

Involvement of Malay Customary Institution in Organizing Development at Tabir Sub-District Merangin Regency

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ABSTRACT

This research analysed the involvement of the Malay Customary Institution as a neutral body integrated element of government and custom. It is expected to realize cooperation in the success of development. To see the level of involvement, this research will tried to examine the decision making process in the implementation of development carried out in the District of Tabir. The study used qualitative research with an intrinsic case study approach. The study established that there was incoordination caused by disagreements between Malay Customary Institutions and the government in development. Not all the leaders of the Malay customary institutions in the Tabir Sub-district were involved in development process. The government understanding of the role of the institution is only limited to the preservation of customs and local wisdom. The involvement of decision-making beyond the preservation of customs and local wisdom of the leaders of the customary institutions were not involved.

Keywords: *Involvement, Malay customary institution, organizing, development*

1. INTRODUCTION

This study intends to explain the extent of the involvement of Malay customary institution in organizing development at Tabir Sub-District Merangin. This Customary institution can be used as a study area as well as a place to prove researchers' suspicions on three arguments. First, changes in the system along with reform and regional autonomy emphasizing decentralization and democratization at local level, directly or indirectly have a broad influence on the governance of people's lives. Second, euphoria of reform and regional autonomy, encourage the rise of civil society and raised the position of citizens (Umbase, 2017). The bargaining power of civil society can be built through a more organized network mechanism. Some community leaders feel the need to form an institution that can serve as a forum for mobilizing traditional leaders to revive the fading values of malay. The institution should play a significant role as a subject and object in development of the country. Third, as a social institution that upholds culture, it has the responsibility of protecting 'anak kemenakan'. The functioning of customary institutions will certainly offer an opportunity for the integration of elements of the government, moslem scholar and customs expected to realize cooperation in the success of development.

Indonesia is a State with the principle of decentralization when it comes to administering the

government by providing opportunities and freedom to areas to organize regional autonomy. Implementation of regional autonomy with the principle of decentralization, positioning local governments to formulate policies in accordance with their respective conditions and areas is quite significant. It provides opportunities for regions to adjust the lowest governance system based on local characteristics and wisdom (Umbase, 2017).

Village community institutions are government partners in empowering rural communities. Therefore, social organisations here are perceived as as customary institutions (Nadir, 2013). Autonomy based on local origins and customs has been held since time immemorial and has become a tradition inherent in local communities. The origin of the community culture in question is expected to help the government in this regard. The origin of the community culture in question is expected to help in the management of a regional government, and more development especially in a local community. Development will not have realized if every element in the community does not cooperate.

The spirit of Regional Autonomy, with the opening of opportunities and chances for traditional community leaders to appear, is one way of forming an institution recognized by the State and respected by the community, that is, the Custom Institute. In Jambi Province, this Customary Institution is referred to as the Malay Customary Institution. Each district will is named up to the district level customary institutions. In connection

with this research Merangin District has formulated a regulation on the main of the function of a traditional institution. PERDA meant is PERDA No. 07 of 2012 clearly stated that the Malay Customary Institution is a social body that holds a position quite important in development. Because of its role, the customary institution gets a greater share in every aspect of development in Merangin District, especially in Tabir.

Malay Customary Institution relates to the preservation of 'culture' alone. However, if examined deeply, it has a very important position in society. This is due to the individuals involved in getting a sense of 'respect' and being more valued in the community. For this reason, custom institutions should use their central position to help the government in development (Mubarrok, 2015). But in some regions in Indonesia, the existence of traditional institutions is still far from the ideals mentioned above. The interests of traditional communities, especially the level of participation in organizing development, are not evident. The Malay Customary Institution in the District of Tabir often does not work together with the government in development initiatives. The involvement of traditional institutions has only been related to the customs, local wisdom and settlement of community disputes. Customary institutions should be able to do more by synergizing with the government to implement development marked by increasing community participation to build their own territory.

In many cases, the development of a tendency does not involve much of the local community and as a result, some government policies are not maintained. Both the local community explained traditional institutions felt that development was not their domain. The government is also inattentive in inviting the traditional leaders to discuss the development interests that can advance the welfare of the society and increasing community participation to jointly formulate the development undertaken. This study was to help in Finding out the factors that cause lack of involvement of traditional institutions in the development and tracking sources of malfunction in various regions. The involvement of traditional institutions is expected to truly be adhesive with positive impacts in supporting development. The main issue to be investigated in this study was how the involvement of the Malay Customary Institution in Tabir Sub-district is in the implementation of development and the obstacles faced by the in its involvement in organizing development. In the same line, the objective of the exercise was to describe the involvement of the in organizing development. It was also meant to describing obstacles that hinder the involvement of the Institution in organizing development.

2. THEORETICAL STUDY

Involvement of Customary Institutions in Organizing Development in Tabir District, Merangin Regency is a role implemented by traditional institution leaders in an effort to build the sub-districts through empowerment and harmonization of community life and between institutions. In this case, the reason of involving traditional institutions is the active role of tand accommodating and channeling the aspirations of the community, and also resolving disputes concerning customs and habits of the community. Empowering to preserve and develop the customs and habits of the community, while empowering the community to support the implementation of governance and development, as well as creating a harmonious and objective democratic relationship between traditional leaders and sub-district government officials (Nadir, 2013).

Local-based development involves the potential of the indigenous resources. Customary institutions as local bodies have the opportunity to be used in decision making as well as planning within a regional community having strong local institutions (Nasrul, 2013). Custom has certain rules that govern the behavior of people's lives, including being the basis for managing natural resources and the economy of the region. In addition, they can be seen as potential institutional contributors in improving and strengthening development planning. Development decisions that stimulate public interest should be carried out by considering the values of the local community (Kaho, 2012).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used qualitative methods with descriptive types aiming to define and understand complex social realities. In this approach, data is collected from in-depth interviews, observations and additions from various literature. The study was conducted at Tabir Sub-District of Merangin Regency. Primary data was obtained from the analysis of the results of interviews conducted on several key informants as well as field observations. The people informants included administrators (according to the organizational structure of Malay Customary Institutions) from the chairperson to the members of customary institution. Likewise from the sub-district level government, several informants were used to triangulate data to ensure the information obtained was complete and valid.

4. DISCUSSION

The Tabir District community is often referred to as the Inner Tribe. The Batin tribe is believed to be a descendant of Malay proto, the oldest clan in Jambi Province. In Tabir Sub-district, there is a Custom

Institute, the Malay Customary Institution, under the auspices of the 60 Segalo Batin. Istidat tradition and local wisdom are highly cherished in the Tabir community. In every activity held or whenever there is a problem, the Tabir community hold a sit *ninik-mamak* or consensus meeting, led by the Chairperson of the Customary and Local Government. *Ninik-mamak* itself is a term for leaders and traditional institutions believed to be able to lead and be wise.

4.1 Accommodate and Channel Community Aspirations

The involvement of customary institutions encourages the community to participate in development planning in matters such as accommodating the aspirations of the community and channeling it to the sub-district level authority. To obtain an overview of the involvement of traditional institutions in accommodating and channeling the aspirations of the community, reference can be made from the construction of various facilities that results from the realization of the aspirations of the community. This can be from the following activities: Construction of a volleyball and soccer field in mutual cooperation, Construction of Mosques and offices with financing from the government and donations from the community. The construction of the arena for traditional activities "memantai" was carried out 3 days before fasting with funding from the district government (regent's regent). Stage development has been carried out by the funders from the local district government as a result of the proposed musreimbang by mutual cooperation.

Community aspirations involves needs in a formality forum from any layer of society with direct involvement in form of services which must be fulfilled to achieve prosperity. This is as outlined in the form of proposed development activities. The aspirations of the community and suggestions and hopes will not be realized if the government itself does not take action to make it happen.

4.2 Resolving Disputes Regarding Customs of the Community

Customary Institutions play very important roles in resolving cultural disputes and even the habits of the community, even though it is a big or small problem in which the police cannot act directly interfering with personal or customary issues. Therefore, custom is handled first by holding traditional /institutional meetings tradition in line with the rules of the customary institutions that have been made and form and maintain the habits of the community, with the rules and strict customary institutions not because others are only to maintain the customs and habits of the community, create

calm, peace, and justice in the community. Because the avoidance of things that hinder and divide the focus of development must be faced and resolved by direct custom institutions. The problem of custom will be delegated again to the police who will be subject to the applicable State law.

4.3 Involvement of Indigenous Institutions Preserving Local Wisdom in Society.

The involvement of Custom Institutions in the preservation of local knowledge is because it is highly respected by the community. The Head of Tabir Sub-district said that the Customary Institution has a very important role such as giving moral messages and customary norms adopted in the community. The Customary Institution in this regard serves as an advisor and companion to the community. In addition, the Institution as a companion to the community means it is the place for collecting and channeling opinions or aspirations of the community to the Government. Therefore, the Customary Institution was involved with the Government in order to approach the Tabir community.

Empowering to preserve local wisdom and develop customs and habits of the community in supporting the implementation of the development initiatives. It is an effort meant to maintain the cultural values of the related community. Since it is empowering, preserving and developing customs, especially ethical, moral and civilized values that are the core of customs in supporting the implementation of government development projects. The habits in that society are maintained by positive and civilized things.

So the implementation of community development in the district of Tabir is an initiative that must be carried out in a comprehensive and directed manner so that it can always move towards positive directions. More about customs can be seen in the *Silat Adat*, Traditional institutions provide teaching to children and village youth about silat adat that can be studied and offered during local and national events. *Memantai* (Memantai is preservation of customary activities in welcoming the fasting month), traditional institutions expect the community to rejoice in welcoming the month of Ramadan worship with mass cutting of cattle and buffalo. The meat can be sold cheaper than the market price. *Rumah Tuo*, traditional institutions provide understanding to future generations and all levels of society that the Rumah Tuo is a cultural heritage. It must be maintained as a form of local wisdom in the process of establishing traditional houses in the district of Tabir.

From the results of the interview, it can be concluded that customary institutions have important roles in preserving local wisdom, empowering, and providing understanding to the community on development. In addition, the role of traditional

institutions includes inviting and bringing the sub-district community to participate in facilitating development. Preserving the customs of the community is an effort meant to maintain the fact that it should grow and develop in society to become a national culture.

4.4 Synergize and Empowering Communities in Supporting the Implementation of Development Initiatives

From the results, community empowerment in supporting government development projects is very important. This is because the success of an initiative from the government certainly needs cooperation from the community through traditional institutions. Therefore, traditional institutions play a role in empowering and giving direction on understanding the development by the community. This way it will be possible to support the development projects initiated by the government.

Creating a harmonious and objective democratic relationship between Customary Leaders and Government officials is very important. It must be created by traditional institutions with the local government since it aims to promote rural development. The impact of good relations between traditional institutions and the Government bodies is for the sake of togetherness and the progress of the Tabir sub-district.

With a relationship that can be seen and felt collaboration created will bring good and positive results for the Tabir sub-district and the community. Like the *musrembang* meetings and the likes, stakeholders can work together for an understanding and mutual support. This will enable traditional institutions and government bodies intertwine in creating an objective and democratic harmonious relationship.

4.5 Obstacles Faced by the Malay Customary Institution in the Implementation of the Development at Tabir Sub-District of Merangin Regency are as Follows

The constraints faced by custom institutions in the development are due to the lack of community participation. It can also be attributed to the transparency of traditional institutions and local governments on the planned development. Since the needs of the community must be provided, it is important to empower the community to participate in the development planning processes. From the results, it can be concluded that Customary Institutions are constrained by time and the need for a development. Customary institutions must synchronize the right time for the community to be

empowered to participate in development. The local government must give space for the involvement of traditional leaders to actively participate in formulating and giving consideration to decisions relating to development. Therefore customary institutions and local governments must be more transparent and provide information to the community regarding development plan or process.

Judging from the other constraints faced such as less democracy between the two parties, poor coordination between traditional institutions and village officials is one of the obstacles faced. Besides, communication is not well established and there is no cooperation between traditional institutions and government bodies.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the results obtained, this study makes the following conclusions:

- Customary institutions in accommodating the aspirations of the community are controlled by traditional meetings which channel them to the village government and sub-district authorities. They are also used in the implementation of *musrembang*.
- The involvement of Custom Institutions in resolving disputes is carried out by applying existing customary laws to overcome conflicts.
- The Malay Customary Institution in Tabir sub-district is empowered to preserve and develop the local customs and wisdom of the community. This can be achieved through coordinating with the local authority and the community in carrying out customary activities such as choreography, traditional martial arts at local and national events.
- The active role of Custom Institutions in empowering the community and supporting the implementation of government development initiatives is carried out through provision of information to the community. This will ensure they have a good understanding of projects and support the process of governance and development.
- The need for an objective and harmonious democratic relationship jointly develop *musrembang* and can help in various tasks and roles of the sub-district.
- Constraints faced by Custom Institutions in the implementation of development plans include lack of participation from the community. They also entail poor cooperation/coordination between sub-district customary bodies with sub-district

government officials. This is brought about by the lack of understanding about the involvement of custom institutions in development to ensure they are excluded from the planning process, preparation and consideration in development.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Although this research has produced preliminary findings, researchers still have to develop further analysis, especially in deepening the analysis on elements of government policy and community response towards the involvement of Malay customary institutions in the implementation of development plans.

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