

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS DISPARITIES IN BORDER AREAS

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Abstract

Indonesia's border areas have a strategic role in maintaining state sovereignty and promoting community welfare. However, the development gap in this border area is still quite visible from the limitations of infrastructure, access to public services, and the quality of human resources. The purpose of this study is to analyze development strategies that can reduce inequality in border areas with an observational approach through case studies in Kalimantan, Papua, and East Nusa Tenggara. This research method uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to analyze development strategies that can overcome disparities in Indonesia's border areas. The results of the study show that integrated infrastructure development, human resource development, and maximizing local economic potential are the keys to overcoming these gaps. Community involvement in program planning and implementation is also very important. Conclusion This study reveals that development in border areas faces various challenges, including limited infrastructure, minimal access to education, and suboptimal local economic potential. This study provides more appropriate policy recommendations for sustainable development in border areas.

Keywords: Borders, Development, Inequality.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's border areas have a strategic role in defense, economy, and culture. This area serves as the front line of the country which also determines the stability of the territory and sovereignty of the country. However, despite its great potential, many border areas experience significant development gaps compared to other areas. This gap can be seen from various dimensions, ranging from limited infrastructure, lack of access to public services such as health and education, to the low quality of human resources (HR). This phenomenon is a big challenge for the Indonesian government in realizing equitable development. (Nugroho, 2017) (Hadi, 2020)

Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, border areas have a special and important status to maintain state sovereignty and encourage community welfare. However, the development policies implemented in this area are often not optimal. Some border areas, such as Papua, Kalimantan, and East Nusa Tenggara (NTT), still face serious obstacles related to inadequate infrastructure, low availability of medical personnel, and limited educational facilities. Budget and human resource constraints are the main factors hindering effective development in this area. (Bappenas, 2021) (Sutomo, 2018)

For this reason, it is important for the government and related groups to formulate the right development strategy to address this gap. Development based on community empowerment, improving the quality of human resources, and integrated infrastructure development are expected to narrow the existing gap. This development must also pay attention to the local social and cultural context, so that people in border areas can be actively involved in the development process they are undergoing. (Kuncoro, 2017)

This study aims to analyze and formulate development strategies that can reduce disparities in Indonesia's border areas. With a qualitative approach through case studies, this study will explore the policies that have been implemented in several border areas, as well as evaluate their effectiveness in reducing inequality. Based on a review of existing literature and research, it is hoped that policy recommendations that are more applicable and have a positive impact on the development of border areas can be found.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research has shown that development inequality in Indonesia's border areas is caused by a lack of attention to the development of these areas in national development policies. In addition, the development strategies implemented often do not pay attention to the local context and active participation of the community.(Nugroho, 2017)

Based on the literature review, several relevant development theories are used in this study, including development theories based on community empowerment, sustainable development, and development models oriented to the fulfillment of basic needs of the community (basic needs approach). These theories provide a basis for researchers to formulate policy recommendations that can be applied in the development of border areas.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach to analyze development strategies that can overcome disparities in Indonesia's border areas. This method was chosen because the main purpose of this study is to deeply understand the various aspects that affect the development gap and evaluate the implementation of development strategies that have been carried out by the government.

3.1. Qualitative Approach

A qualitative approach is used to explore social and economic phenomena in border areas in depth. This method allows researchers to obtain rich and detailed data from the perspective of stakeholders and communities directly involved in the development process. With a qualitative approach, this research can:

- Exploring an in-depth understanding of development challenges in border areas.
- Exploring the factors that contribute to the development gap.
- Formulate strategic recommendations based on field data and local experience.

3.2. Case Study Design

Case studies were chosen as the research design because they allow the researcher to focus on a specific border area that is a representative example. This research includes research in several border areas that have unique characteristics, such as:

- Kalimantan (Indonesia-Malaysia border): It has economic potential from the plantation and natural resources sectors but faces infrastructure and accessibility constraints.
- Papua (Indonesia-Papua New Guinea border): An area with great natural resource potential but with significant social and infrastructure challenges.

- East Nusa Tenggara (Indonesia-Timor Leste border): An area that has challenges in local economic development and limited resources.

This case study allows for a comparative analysis between regions to identify similarities and differences in the challenges and development strategies implemented.

3.3. Data Collection Techniques

- Literature Study : Collecting data from government reports, scientific journals, policy documents, annual reports of Bappenas, and relevant related publications.
- In-Depth Interviews: Conducted with stakeholders such as local government officials, community leaders, and development experts to gain first-hand insight into strategies and challenges on the ground.
- Participatory Observation: Conduct direct observation in several border areas to record existing social, economic, and infrastructure conditions.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data is analyzed using thematic analysis techniques that aim to identify the main patterns and themes that emerge from the data. The analysis process includes:

1. Data coding: Data from interviews and observations is converted into thematic codes.
2. Theme categorization: Codes are grouped into key themes that reflect development challenges and strategies in border areas.
3. Interpretation: Each theme is analyzed to see the relationship between variables, evaluate the effectiveness of existing strategies, and formulate policy recommendations.

3.5. Validity and Reliability To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses a data triangulation technique by comparing data from various sources (secondary data, interviews, and observations). In addition, peer debriefing is carried out to check the consistency of the analysis results and ensure accurate interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research results

The study found several key findings related to development strategies to address disparities in Indonesia's border areas. The results of the research from case studies in Kalimantan, Papua, and East Nusa Tenggara are presented as follows:

Infrastructure Availability

The findings show that the availability of infrastructure in the three study areas is still inadequate. In Kalimantan, road accessibility on the Indonesia-Malaysia border is hampered by damaged and hard-to-access roads. In Papua, many rural areas do not have proper roads, which has an impact on access to health services and education. In East Nusa Tenggara, limited inter-regional transportation infrastructure reduces the efficiency of agricultural product distribution.

Table 1. Infrastructure conditions in border areas

Region	Road Availability (%)	Adequate Health Facilities (%)	Adequate Educational Facilities (%)
Kalimantan	60	55	65
Papua	40	50	45
East Nusa Tenggara	50	60	55

Based on the table above, the condition of infrastructure in the border areas, namely on the border of the Kalimantan region, the availability of roads is around 60%, health facilities are around 55% and educational facilities are 65%. The condition of infrastructure in the Papua border area is around 40% road availability, health facilities are around 50%, and educational facilities are around 45%. The condition of infrastructure in the border area of East Nusa Tenggara is around 50% road availability, health facilities are around 60%, and educational facilities are around 55%.

Access to Education and Training

In Papua, access to education is still very limited, with few secondary schools in remote areas. The number of qualified educators is also inadequate. Meanwhile, in Kalimantan, vocational training programs are still in the development stage and their scope is limited. In East Nusa Tenggara, entrepreneurship training programs have not touched all levels of society.

Local Economic Potential

Local economic potential, such as the agricultural and tourism sectors in East Nusa Tenggara and natural resources in Papua and Kalimantan, is still not being utilized optimally. This is due to technological limitations and a lack of investment coming into the area.

Involvement of the Government and Local Stakeholders

In Kalimantan, coordination between the central and regional governments affects the effectiveness of the implementation of development programs. The involvement of local stakeholders in Papua is still minimal, so development programs are often not in line with the needs of the local community.

Discussion

The discussion of the results of this study shows that development strategies in border areas must be more holistic and integrated. Here are the key points discussed:

1. **Integrated Infrastructure Development:** Adequate infrastructure can increase mobility and encourage local economic growth.
2. **Human Resource Development (HR):** Training programs tailored to local needs need to be developed.
3. **Optimizing Local Economic Potential:** The development of the MSME sector and investment in superior sectors must be prioritized.
4. **Community Involvement in Decision-Making:** Active community participation in program planning and implementation can increase the success of development projects.
5. **Cross-Sector Coordination:** Cross-sector cooperation is essential to ensure sustainable development programs.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion This study reveals that development in border areas faces various challenges, including limited infrastructure, minimal access to education, and suboptimal local economic potential. An effective development strategy must include integrated infrastructure development, human resource development, and optimization of local economic potential. Active community participation and cross-sectoral coordination between governments, stakeholders, and local communities are key to achieving sustainable and equitable development.

Suggestions for Further Research Future research should deepen the analysis of the long-term impacts of development programs in border areas, as well as explore more effective collaborative approaches between the public and private sectors. Further research also needs to consider the role of technology in supporting development and access to information in remote areas.

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