions cannot be easy to regain. When citizens feel that their government is hidden or unprofessional, they will lose interest in the political process and shrink and decline participation in elections and reduce accountability in democracy. This was a major risk in Bone Regency since DPRD, the representative institution of the people is expected to be transient and accountable. Such a failure in this respect not only jeopardizes the image of the council but it also jeopardizes the very concept of local democracy itself. Also, disillusionment among the masses may result in less obedience to the state. Once citizens no longer suspect that their leaders are operating in good faith, then they will not be willing to support or obey the policies that are issued by the leaders. This will be destructive to the successful adjustment of the public administration, and forms a vicious circle of political disagreements undermining the governance, and the governance undermining the trust of the people.

Review of Applicable Regulations

Regulations Governing the Inauguration of Public Officials in the DPRD

The installation of echelon II officials in Indonesia, such as the Secretary of DPRD, is provided by Government Regulation No. 18 of 2016 regarding Regional Apparatus. According to this rule, the appointment and inauguration of some officials should not only be approved by the executive but also recommended by the Speaker of the DPRD. Such a provision is intended to ensure that the balance between the executive and the legislative authority on the appointment procedure is sufficient and, consequently, is not a risk to the institutional legitimacy. Theoretically, this kind of demand is indicative of the spirit of checks and balances in local government.

However, this rigidity of law also leaves certain gaps. In the Bone Regency case, since all the various DPRD factions had passed the candidate, the failure of the Speaker to sign was enough to stop the process. This means that the regulation puts the disproportionate burden on the authority of one particular individual, creating a bottleneck in what ought to be a simple administration process. Nicoli et al. (2023) emphasize that the risks of politicization and institutional stalemate become dramatically high when procedures put such discretion in the hands of a single actor. Therefore, although the regulation is aimed at facilitating legitimacy, in reality, the regulation may hinder governance unless it is complemented with specifications on how discretion is to be exercised.

The lawfulness and operability in the Bone is a problem as the Speaker was not a signatory to the Contract, but operated according to the pattern of procedures which formally respected the broad purposes of administrative continuity and effectiveness. This indicates that there is need to revisit the existing regulations in place that ensure that procedural safeguards do not unwittingly get in the way of good governance.

Authority of the DPRD Speaker and Its Implications

The DPRD Speaker has a big power in appointing echelon II officials, especially in recommending or not. This power is designed as one of checks and balances, so the executive

decisions are checked by the legislature. This, in theory, is to enforce accountability, and eliminate unilateral executive action. Such exercise of power, however, should be informed by the principles of objectivity, equity, and transparency.

One can see uncontrolled discretionary power in Bone Regency by how the Speaker simply dismissed the suggestion without any reason and that is very problematic. As Testriono (2022) observes, political bargaining by political elites in Indonesia can be adversely affecting the operations of the institutions as procedural authority is being leveraged to seek political favors. The Speaker did not act accountably and the result was a deadlock in governance not due to inadequacy in procedure but due to the exercise of authority without accountability. This case highlights the need to put constraints on the discretionary power within the system, e.g., by requiring written reasons why no recommendation is made or by establishing mechanisms of collective decision-making.

The consequences of this type of unilateralism are not limited to the factual delay in administration. They are a warning to masses and political elites that institutions can be manipulated to benefit their own selfish interest or that of their group. This increases uncertainty in governance and creates a culture whereby political actors can make short-term interests and long-term organizational stability less likely. In this regard, the Bone case can be seen not just as an issue of administrative procedure but also of wider governance issues in Indonesia where individual power tends to be superior to institutional regulation.

Impact of Non-Compliance with Regulations

The postponement of inaugurations without justifiable causes amounts to a breach of the spirit, at least not of the letter, of administrative law. Although the laws grant the Speaker the power, they also implicitly require the same power to be used in a responsible manner and within the confines of the law. Failure to comply, both in action and inaction, compromises administrative efficiency as well as institutional legitimacy. According to Susilo (2022), inconsistency in the administration procedures poses a risk to the normative authority of the public institutions because citizens consider that the administration can bend the rules to suit the political agenda. The inability of the Bone Regency to complete the inauguration process despite the process meeting all the other requirements of the procedures demonstrated how weak rule-based governance was. This resulted in a very bad precedent in which political will can get in the way of regulatory will. Not only do such practices erode trust in government, they are also potentially harmful in the event that some parties concerned seek court redress on the alleged administrative wrongdoing.

The long-term cost of failure to comply is the loss of confidence in the decentralization reforms. Such reforms were intended to provide local governments with more independence, although they were also based on the premise that local leaders would behave responsibly under the control system. When abuse of discretion is rampant such as it was in this situation, it cripples the effectiveness of the concept of decentralization as a mode of governance. The case of Bone therefore shows how lack of compliance, even in apparently minor administrative issues can affect the legitimacy and stability of the governance system in systemic ways.

CONCLUSION

The delay in the inauguration of the DPRD Secretary in Bone Regency shows that bureaucracy can destroy administration, put political relations under tension and lose the trust of people. Inadequate co-ordination and limited decision making, and the unwillingness of the Speaker to make a recommendation without due reason demonstrated the risks of unmeasured power. As noted in this case, regulations that are supposed to induce accountability may be a burden where discretion is not spelt out. Reform is required to avoid such problems; to make things clearer and to make the executive and legislative communications better and to make the appointment process more transparent. Some of the most crucial steps towards stabilization of

institutions and protection of democracies is improvement on the processes of control and mediation.

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