

Developing Regional Autonomy: Lesson Learned from Norway

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Abstract

A decentralized government system is the opposite of a centralized government system. In a centralized system, the authority to make decisions about various public affairs lies in the hands of the central government. Officials in the provinces and districts are only the panic of the central government. In contrast, in a decentralized system, part of the authority to manage public affairs is devolved to provinces and districts. One of the implications of implementing autonomy is the development of the uniqueness of each community so that diversity appears within a country. Therefore, the experience of developing regional autonomy in several countries is also different. Indonesia which has been, is currently and continues to do *trial and error* in developing regional autonomy will certainly be more mature if it not only learns from its own experience, but also learns from the experiences of other countries in trying to answer its native problems with the concept of autonomy. Studying the experiences of other countries is intended to reflect in order to find positive and negative values that are used as references, and if possible

the option translated into the Indonesian context. The following experience of Norway in its local autonomy can be used as a reference for autonomous learning in Indonesia.

Keywords: regional autonomy, government, Indonesia, Norway, decentralization

1. Introduction

The definitions given to the word 'decentralization' namely the transfer of authority or the sharing of power in government planning and management and decision-making from the national level to the regional level [1]. According to them, there are four forms of decentralization, namely deconcentration, delegation, devolution, and privatization or debureaucratization. Deconcentration is a transfer of administrative authority (and responsibility) in a department. In this case, there is no real transfer because the subordinates exercise authority on behalf of their superiors and are accountable to their superiors. Meanwhile, delegation is the delegation of responsibilities for certain functions to organizations outside the government bureau structure and is not directly controlled by the central government [2].

Meanwhile, devolution is the creation and empowerment of government units at the local level by the central government. The central government to control the minimum limited to certain areas. This is what in our current practice it is interpreted as decentralization from one side or autonomization on the other hand. Finally, privatization or debureaucratization is the shedding of responsibility for non - governmental organizations (NGOs) or private companies [3].

Meanwhile, the United Nations defines de centralization, as follows: “*Decentralization refers to the transfer of authority away from the national capital whether by deconcentration (ie delegation) to field offices or by the devolution to local authorities or local bodies*”. According

to the United Nations, decentralization can be done by delegating authority to officials outside the capital (*deconcentration*) or to offices or autonomous institutions at the local level (*devolution*). Deconcentration means that there are regional devices that are outside the head office. The central department delegates the authority and responsibility of certain areas of an administrative nature to their officials who are in the region / regions without fully giving up power. Meanwhile, in devolution, part of the power that is transferred to regional political bodies is the full power to make decisions both politically and administratively. Thus it is not just the transfer of duties and functions but also the transfer of power [4].

There are two forms of decentralization, namely decentralization which is political (more or less the same as devolution) and which is administrative in nature (less the same as deconcentration). Political decentralization, namely the authority to make regulations and exercise certain control functions over the resources assigned to government agencies that are in autonomous regions. Meanwhile, administrative decentralization design is the delegation of implementing authority to officials at the local level who are positioned as administrative areas. The working official according to plan and the source of predetermined [5].

2. Concept and Objectives of Provincial and District Autonomy: Experience the Norwegian Commune

Norway (along with Sweden, Denmark and Finland) is located in the Scandinavian region of northern Europe. Norwegian administration is divided into three levels of power, namely central government, *fylkekommune* (province, 19) and *kommune* (district/city equivalent, 425 districts). This country is an adherent of a *welfare state* so that the welfare of the population

is the responsibility of the state. In this context, *kommune* role as executive functions and responsibilities of the state through provision of public services [6].

The Kommune is a political entity and a local entity that has very long historical roots - longer than the Norwegian state itself. *Commune* is the result of evolution from the existing local forms of unity. The independence of the locality was heavily degraded when Norway became a political union in the 900s, and has continued when the area was united with Denmark for more than 4 centuries. The development of Norwegian local autonomy began with the enactment of the *formannskaploven* 1837, which was the first regulation concerning regional government [7]. Since then, local government has continued to experience significant developments. The development of Norwegian local autonomy is broadly divided into six periods, from 1837 to the 1990s. This division based on four indicators, namely the division of authority between state and *kommune*, country setting in organizing *kommune* and issues solution, freedom *kommune* to regulate local financial and *kommune* magnitude. This is summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. History of *Commune* Autonomy in Norway

Period	Characteristic features
Autonomy Model I: Without intervention central government (1837- 1860)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Formannskap</i> (province) is representative of the state and has full responsibility for local authorities. - Each region does not have a separate authority from the center. - The form of the state: unity, not federation - the greatest responsibility <i>kommune</i> is in the field of education. - <i>Community</i> activities are financed from local income the largest income is from property tax.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <i>Kommune</i> received the status of an independent legal entity, authorized to make regulations for the region. - The state has no right to intervene in activities <i>kommune</i>, unless regulated by law. - Although the population is still sparse, communication between the population and local empowerment is still bad
<p>Autonomy Model II (1860-1920)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - End of <i>union</i> with Sweden. - There has been an improvement in the quality of democratic practices, which he admits the right to vote for all citizens. - The <i>Kommune</i> gets a greater than previously, including in the field of development infrastructure and community welfare activities. - The need for financing is getting bigger. - <i>Kommune</i> set many new tax types so the state (center) took the initiative to regulate the setting standards and amount of tax. - The existence of a subsidy policy from the central government towards local government finances.

Table 1. (continued)

Period	Characteristic features
<p>Autonomy Model III: Stabilization of the <i>welfare</i> <i>community</i> (1920-1939)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Community</i> initiatives and their continued growth in developing activities. - There was an economic crisis in the 1920s, the unemployment rate increased and <i>communal</i> income decreased dramatically so finally in 1927 went bankrupt. This matter provide opportunities for the state to intervene against <i>commune</i>. - The state intervened in the <i>commune</i> in particular in the regulation of economic activity, measures for overcoming the crisis, and inclusion of tax types.
<p>Integration Model I: Intervention (1945-1963)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After World War I, <i>communal</i> activity continued to experience increase moderately. - <i>Kommune</i> as the main actor in the provision of public services. - The principle of decentralization is used as a basis for relations between governments the center and the <i>commune</i> , despite the strong state intervention This includes making <i>communal</i> legislation. - Despite state intervention, the <i>commune</i> was capable of more independent especially in terms of subsidies. - Increased economic growth is a driving factor rising incomes <i>kommune</i>.

- The state rearranged the division of *commons*.

Table 1. (continued)

Period	Characteristic features
Integration Model II: consolidation and development (1963-1978)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comprehensive <i>communal</i> reform underway : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increasing authority in the provision of public services better implementation of community development programs more effectively. - Reduced state intervention in regions. - Regions are increasingly independent in terms of finance. - There was <i>communion</i> merging. - <i>Fylkeskommune</i> (province) as a level of self- government .
Integration Model III (1978-1990s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Community</i> activity is growing. - The amount of authority <i>kommune</i> exceed the capabilities economy so that it experiences financing problems. - To solve the problem, financing is used principle of financial responsibility: local government (<i>kommune</i> and <i>fylke</i>) who want to expand their authority to the main responsibility in financing. - <i>Kommune</i> had wide participation in the formulation Law to be used together . - Gradually the <i>commune</i> gained legal authority to formulate its authority in public service.

	- Local democracy is getting stronger along with strengthen management <i>kommune</i> .
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Source: Summarized from Abdul Gafar Karim (Ed.), 2003: 368-372.

Kommune in Norway is very diverse both in terms of geographic area, and the population - most of which have population of less than 5 thousand inhabitants and 10 *kommune* population of more than 50 thousand inhabitants [8]. Despite having a variation in the number of population and area, *kommune* has authority. Apparatus *kommune* of a role as a *street-level bureaucracy*, the bureaucracy relating to or dealing direct with the community. By Therefore, *kommune* set levels of government that provide the greatest public services (around 60%) in Norway so that every citizen certainly do with *kommune* in all phases of his life.

Table 2.2. Three groups Authority *Kommune*

Category of Authority	Type of Authority
The <i>communion's</i> full authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fire department - Pre school education - Basic education - Primary health services - Kindergarten - Nursing home - Housing - Water purification - Handling of trash - Library

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electric - Water supply
Authorities with <i>fylke</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adult education - Theater, concerts - Museum - Sports <i>events</i> - Street *) - Shared traffic *) - Physical planning *) - Developer 's business *)
Authority with the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environmental conservation

Source: Abdul Gafar Karim (Edt.), 2003: 374.

Parliament has the authority to determine the distribution of powers between the national government, *fylkekommune* and *kommune*. The authority of the *commune* - as the unit of government which has the greatest authority - can be grouped into three categories, namely the full authority of the *commune*, the joint authority of the *fylke* (province), and the joint authority of the state (center) [9]. Form of authority *kommune* this can be seen in Table 2.

Since the enactment of the 1954 *communal covenant*, the *commune* has two organs, namely the political and administrative organs. Political organs consist of the *comunestyre*, *formannskap*, *ordforer*, and *faste utvalg* (permanent committee). Members on the political organs have been through mechanism local elections held in four out once between the implementation of two national elections [10]. Position, kewenan gan and membership of a political organ *kommune* can be seen in Table 3.

Meanwhile, the administrative stratification organ has administrative responsibility in the implementation of gas *tuition* and the authority of the *commune* and *fylkeskommune*. Just like bureaucracy in general, this organ is required to be professional and competent as the front line of public service providers [11]. This organ is headed by an administrative executive (*administrasjonssjefen*) who is appointed and determined by the *kommunestyret*. *Administrasjonssjefen* has authority engineering judgments, membe offered are information regarding cases- cases that are discussed in political organs and implement policies that are taken by political organs, as well as kewenang an other non- principles for *kommunestyret* not specify otherwise [12].

3. Members and Authority Political Organs *Kommune*

In 1992 a new Constitution was introduced which gave the *commune* and *fylkeskommune* the opportunity to adopt a parliamentary system in their local political system. In the new model, the political organ of important *kommune* held by *kommunestyret* and *kommuneradet*. The *kommunestyret* as the highest political organ determines the *kommunerad* as the highest administrative leader in both the *commune* and the *fylkeskommune* [13]. As a consequence, the position of the *communeration* was largely determined by the support of the *community* which could overthrow it through a motion of no confidence [14]. Thus, Norway has two alternative models of *commune* government, namely *formannskap* and parliamentary [15]. Both those models not have the legal power equally so that each *kommune* have the flexibility to choose and apply one of them as a model of local political system [16].

There are several reasons for the need for the central government to decentralize power to the provincial and district / city governments, including: a) From a political point of view,

decentralization is intended to involve citizens in the policy process, both for the interests of the region itself and to support national politics and policies through the development of a democratic process at the grassroots level [17]. Thus, there is equality and political participation as well as a medium for political education to learn to be democratic in real life; b) In terms of government management, decentralization can improve effectiveness, efficiency and accountability, especially in the delivery of public services [18]; c) From a cultural point of view, decentralization is intended to pay attention to the specificities, features or contextualized of a region, such as geography, population conditions, economy, culture or historical background; d) From a development perspective, decentralization can accelerate the process of formulating and implementing development programs in order to improve the welfare of citizens. When the provincial or district governments have the authority to formulate and implement development policies in their regions, these policies will be more effective than if this authority is held by the central government [19]. Given its position in the region, the local government should be more sensitive to the problems and needs of the local community; e) Judging from the central government's own interests, decentralization can overcome the weaknesses of the central government in overseeing its programs; f) Decentralization can increase competition (competition) between regions in providing services to the community, thus encouraging local governments to innovate in order to improve the quality of their services to citizens [20].

Table 3. Members and Authority Political Organs *Kommune*

Political Organs <i>Commune</i>	Recruitment Patterns and Number of Members	Authority
<i>Kommunestyret</i>	Elected through local elections	- decide all policies

(representative body population)	4 years, with the number of members is 11-43 people.	<i>commune</i> , as long as it is uncertain- it's different by law; - Just tackling the stuff principle; - Delegating authority decision making to <i>formannskap</i> and <i>ordfører</i> as well as administrative organs.
<i>Formannskap</i> (body <i>kommunestyret</i> workers)	Chosen from and by <i>kommunestyret</i> for period 4 years, and its members minimum 5 people.	- Handles deep drafts economics, budget annual <i>commune</i> , and tax determination.
<i>Ordfører</i> (spokesperson <i>commune</i>)	system I: selected by <i>kommunestyret</i> from members <i>formannskap</i> . system II: elected from the members <i>kommunestyret</i> . system III: direct election by the people.	- Organizing activities <i>formannskap</i> and <i>kommunestyret</i> ; - Have the legal right to represent <i>commune</i> ; and - Sign decisions- decisions that concern <i>commune</i> .
<i>Faste Utvalg</i> (committee)	Formed by <i>kommunestyret</i> , and consists of at least 3 members	- Analyze policy formulations <i>commune</i> ;

	person.	- Become a <i>leak ad</i> agency for solve certain problems; and - Other powers assigned by <i>kommunestyret</i> .
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4. Conclusion

Decentralization can be interpreted as the ownership of power and a political entity to determine one's own destiny and manage its resources to achieve common goals. The definition or understanding of decentralization is of course subjective. Although the principles of decentralization have been understood, there are still varied and even distorted interpretations among the community. This is determined by the level of community satisfaction with the conditions of economic development so far, the level of maturity of society in politics, and the development or experience of a country in implementing decentralization itself.

From the case of Norway, which is one of the many developed countries with an established regional government system, several lessons can be learned:

- a. Among the hierarchy of *governance* consisting of *regjering* (central government), *fylke* (province), and *kommune* (district / city), the *kommune* acts as an agent of the central government as well as a representation of local political entities.
- b. *The commune* - in its present form - is the result of evolution from a local form of unity that existed for more than a thousand years.
- c. The relationship between the central government and the *commune* in Norway is now consistency of commitment and cooperation between the two in holding the doctrine of the *welfare state*.

- d. The success of Norway in autonomy is supported by the high level of political maturity and democracy of its people.

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