

Optimization of Institutional Roles Based on Regional Leadership Commitment (A Case Study in Garut Regency)

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ABSTRACT: The policy of decentralization and regional autonomy in Indonesia aims to promote regional development by granting authority to regions to administer governance and development. However, the implementation of this policy still faces various challenges, including limited community involvement, low cooperation among regional governments, as well as constraints in regional capacity and finances. This research aims to optimize the role of regional institutions in regional development, focusing on five districts in Garut Regency. The research method used is qualitative with descriptive analysis, aiming to comprehensively describe the role of regional institutions in regional development. The findings of this research conclude that regional governance in Indonesia has undergone significant changes after implementing decentralization. Sub-districts, previously considered ordinary regional entities, have now become more significant entities within the framework of regional governance. This change reflects efforts to provide greater autonomy to regions in managing local governance and development affairs. Thus, sub-districts play a more proactive role in formulating policies, managing resources, and advancing development at the local level. However, these changes also bring implications such as potential conflicts among institutions and challenges in optimizing the effectiveness of regional governance as a whole. The optimal effectiveness of institutions will function well when there is strong commitment from regional leaders to ensure that these changes align with the goals of regional development and the interests of the communities they serve.

Keywords: Optimization, Institutions, Leadership Commitment.



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INTRODUCTION

The background of the research is that the policy of decentralization and regional autonomy is intended to promote development in regions from all aspects, whether it be in governance, education, health, or other fields, as it is an integral part of national development ([Cook et al.](#),

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[2023; Ofoulhast-Othamot, 2018; Yuda, 2019](#)). As autonomous regions, they should have the authority and responsibility to organize community interests based on the principles of transparency, community participation, and accountability to the community ([Sukmawati, 2019](#)). Changes to the organizational structure will certainly have significant consequences for the government as the implementer of state administration, starting from the Governor, Regents/Mayors, Districts, to village and sub-district governments as the smallest institutions in the governance structure. From another perspective, the implementation of regional autonomy demands the empowerment of as many local potentials as possible, including natural resources, human resources, technological resources, and cultural resources. Many primary objectives may be achieved, including improving the welfare of the people, or not only pursuing welfare but also competing in all other aspects ([Budd & Sancino, 2016; Shkurkin et al., 2017; Vallance et al., 2019](#)).

The application of the principle of decentralization, in the sense that regions have the authority to regulate and execute various local government affairs, should address several desired targets ([Gore & Muwanga, 2014; Maheshwari et al., 2018](#)). However, many views suggest that it seems to still fall short of meeting the needs of the community. Even though the momentum of the implementation of regional autonomy can answer the struggles of services, empowerment, and development initiated by the government, the process of implementing this decentralization policy still encounters several problems, including: the unclear division of authority between the central and regional governments, differing perceptions among development actors regarding decentralization and regional autonomy policies, low cooperation between regional governments, the lack of effective and efficient regional government institutions, limited and low capacity of regional government apparatus, and limited regional financial capacity ([Reuchamps et al., 2021; Sambanis & Milanovic, 2014](#)). This situation also affects the role and function of regional government governance, including the position of districts. The position of the district as an institution in the structure of regional government in Indonesia after decentralization has changed from a territorial device to a regional device ([Otsuka et al., 2014; Tselios, 2021](#)). This change also affects the role of district institutions, where previously they carried out deconcentration and assistance tasks, now shifting to sectoral agencies. In carrying out their duties and functions, there is a tendency for conflicts to arise between institutions, whether it starts from the district or other sectoral agencies. This condition raises controversies and becomes a problem in relation to the optimization of district institutions, as well as in the governance of regional governments ([Harun et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2023](#)).

Upon analyzing based on the theory of "Local Governance," which emphasizes the importance of active and participatory involvement from local institutions, such as districts, in decision-making processes and development implementation at the local level, as discussed by [Pierre, Jon, and Peters, Guy B. \(Eds.\). \(2000\)](#), various aspects of local governance, including the role of districts in optimizing regional development, are highlighted. They underscore the significance of active involvement of local institutions in decision-making processes and development implementation at the local level ([Lorincz et al., 2020](#)). Here are some key points regarding the role of districts in optimizing regional development according to them ([Ahmed, 2022; Kunaifi et al., 2021; Suartina, 2020](#)):

1. Local Empowerment: Districts often serve as administrative levels closer to the community than higher-level regional governments. Therefore, districts play a crucial role in fostering

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- community participation in regional development. They can assist communities in identifying development needs and priorities that align with the local context.
2. Implementation of Development Policies: Districts are responsible for implementing development policies established by regional and central governments. They have a vital role in ensuring that development programs are effectively and efficiently implemented according to local needs.
 3. Coordination between Central and Regional Levels: Districts also serve as intermediaries between the central government and regional governments. They help coordinate the implementation of national policies with local needs and conditions.
 4. Management of Local Resources: Districts are responsible for managing local resources, including infrastructure, natural resources, and human resources. They must be able to manage these resources efficiently and sustainably to support sustainable regional development

Thus, Pierre, Jon, and Peters, Guy B. emphasize that districts have a crucial role in optimizing regional development through local empowerment, implementation of development policies, coordination between government levels, and management of local resources ([Steyvers, 2016](#)).

However, based on what is happening in the field, the existence of districts is no longer positioned as development planners. Lack of infrastructure, insufficient funding support, limitations in human resources to manage administrative functions, which ultimately affect the functioning of district government bureaucracy, not to mention the dependence of district authorities on decrees from the District Government or City Government. These issues were found in research conducted by the Center for Economic Studies and Public Policy. From several research results and surveys conducted, it is evident how complex the issues of district institutions are, which the author deems crucial to investigate. In relation to the research process, the author chooses Garut Regency as the research location.

Other realities also indicate, as in previous research conducted by several economic study centers, districts, which tend to wait for the delegation of tasks and authority from the Regional Head, encounter issues ranging from carrying out authority in governance, economics, and development, to education and health. On the other hand, district institutions receiving delegated tasks and authority often face reluctance from the Regional Head to grant them authority. Other facts also show, as found in surveys conducted by several economic survey institutions, that dual authorities or even unclear division of functions or roles within regional government internals, whether by departments or districts, often occur, potentially leading to functional conflicts among institutions operating in similar domains. The delegation of some tasks and authority given by the Regional Head to the districts encounters obstacles; while disturbances in the administration process of regional government in general are considered reasonable, the impact of these disturbances is still deemed acceptable. However, institutionally, the position of districts becomes problematic due to difficulties in fulfilling their governmental functions ([Falola & Agbola, 2022](#); [Høiland & Klemsdal, 2022](#); [Li & Ramanathan, 2020](#); [Shittu et al., 2022](#)).

Previous studies focusing on the implementation and public service of districts, including the administrative processes of districts up to the implementation of delegated authority policies, were conducted by [Rusmana \(2017\)](#), followed by research by [Khusaeni \(2017\)](#), then research by [Moch Abdullah \(2020\)](#), and subsequently research by [Kurniawan \(2021\)](#). The findings of previous research, focusing on a condition where each position, task, and function of districts varies in each

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established focus and study, emphasized issues such as the ineffective implementation of delegated authority processes, with many authorities that cannot yet be carried out by district heads, whether in governance, economics, development, education, and health, as well as the quality of public services (Kim & Choi, 2020). These studies have shown that despite the delegation process being accompanied by institutional service to meet community needs, there is no guarantee, even though there is an existing system and governance structure in the region. The findings of these studies lack emphasis on the optimization of the role of district institutions in regional development seen from the commitment of regional leaders, and they also inadequately examine whether district institutions are still necessary in the regional government system. Moreover, other factors causing suboptimal delegation of tasks and authority have not been thoroughly explored. The issues raised in the first to fifth studies differ but do not focus on district institutions. However, considering that district institutions play a dominant role in fulfilling their functions, it is crucial to address the role of district institutions in regional development. In connection with the above-mentioned issues, the author is interested in conducting this dissertation research with the topic "Optimizing the Role of District Institutions in Regional Development: A Study in 5 Districts in Garut Regency".

METHOD

Based on the background, problems, and research objectives, the author employs qualitative research and descriptive analysis methods in this study. The descriptive analysis method is used to comprehensively reveal the optimization of the role of district institutions in regional development and community welfare in Garut Regency, as viewed from the aspect of regional leaders' commitment. Furthermore, the descriptive analysis method is utilized to discover facts by interpreting and accurately portraying the nature of several phenomena from groups or individuals resulting from the findings. The qualitative research approach is also understood to conduct a series of activities in collecting, describing, and interpreting data about the experienced situations, activities, specific relationships, views or attitudes displayed, or apparent trends in the ongoing process. Through this design, a depiction of phenomena, facts, characteristics, and functions about district institutions in regional governance can be obtained, providing answers to research propositions as research findings.

The choice of a qualitative approach is expected to assist researchers in interpreting data and theories related to the phenomena under study. Additionally, the qualitative approach method can delve deeper into small-scale aspects, uncovering complex details about field phenomena such as the political desires of regional heads, the political will of regional legislatures, support from human resources, infrastructure, and budget availability. Thus, it is anticipated that new propositions will emerge through interpretations that can subsequently be used to build categories and provide explanations for the phenomenon of optimizing the role of district institutions in regional development and community welfare, respectively, in the five districts namely Malangbong, Garut Kota, Kadungora, Cikelet, and Singajaya. The objective of this qualitative approach is also to assist the author in carefully uncovering and understanding various phenomena related to the research problems and objectives. Moreover, data collection is conducted as it is perceived and viewed in the District Office, in the government of Garut Regency, both in terms of leadership and staff

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components, as well as from the community, other sectoral agencies, as well as the Regent and Vice Regent. This process is undoubtedly supported by theories built within the framework of thinking and propositions. In this research, an attempt is made to explore from a limited system, conducted in detail, with in-depth data collection, while the researcher examines as much data as possible about the subjects under study ([Cresswell et al., 2014](#)).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to ([Surbakti et al., 2020](#)), political leaders primarily utilize informal and personal relationships to mobilize their followers to achieve specific goals. However, individuals who formally hold political elite positions or head certain institutions may also play a role as political leaders if they exhibit leadership characteristics. Successful political and governmental organizers are typically individuals who can employ various types of influence sources appropriately according to the context and type of issues. A political leader must also have a thorough understanding of political ethics to ensure that political processes and dynamics proceed in a civilized manner. ([Alfian et al., 2018](#)) further states that, from an academic perspective, a political leader does not necessarily have to be an expert in political science. Not all political leaders have backgrounds as intellectuals who formally study political science, although politicians are expected to be able to argue well and articulate their points coherently. However, a good politician possesses a strong political insight. This is evidenced on the political stage in every country, where only politicians with strong political insights endure, while those lacking strength falter midway or are even ousted at the beginning of their journey.

In many cases, it is observed that political leaders emerge not only from pure political experts. Military personnel, businessmen, farmers, engineers, activists, intellectuals, and even actors and film artists have at times colored the political landscape. Regarding leadership, according to [Thoha \(1983\)](#), a leader is someone who has the ability to lead, meaning they have the ability to influence others or groups regardless of the form of reasoning. [Kartono \(1994\)](#) further elaborates that a leader is an individual with special skills and strengths, particularly in one field, enabling them to influence others to collectively engage in specific activities to achieve one or more goals. Meanwhile, according to ([Cooley, 2017](#)), a leader is always the focal point of a tendency, and on other occasions, if observed closely, all social movements will be found to have a central point. [Nawawi \(2006\)](#) emphasizes its operational aspect, stating that the leader's function consists of four aspects:

1. Instructive Function: The leader acts as a communicator who determines what (the content of commands), how (the method of executing commands), when (the timing of starting, implementing, and reporting results), and where (the location of executing commands) to ensure that decisions can be effectively implemented. Thus, the function of those being led is solely to execute commands.
2. Consultative Function: The leader can use the consultative function as a two-way communication method, particularly when determining decisions requiring consideration and consulting with those being led.
3. Participatory Function: In executing the participatory function, the leader endeavors to activate those being led, both in decision-making and implementation. Each group member has an

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equal opportunity to participate in carrying out activities derived from their core tasks, in line with their respective positions.

4. Delegation Function: In executing the delegation function, the leader grants authority to make or establish decisions. Delegation function is essentially the leader's trust in individuals entrusted with authority, expecting them to carry it out responsibly. This delegation function must be realized because the progress and development of a group cannot be achieved by a leader alone.
5. Control Function: An effective leader must be able to direct the activities of their members in an organized manner and with effective coordination, thereby maximizing the achievement of collective goals

In carrying out the control function, leaders can realize it through activities such as guidance, direction, coordination, and supervision. In relation to political leaders at the local level, according to [Kaloh \(2003\)](#), they consist of Governors, Regents, and Vice Regents. Their existence as regional heads is connected to the administration of regional governance. Furthermore, according to [Yuki \(2005\)](#), the term "head" carries connotations of a position within the organizational hierarchy, encompassing predetermined tasks, authority, and responsibilities defined formally. Leadership entails legitimate authority based on formal provisions to oversee and issue commands to specific groups of subordinates, particularly in specific areas of concern. [Kaloh \(2003\)](#) further suggests that the effectiveness of national governance depends on the effectiveness of governance at the regional level. Similarly, the success of leadership at the regional level determines the success of national leadership. This implies that the inability of regional heads to successfully implement regional development programs results in reduced performance and effectiveness in national development governance. Therefore, regional heads play a central role in determining the effectiveness of achieving the goals of the Regional Government organization. Consequently, [Kaloh \(2003\)](#) adds that the capabilities, competencies, and capabilities of the respective regional heads in carrying out leadership functions, mentoring, and services, as well as other duties and responsibilities, must also be considered. [Furthermore, Sarundajang \(1997\)](#) asserts that in the context of being a regional head, the formulation and implementation of public policies, the role of regional heads are highly strategic, not only in formulating and initiating but also influencing decisions made. Regional heads, as the apex of an administrative hierarchy pyramid, play a role in enforcing all regional regulations established by the Regional Government, encompassing executive and legislative functions. As regional heads, they have the right and obligation to make necessary or required decisions for the region.

Consistent with [Sarundajang's \(1997\)](#) thinking, [Tjokroamidjojo \(1985\)](#) has previously emphasized that a government leader must always consider the needs and interests of the community as well as the needs and interests of the government organization. Like leaders of other organizations, regional heads also face various situations and challenges in leading regional administrative organizations. In any organization, there are programs set, whether implemented annually or over five years. In Indonesian regions, there is something called the Long-Term Regional Development Program Plan, the success of which depends on the governance of the regional government. In [Law No. 23 of 2014 on Regional Governments, which also replaces Law No. 32 of 2004](#), it is

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stated that the organizers of provincial and district/city regional governments consist of regional heads and regional councils assisted by regional apparatus, and each region is led by a regional government head. As for the characteristics of government leaders, especially regional heads, they are responsive to political conditions, both within the government organization and in society, and provide responses to criticisms, suggestions, and even oversight from the public, as well as being responsive to the hopes and needs of the community. A government leader must be responsive to institutional conditions by paying attention to various operational needs within the government organization for the organization's sustainability. As [Nawawi \(2006\)](#) asserts, there are five indicators operationalized in the leadership process. Therefore, based on observations and interviews conducted by the author, it is found that instructions, consultations, participation, and control regarding the leadership of the Regent of Garut Regency are not problematic. As a leader in Garut Regency, the instructions from the regional head remain the benchmark for the implementation of governance at the sub-district level. Instructions are not an issue, as the Secretary of Garut Regency provides most of the instructions. Moreover, concerning matters directly related to public services, consultations are still conducted. In addition to seeking guidance, consultations are also used by the Regent for exchanging ideas. The Regent and Vice Regent are often invited to coordination meetings, where they discuss the steps to be taken when there are decisions by the Regent. Two-way participation is also widely practiced, with both the Regent and the regional apparatus involved. Therefore, it is incorrect to claim that when making decisions, elements of the regional apparatus, including involvement from the district government, are not considered. However, regarding the delegation indicator, based on empirical facts observed in the field and the results of interviews, it is revealed that there has been no partial delegation of authority from the Regent of Garut Regency. In relation to the absence of partial delegation of duties and authority from the Regent of Garut Regency, the author also interviewed the Vice Regent of Garut Regency, who revealed that there has indeed been no partial delegation of duties and authority from the Regent. Additionally, it was found that there was some hesitancy during consultation meetings to issue a Regent's Regulation regarding the partial delegation of authority from the Regent. This does not mean that a Regent's Regulation cannot be issued, but the implications of issuing a Regent's Regulation become burdensome, especially if there is misuse of authority; hence, precautionary measures are necessary. The previous leadership also faced legal issues. Furthermore, the legal umbrella to be used is not yet strong, perhaps from the perspective of the city government, as there is no obligation for partial delegation of authority to the sub-district. This means it can be done and perhaps should be done. However, a different situation was found during interviews, revealing that although the process of delegation to the Sub-District has not yet occurred, preparations are being made, and input has already been requested from several academics. This result shows that there has been no delegation of authority to the sub-district during that period. With regard to the implementation of [Law No. 23 of 2014, Article 225 paragraph \(1\)](#) states that the duties of the Sub-District Head are:

- a) Organizing general government affairs as referred to in Article 25 paragraph 1
- b) Coordinating community empowerment activities.
- c) Coordinating efforts to maintain public order and security.
- d) Coordinating the enforcement of regional regulations and mayoral regulations.
- e) Coordinating the maintenance of public infrastructure and facilities.

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- f) Coordinating the implementation of government activities carried out by Regional Apparatus in the sub-district.
- g) Nurturing and supervising the implementation of village and/or urban neighborhood activities.
- h) Carrying out other duties as stipulated by regulations and laws

This article illustrates that the position and role of the Sub-District Head are closely related to the process of receiving tasks and carrying them out, especially as Article 226 paragraph (1) asserts that the sub-district head receives partial delegation of authority from the Regent to carry out some government affairs within the region. From this provision, it is undeniable that the activities of government administration at the sub-district level will be apparent if there is delegation of authority by the Regent. Without delegation of authority, formally, the Sub-District Head has no authority to carry out his/her duties other than coordination and facilitation. Being innovative and engaging in other creative activities cannot be done due to the lack of legal basis, as the foundation for organizing sub-district government in Garut Regency. Although the Sub-District Head can also carry out general government duties, the organization of general government duties should support the Sub-District Head's role as a regional apparatus. If only focused on carrying out general government duties, the position of the Sub-District Head is similar to that of a regional administrative head carrying out deconcentration tasks, as in the enforcement of Law Number 5 of 1974. Meanwhile, according to the current law, the position of the Sub-District Head as a regional apparatus should be more directed towards assisting the Regent in handling some of the Regent's affairs. Regarding the organization of general government duties, there are no provisions governing the form of accountability along with the coordination mechanisms of the Sub-District Head in carrying out these duties. Therefore, considering the issues faced by the Sub-District Head and the change in the Sub-District Head's position as a regional apparatus, it would be advisable to eliminate the existence of the Sub-District, which organizes sub-district governance, in the regional government system, with no more Sub-District Governments, so it would be appropriate to elevate the status of village governments, as it must also be acknowledged that village governments provide closer services compared to sub-district governments. So it is very appropriate for village governments to be strengthened in their position. The above matters were revealed in interviews conducted at the Malangbong Sub-District Office. Based on observations and interviews conducted by the researcher, several things were revealed, namely: There were errors in interpreting articles in the Law, whether it was according [to Law Number 32 of 2004 or the newly enacted Law Number 23 of 2014](#). In the task of organizing general government, there is no need for the Regent to issue regulations to delegate some of his tasks and authority to the Sub-District Head. The process of delegating some authority from the Regent to the Sub-District Head is not mandatory. This means that in the consideration of the city government, there is no problem if there is no delegation of tasks and authority from the Regent of Garut Regency to the Sub-District Heads in Garut Regency. There is hesitancy on the part of the city government in making strategic decisions in the administration of general government affairs, as well as in its application at the sub-district government level. This is because the previous leadership, both the Regent and The Deputy Regent is involved in legal issues. The Garut Regency Government considers that the issuance of the Regent's Regulation regarding the Details of Sub-District Tasks and Functions means that there is no need to issue other regulations regarding the administration of sub-districts. Even though these regulations are products of the previous leadership's decisions. Without the delegation of some tasks and authorities from the Regent to the Sub-District Head,

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the position as the government administrator in the Sub-District is only in one position, namely as the organizer of general government affairs, while in other positions, namely receiving task delegations, are not given to the Sub-District Head in the form of Regent's Regulation, then formally, there is no legal basis for the administration of sub-districts. Without the delegation of authority from the Regent, the Sub-District Head's position in organizing governance is not optimal, and this affects the Sub-District Head's function in making strategic decisions related to public interests because if decisions are still made, it will result in legal violations that weaken the position of the sub-district ([Kusnandara, 2019; Rosya et al., 2021](#)).

Based on observations and interview results, institutionally, the community sees the existence of the sub-district office, but when handling something, there is doubt from the sub-district government to make decisions. As in the case of the approval of land certificates issued by the Urban Village for land ownership under 2 (two) hectares and in issuing the sale and purchase deeds for certified land. Although the desire of the city residents, especially in the islands, for land certificate services, which the sub-district head knows is quite high even though this authority has been in place since Law Number 5 of 1974, followed by Law Number 32 of 2004, and most recently Law Number 23 of 2014. So, there are no regulations from the Regent to be the basis for action, but there are also no provisions prohibiting it. Similarly, by issuing sale and purchase deeds for land certified with an area of 2 (two) hectares, although it must be acknowledged that the Sub-District Head also serves as an Acting Notary Public whose appointment is issued by the Provincial National Land Agency office, because the Sub-District Head's position is also as a regional apparatus, there should also be top executive decisions through the Regent's Regulation, because this authority also exists in the city government. Other duties performed by the Sub-District Head, such as development projects within the sub-district's jurisdiction, are limited to supervision. This means that they cannot intervene in these works. Similarly, the administration service provision is only based on the job description regulated in the Sub-District organizational structure. This administrative service process is a derivative task organized by the Sub-District. In the process of obtaining Identity Cards (KTP) and Family Cards (KK) previously issued by the Sub-District under the name of the Regent and now this authority has been transferred to the Population and Civil Registration Office of Garut Regency, which has a significant impact on the administration of sub-district governance, even though the mechanism is the same starting from the Urban Village then to the Sub-District to obtain a referral letter to the Population and Civil Registration Office to be signed on behalf of the Regent, without undergoing a brief verification process by the office. Meanwhile, if the process is carried out in the Sub-District, there is a brief interview with the community members applying for KTP and KK, this is to anticipate any adverse impacts on governance. Many incidents such as when a community member commits a criminal act, and after investigation, the community member is from the sub-district, then the one sought is not the Head of the relevant Office but the Sub-District Head, even though the Sub-District Head no longer signs on the KTP.

Besides the absence of task and authority delegation, coordination, which is indeed a general duty of government administration, encounters obstacles, as regulated in [Article 225 paragraph \(6\) of Law Number 23 of 2014](#), which emphasizes coordination in carrying out general government duties. From the results of observations and interviews, the obstacles faced by the Sub-District Head in carrying out coordination are that not all offices or agencies with branches in the Sub-District only involve coordination among personnel, if there is an agenda for a visit. Even if there are several branch offices in the sub-district, they do not have any authority, only administrative

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tasks (reporting to the City Government), as is the case with Regional Technical Implementing Units (UPTDs) such as the National Education Office, when there is an examination held in the sub-district. However, in relation to the empowerment efforts in the Sub-District, it is crucial to build coordination with the formation of Branch Offices in the Sub-District, as working partners of the Sub-District Government. Even though the laws governing Regional Governments have undergone several changes starting from [Law Number 5 of 1974](#), then [Law Number 22 of 1999](#), [Law Number 32 of 2004](#), and most recently, the enactment of [Law Number 23 of 2014](#), there have been no efforts to enhance the Branch Offices in the Sub-District. So far, there has been no change in the regulations from the Regent aimed at improving the empowerment of Branch Offices in the Sub-District, which affects bringing services closer to the citizens for the sake of their welfare. The results of interviews with the Agriculture Office, Plantation Office, Fisheries and Marine Office, revealed several things: The empowerment of the Sub-District through the delegation of authority from the Regent to the Sub-District Head has not yet occurred, and if it will be followed up in the future, it must be followed by changes in the Sub-District organizational structure and the Branch Offices in the Sub-District, because until now, the purpose of the coordination and the task of the Sub-District and the Branch Offices is unclear. It is also advisable to establish integrated service offices established by the city government also in the Sub-District, meaning in the context of regional development interests, more specifically, to bring services closer to the city residents. From the above points, it can be concluded that improving empowerment in the Sub-District is crucial, but it must also be accompanied by changes in its institutional structure, that so far the empowerment process in the Sub-District is owned by the Sub-District government, even though there are Branch Offices that also pay attention to improving empowerment in the Sub-District. Therefore, political will from the City Government, especially the Regent as a leader in formulating and issuing the Regent's Regulation regarding the improvement of the residents' welfare through the empowerment of sub-districts for regional development, is needed. The change in the Regional Government Law brings fundamental changes in the administration of governance at the Sub-District level since the enactment of [Law Number 22 of 1999](#), then amended by [Law Number 32 of 2004](#), and amended again with the enactment [of Law Number 23 of 2014](#), with the enactment of this Law, it:

1. Sub-districts are no longer perceived as administrative regions governed by a head within a specific area but rather viewed based on the working area or the geographical area where the Sub-District Head operates.
2. The position of the Sub-District Head is no longer as a central apparatus responsible for deconcentration tasks but rather in the position of a regional apparatus exercising delegated authority and attributive authority.

The change in the position of the Sub-District conceptually affects the authorities that must be carried out by the Sub-District Head. These authorities include delegated authority and attributive authority, which are exercised simultaneously. Delegated authority is authority delegated by the Regent through Regent's Regulation. Meanwhile, attributive authority is sourced from the Law. According to [Suryana \(2000\)](#), economic development is not a harmonious or gradual process but a spontaneous and uninterrupted change. Regarding the implementation of regional economic development, in which the Sub-District is also involved, according to [Irawan \(2002\)](#), regional economic development is a process where the regional government and its community manage existing resources and form a partnership between the regional government and the private sector

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to create new job opportunities and stimulate economic activities (economic growth) in the region. From various opinions, it can be concluded that closely related to the management of resources forming partnership patterns that should be managed by the government at all levels. However, the presence of the Sub-District Government in economic development management is only advisory. Besides being advisory, based on research findings for the three Sub-Districts, namely Malangbong Sub-District, Kadungora Sub-District, and Singajaya Sub-District, the economic development process in the Sub-District is only limited to coordination and administrative services. The coordination process and administrative services include: a) Coordinating with Technical Implementing Units (UPTDs) in the sub-district for proposed development initiatives to be submitted to the sub-district's development meeting. b) Coordination with sub-district leadership and private sector entities for the security and maintenance of public facilities and infrastructure within the sub-district. c) Coordinating with all Sub-District Heads in Manado City regarding boundary demarcation in each working area. d) Coordinating with private entities participating in infrastructure provision for public purposes within the sub-district. As for administrative services, they include:

- a. Summarizing development proposals generated during the sub-district's development meeting, which will then be discussed in the city-level coordination meeting.
- b. Providing recommendations for building permits (IMBs) submitted by community members to the permit office.
- c. Providing recommendations to community members applying for loans for business purposes.
- d. Recommending community members to obtain free medical treatment cards.
- e. Participating in the endorsement of cooperation agreements between the private sector and the community.
- f. Recommending the establishment of markets in urban villages

Based on the description above, the tasks empirically carried out in three sub-districts, based on observations, interviews, and documentation conducted by the author, show that the changes in the position of the Sub-District as a Regional Apparatus since the enactment of [Law Number 32 of 2004](#) and [Law Number 23 of 2014](#) have not shown changes to the tasks and authorities carried out by the Sub-District. In the sense that the tasks carried out by the sub-districts during this research have not undergone significant changes, especially those directly impacting the community. Referring to [Article 126 of Law Number 32 of 2004](#), which states that sub-districts led by Sub-District Heads exercise two authorities simultaneously. These two authorities are Delegated Authority and Attributive Authority. Referring to the two authorities granted to the sub-districts, this serves as the basis for the Regent of Garut Regency to delegate some of its authority to the sub-district heads to handle certain affairs. This is also reinforced by the presence of [Government Regulation Number 19 of 2008, specifically Article 15 paragraph \(2\)](#), which states that the delegation of authority to the Sub-District Head includes:

1. Licensing
2. Recommendation
3. Coordination
4. Development
5. Supervision
6. Facilitation
7. Determination

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8. Organization and
9. Other authorities delegated

The provisions above, such as Government Regulation, state that in addition to carrying out general governmental tasks, the Sub-District Head also exercises authorities delegated by the Regent. According to the author, there is inconsistency with [Article 14 paragraph \(1\) of Law 32 of 2004](#), which stipulates 16 mandatory affairs under the jurisdiction of the City Government, namely:

1. Development Planning and Control
2. Planning, Utilization, and supervision of Spatial Planning
3. Maintenance of Public Order and Community Security
4. Provision of Public Facilities and Infrastructure
5. Handling Health Affairs
6. Education Administration
7. Social Problem Mitigation
8. Employment Services
9. Facilities for Small and Medium-Sized Business Cooperatives
10. Environmental Management
11. Land Services
12. Population and Civil Registration Services
13. General Government Administration Services
14. Investment Administration Services
15. Basic Service Provision
16. Other mandatory affairs mandated by Legislation

In the author's view, the authorities delegated by the Regent to the Sub-District Head, as a dual position with the Regent, should be related to the 16 authorities in the City, and the delegation of authority should be based on the consideration of the Nine aspects of authority as explained above. The relationship between the 16 authorities of the Regent should intersect with the Nine aspects of authority delegated to the Sub-District, for example, the Regent can delegate authority to the Sub-District by issuing licenses in the fisheries sector. Meanwhile, recommendation-type authorities remain intact, such as recommendations for the establishment of sports facilities in the Sub-District's working area. To avoid overlapping of authority with the Youth and Sports Agency and the Public Works Agency, the authorities suitable for delegation to the sub-district are those coordinated with relevant agencies related to the delegated authority. Empirically, it is difficult to distinguish between the position of the Sub-District Head as a delegate task administrator and the administration of attributive tasks, namely general governmental tasks. When the Regent has delegated some authority to the Sub-District from the 16 authorities of the Government, it includes both aspects of authority: Coordination and Government Organization. According to the author, the position of the sub-district as a regional apparatus whose accountability automatically falls under the Regent through the City Secretary, may no longer require provisions regulating general governmental tasks, so the Sub-District Head can focus more on executing the authorities delegated by the Regent in an effort to realize community welfare. The provisions regulating general governmental tasks indicate that the position of the Sub-District in the era of [Law Number 32 of 2004](#), which has also changed to [Law Number 23 of 2014](#) currently in effect, shows almost the same as the position of the Sub-District Head in the era of [Law Number 5 of 1974](#), namely

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carrying out deconcentration tasks within the administrative working area. On the other hand, the Sub-District Head as a regional apparatus unit carrying out the delegation of some authorities from the Regent. This demonstrates the dual role of the Sub-District Head, on one side as a Regional Apparatus Unit and on the other side as an executor of deconcentration tasks. Based on observations and interviews with community leaders, the existence of the sub-district government is still a significant hope for the community in various affairs, while also addressing various issues. With the existence of the new Law, various administrative processes are already guaranteed or can be regulated by the Regent's regulations, also serving as a basis for the sub-district government. However, the regulations issued do not address the core issues but only the tasks and functions of the sub-district government, ultimately prolonging bureaucratic processes.

CONCLUSION

There are several key points regarding the strengthening of sub-district institutions related to the aspect of political leadership, especially in the context of local government commitment. Political leaders tend to use informal and personal relationships to influence their followers towards certain goals. It should be understood by political leaders that understanding political ethics is essential to ensure that the political process runs smoothly, thus having political insight is more important than formal background in political science. Additionally, political leaders must understand their roles as instructive and consultative leaders, prioritizing two-way communication, especially when deciding on matters requiring consideration. Political leaders should also be participative and delegative, providing clarity in delegating authority to others, thus facilitating decision-making and control.

Political leadership, in this case, at the district level, such as the regent or head of the region, must play a strategic role in the effectiveness of local government. They must possess the necessary competence and capability as regional leaders to fulfill their leadership and mentoring functions. Regional leaders must be responsive to political and institutional conditions and needs to realize the aspirations of the community.

The role of the sub-district head in sub-district governance is highly strategic in institutional strengthening. The sub-district head must continue to coordinate between the sub-district and branch offices within the sub-district to optimize their duties, despite limitations in the delegation of authority.

Challenges faced by the sub-district include the continued limitation in the delegation of authority, resulting in inadequate coordination among units in the sub-district, which affects the optimal functioning of sub-district institutions. This, in turn, impacts the potential for economic development and human resource capacity building within the sub-district.

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