

Implementation of Specific Purpose Grant Policy of Education in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the influence of the implementation of the Specific Purpose Grant (SPG) policy in achieving the national priorities in Banten Province. This study was conducted on the basis of a descriptive qualitative design by using interviews and observations for data collection. Findings indicate that the implementation of the SPG in primary education has provided maximum expected results. The factors that hinder the implementation of SPG activities in primary education are unrelated to technical factors but to financial policies at school. The objectives of SPG implementation in primary education have been realized, and the efforts made from the input, process, and output indicators are all satisfactory. Therefore, the expected influence is comparable to the efforts done. For secondary education, the implementation of SPG has not fully provided the expected results. The objective has only realized 50% of the target. The input, process, and output are satisfactory, and the graduation rates are close to 100%. The expected influence is comparable to the efforts done. Results suggest improvements on the Education Office through infrastructure, performance, inventory, and scope of SPG distribution.

Keywords: *Special Allocation Funds, Pandeglang Regency, Primary Education, Secondary Education*

Introduction

In the context of *welfare state*, the government is a state organ with the obligation to realize general welfare (*bestuurzorg*). The government needs to be actively involved in the economic and social life of the community as a step to realize public welfare in addition to maintaining order and security. One of the policies implemented by the government in the framework of realizing the tasks and objectives of the state is the policy of allocating Specific Purpose Grants (SPGs). The White Paper on SPG published by the National Development Planning Agency (BPs, 2004) states that SPG is one of the central government's financial transfer mechanisms to regions that aims to

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fund special activities for regional affairs in accordance with national priorities. SPG is part of the balancing fund that is closely related to the national development strategy. The provisions regarding the activities that can be funded from SPG are a form of activity that is a subject of local government (Qibthiyah, 2018). Thus, SPG activities in the form of service programs for the community are expected not only to be a development priority for the central government but also to gain support from the local government. Therefore, the SPG policy is primarily designed to accelerate regional economic growth.

SPG is allocated primarily to help finance the needs of primary community service facilities and infrastructure or accelerate regional development. Article 1, Number 23, Law Number 33 of 2004 Central and Regional Financial Balance Law, which concerns the balance between central and regional finance, states that:

“Specific Purpose Grants, hereinafter referred to as SPG, are funds sourced from the SEB allocated to certain regions with the aim of helping fund special activities that are the regional authority and in accordance with national priorities.”

The SPG allocation is intended to assist the region in realizing governmental tasks in certain fields, especially in the effort to fulfill the primary community service facilities and infrastructure that are in line with national priorities.

Generally, the main directions and policies of SPG from year to year are aimed at helping regions with low financial capacity in financing public services to encourage the achievement of Minimum Service Standard through the provision of physical facilities and infrastructure for primary community services and improving the effectiveness of regional shopping (Putra & Ulupui, 2015). Primary services, which are the target of the SPG policy, are the focus of the education sector. Focusing on education is important given the low quality of education services, especially primary education services. This phenomenon is evident in the inadequate condition of facilities and infrastructure that are required to develop a comfortable and effective atmosphere and learning nuance.

When the SPG policy was implemented in 2003–2016, the education sector received the largest budget allocation on average. The government only provided a budget of Rp 625 billion in 2003, whereas the budget was raised to Rp 119.9 trillion in 2016. Over the past 13 years, the increase in the SPG budget allocation for education has reached such a large number. This situation is in line with the mandate of Article 31, Paragraph (4) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic

of Indonesia, which states that education funds should be allocated 20% of the State Expenditure Budget (SEB) posture (Statistik, 2014).

Although the terms of the benefits of SPG policies have had an important influence on improving the quality of public services, especially in education, in some cases, the implementation of SPG policies still leaves a problem. First, the SPG allocation process does not simultaneously involve all stakeholders, or is fragmented, thereby making the coordination process between stakeholders difficult. Second, at the same time, the discussion on the determination of the SPG budget allocation for the education sector in DPR are often not based on clear allocation criteria, which results in multiple changes. The lack of clear criteria results in allocation that depends solely on negotiations with the government. Third, the SPG and SEB allocation are performed simultaneously without the certainty of SPG allocation. Consequently, problems are experienced during implementation at the regional level. The problems are related to the determination of the amount of SEB in the education sector. As a consequence, the administrative mechanism often contradicts the different interpretation of norms, especially for law enforcement.

The aforementioned problems affect the implementation of SPG policies in the field of education in the region, especially in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province. The low absorption of SPG is caused by the weak performance of Regional Device Organizations, which are cannot absorb the SPG budget to the fullest. Budget absorption is important because it involves the benefits that will be received by the community. If budget absorption fails, development is not achieved, thereby affecting the community. Communities that should be able to benefit from SPG fund allocation cannot enjoy the results of development. This situation is where the regional heads are needed to regulate the regional financial management and achieve budget realization targets.

The various aforementioned descriptions show that the policy of SPG allocation at the implementation level still leaves the problem unresolved and requires policy improvement. This phenomenon is the motivation behind the present study, which focuses on the SPG policy implementation in education in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province; this policy has not affected the achievement of national priorities. Specifically, this study aims to 1) identify and describe the SPG policy implementation in Banten Province and 2) identify and describe the effect of the implementation of the allocation fund policy on achieving national priorities in Banten Province.

Literature review

Several studies on policy implementation have been conducted by several researchers (Ahmad, 2016; Carcolini, 2017; Kilinc, 2017). Jumadi (2014) conducted a study in PMIS-Tanjungpura University Pontianak on the implementation of education policy in Kayong Utara District. The study shows the benefits of improving the quality of education in the district, such as increasing school enrollment rates and decreasing dropout rates because all students are exempted from tuition. However, while implementing the free education policy, weaknesses were still encountered, which caused the policy to be distorted. On the basis of an analysis of policy objectives; measures, resources, communication between implementing organizations; characteristics of the implementing agency; social, economic, and political conditions; and the attitude of the implementing agency, these factors have not fully supported the implementation of free education policies. Social, economic, and political factors are exempted because the knowledge and understanding of the people in Kayong Utara District are still minimal. Consequently, most people wrongly assess the free education policy, in which all educational activities at every level of education are free of charge. As a result, the community is a priori in participating in supporting school activities. Meanwhile, school-based management emphasizes the importance of community involvement in supporting school activities, including the contribution to school operational costs through school committees.

Usman, Mawardi, Poesoro, Suryahadi, and Sampford (2008) from the SMERU research team with Sampford from Griffith University in the Indonesia–Australia partnership studied on the mechanism and use of SPG funds. Their results show that policies actually require national uniformity but still provide space for non-uniformity. By contrast, although some policies should provide space for differences caused by inter-regional conditions, they impose national uniformity. Many parties in the region consider that SPG regulations issued by the central government are often late and do not match the planning schedule in the regions. When the contents of the issued central decision appeared late to be different from what was predicted by the regions when preparing the Regional Expenditure Income Budget (REIB), several items in the REIB would be forced to be change and be discussed again by the Regional Legislative Council. This process, in addition to confiscating the time of the government apparatus, also involves a considerable amount of funds, although regional financial capacity is limited. In practice, regional governments are

passive recipients of SPG grants even though legislation truly allows regions to submit proposals actively. The aforementioned studies discuss several sectors. However, SPG policy implementation is limited to the field of education, particularly policies relating to their influence on achieving national priorities.

Concept of Policy Implementation

William and Elmore (Bambang, 1994) stated that policy implementation is formulated as “the whole of activities related to the implementation of policy.” Pasolong (2007) interpreted policy implementation as “a summary of various activities in which human resources use other resources to achieve strategic goals.” The success of public policy implementation is largely determined by the activities performed to achieve the objectives of public policies.

To support the success of public policy implementation, certain elements must be fulfilled. Hoogwood and Gunn (Solichin, 1997) suggested several requirements for perfectly implementing policies, as enumerated as follows:

1. The circumstances external to the implementing agency do not impose constraints.
2. Adequate time and sufficient resources should be made available to the program.
3. The required combination of resources is actually available.
4. The policy to be implemented is based upon a valid theory of cause and effect.
5. The relationship between cause and effect is direct, with only few intervening links if any.
6. The dependency relationship is minimal.
7. Objectives are understood and agreed upon.
8. Tasks are fully specified in the correct sequence.
9. Communications and coordination are perfect.
10. Those in authority can demand and obtain effect compliance.

Meter and Horn (Sulaeman, 1998) suggested that certain standards and targets must be achieved by policy implementers to measure policy implementation performance. Policy performance is primarily an assessment of the level of achievement of these standards and targets. Rue and Byars and Keban (Sulaeman, 1998) suggested that a simple performance is the level of achievement of results or the degree of accomplishment.

On the basis of the two views, the implementation of wisdom is not only concerned with the behavior of administrative bodies responsible for implementing the program and causing adherence to the target group but also related to political, economic, social, and direct or indirect

networks that can influence the behavior of all parties involved and ultimately affect the expected good influence.

Edwards III in Winarno, 2012) identified crucial factors or variables in public policy implementation, namely, communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structures, which are described as follows. First, the basic requirement for effective policy implementation is the understanding from the policy implementer. Second, resources are another requirement for effective policy implementation. Policy implementation will not be effective if implementers lack the resources required to implement the policy. Edwards III (Rusli, 2013) indicated that lack of resources would result in the ineffectiveness of policy implementation. The resources in question include the adequate number of people and their clear understanding, infrastructure and facilities, and authority. Third, the tendency or disposition of implementers are required for effective policy implementation. Solichin (1997) described disposition as the set of characteristics possessed by implementers, such as commitment, honesty, and democratic nature. If implementers have a good disposition, then they will conduct the policy, as well as what is desired by the policymakers. Fourth, bureaucratic structures, which cover two important factors, namely, (i) the mechanism and (ii) the implementing organizational structure are requirements for policy implementation. The policy implementation mechanism is usually established through a standard operating procedure (SOP), which is included in the policy guide. A good SOP includes a clear, systematic, and non-convoluted framework that is easily understood by anyone because it will be a reference in the implementation.

The four important criteria are a source of problems, as well as the preconditions for the success of policy implementation. Edward III in Winarno, 2007) indicated that the four factors that influence policy implementation work simultaneously and interact with one another to help and hinder policy implementation; hence, the ideal approach is to reflect this complexity by discussing all factors at once. The implementation of each policy is a dynamic process that includes many interactions of many variables.

SPG Policy in Education

The SPG policy in education is part of the national development policy that is intended to achieve the country's goals in education. The government is keen on the development of education

to form intelligent human resources as the nation's assets. Human assets face national and global competition, especially in shaping civil society that is needed in democratic life.

The SPG policy in education is a manifestation of Law No. 23 of 2018 and Law No. 33 of 2004. At the implementation level, the policy still leaves a problem in the achievement of national priorities. From the Rp 10.41 trillion SPG budget for education in 2016 proposed by the Ministry of Education, the amount was reduced to only Rp 2.6 trillion. The Ministry of Education proposes a budget on the basis of proposals from the regions; however, the final allocation changes considerably. Thus, some national priority programs for the 12-year compulsory education infrastructure facilities may not be fulfilled.

Furthermore, what hinders the achievement of SPG policy implementation in education stems from the SPG allocation process. The SPG allocation process: (i) does not involve all stakeholders simultaneously (fragmented), thereby making the coordination process between stakeholders difficult. This phenomenon can be observed in situations where Bappenas determines the fields that receive SPG, the technical ministry determines the subfields that receive SPG, and the Ministry of Finance has its own process in determining the regions that receive SPG. Thus, the SPG allocation process by the Ministry of Finance can change its utilization principle. In addition, (ii) SPG allocation is performed simultaneously with determining the REIB allocation, without the certainty of SPG allocation. As previously explained, SPG policy implementation involves at least three ministries: Bappenas who determines the fields who receive SPG, the technical ministry who determines the subfields who receive SPG, and the Ministry of Finance who determines the regions that receive SPG.

Research Method

Research Design

This study applies qualitative research design with descriptive methods. Bogdan and Taylor (Moleong, 2009) stated that qualitative methodology produces descriptive data in the form of written or verbal words from people and observable behavior. Nawawi (2003) mentioned that "descriptive method can be interpreted as a problem-solving procedure that is investigated by describing the state of the subject/object of research (person, institution, community and others), at the present time based on the facts that appear or as it is." Therefore, the descriptive method

describes the characteristics of an individual, a particular symptom, or phenomenon in the present and then analyzes and interprets the relationships between the phenomena investigated. In this study, the phenomena that are examined and disclosed are the those of SPG policy implementation and its influence on achieving national priorities.

Selection of Informants and Research Locations

The informants in this study were chosen using purposive sampling technique, namely, data source sampling techniques with specific considerations and objectives (Sugiyono, 2013). Purposive sampling was used to understand certain selected cases without needing or desiring to generalize the results to all cases. Therefore, the results of this study would not be generalized to other populations because the sampling was not taken randomly. Purposive sampling was applied to increase the usefulness of the information obtained from a small sample.

Eleven informants in this study were believed to be able to provide the best information; they were informants from the Directorate General of Primary and Secondary Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture, and Sub Directorate for Facilitation of SPG Ministry of Home Affairs; and regional informants, namely, the Banten Province National Education Office, Pandeglang District National Education Office, Head of the Primary Education Unit of Pandeglang District, and Head of the Secondary Education Unit of Pandeglang District. Table 1 lists the informants.

Table 1

List of Research Informants

No.	Informants
1	Director of the Ministry of Education and Culture's Primary School Development
2	Director of Development of Junior High Schools, Ministry of Education and Culture
3	Head of Sub Directorate for Facilitation of SPG Ministry of Home Affairs
4	Head of Banten Province National Education Agency
5	Head of BPKAD Pandeglang Regency
6	Head of the National Education Agency of Pandeglang Regency
7	Head of Elementary School UPT (3 people)
8	Head of Middle School UPT (3 people)

This study was conducted in Pandeglang Regency, Banten Province, which was selected on the basis of some considerations as follows. First, Banten Province has an APK that is consistently below the national average from 2004 to 2016 and is ranked at the bottom 11 of 34 provinces in Indonesia. Second, in 2016, the population of Banten Province aged 25 and above and had studied for only approximately 8.37 years, still lags behind the DKI Jakarta school year's expectations of 12.73 years (Jakarta, 2015) despite having increased by 0.1% from the previous year (Statistik, 2015). Meanwhile, the budget allocation for education from REIB is only 3.69%. Thus, the development of the education sector depends heavily on SEB funds, including SPG. Third, from the geographical aspect, the location of Banten Province can be accessed easily by the researcher. Furthermore, from the eight regencies in Banten Province, Pandeglang was selected as a deliberate research locus on the basis of two considerations. First, Pandeglang is a disadvantaged district in terms of education based on the HDI figure and APK data. The HDI figure for Pandeglang Regency in 2016 was 66.80, whereas its APK of 83.85 was the lowest in Banten Province. Second, this district has a number of middle-level schools (neither the highest nor the lowest) in Banten Province.

Research Focus

The focus of this study is the SPG policy implementation in education and its influence on the achievement of national priorities in elementary, middle, and high school or vocational high schools in Banten Province. The researchers acted as the main instrument, as an active participant, and engaged in reality trans-subjectively (relating to reality outside the scope of direct experience or direct knowledge). In addition to being the main instrument, researchers, as well as the planners, implementers, data collectors, analysts, data interpreters, and reporters of research results, were involved in the study.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection techniques are the most strategic step in this study because the main purpose was to obtain data. Sugiyono (2006) indicated that data collection could be performed in various (i) settings, (ii) sources, and (iii) various approaches. Sugiyono further explained:

“When viewed from the settings, the data can be collected in natural settings, in laboratories with experimental methods, at home with various respondents, at seminars, discussions, on

the road and others. When viewed from the data source, data collection can use primary sources and secondary sources... when viewed in terms of ways or techniques of data collection, the data collection techniques can be done by observation, interview, questionnaire, documentation, and the combination of the four.”

In this study, the collected data in natural settings related the implementation of SPG policy in education and its influence on achieving national priorities. Focus group discussions were also performed. With the two data collection settings, comprehensive data were expected to be obtained to answer the research problems in this study. Related to the sources of data, primary and secondary data were obtained. The primary data were obtained from in-depth interviews from various informants and documentation, whereas secondary data were obtained from various literature and pertinent documents. Data triangulation was conducted by cross-checking the data sources and methods with other data. This technique was performed continuously until valid data were achieved.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an attempt or method for processing data into information that can be understood and useful for problem solving, especially in problems related to research. In this study, the researchers used the qualitative analysis of Miles and Huberman (1994), which comprises three stages as follows.

1. **Data Codification:** This is the data processing stage, where the researchers provided the name or naming of the research results. The collected data were classified on the basis of themes of the research. Afterwards, the researchers provided special attention to the important themes in accordance with the issues to be answered. The researchers then interpreted these themes.
2. **Data Presentation:** This stage of analysis is where the researchers presented their research findings in the form of categories or groupings.
3. **Conclusion:** This stage is the withdrawal or verification, where the researchers drew conclusions from the data findings. This stage is the researchers' interpretation of the findings. After the conclusions were drawn, the researchers then checked the validity of the interpretation by re-checking the data coding and presentation process to ensure that no errors were made.

Result (Findings)

1. Primary Education (Elementary and Middle School)

The realization of the 2017 SPG implementation in primary education has 18 activities. Of these 18 activities, 11 activities have been achieved 100%. The remaining 7 activities have not reached 100%. Therefore, primary education SPG activities reached 11/18 or 61%, whereas 39% is still not realized because of several problems.

First, 242 implementing schools are in elementary school classrooms, but only 240 schools are reached because 2 elementary schools are private. Second, in the construction of a junior library (2017 matching fund), the realization is 3 out of 4 recipient schools. The problem is due to the one private school. Third, in the construction of science/language (SMP) laboratories (2017 matching fund), only 3 out of 5 schools are realized. Fourth, in the procurement of science/social science/mathematics/language/sports laboratory equipment for junior high school (2017 matching fund), only 11 out of 26 implementing schools are realized. Fifth, in the provision of elementary education equipment (with 2017 companion), mathematics, science, social studies, language, health-education institutions, arts and culture skills have also been achieved 100% because all are public schools.

Then, for the construction of an elementary library, rehabilitation of classrooms (junior high school; matching funds 2017), and construction of new classrooms (SMP) (2017 matching fund), each realization has been achieved 100%. In conclusion, the difference used is the status of public or private schools. Public schools enter the DPA account code for direct shopping, whereas private schools in the DPA include grant spending. In SPG activities, the private school DPA account code must be changed into grant expenditure and will be realized the following year.

2. Secondary Education (SMA and SMK)

The secondary education sector has six SPG activities, among which three have been achieved 100%. Therefore, secondary education SPG activities has reached 3/6 or 50%. The remaining 50% is still not realized because of several problems. First, in classroom rehabilitation activities, 25 high schools and 44 out of 46 vocational schools have achieved 100%. The remaining two vocational schools have light damages, which do not need fixing and thus do not require SPG funds. Second, in the laboratory construction activities, 10 high schools and 38 out of 40 vocational schools have achieved 100%. The remaining two vocational schools do not have

a vacant land for the construction. Third, in library construction activities, procurement of high school laboratory equipment and vocational laboratory equipment have achieved 100%. Meanwhile, the realization of textbooks/reference books is still 0%, because new books have been auctioned in 2018.

Discussion

The Effectiveness of Evaluation Results

The theory of finance (Badjuri, 2011) indicates that four primary evaluations are typically made to achieve the objectives of a study. The four types are appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency, and meta-evaluations. In this study, effectiveness evaluation was performed. The policy used as a guideline is the Decree of the Regent of Pandeglang Nos. 425/428/14 of 2017 concerning the Establishment of Educational Institutions for SPGs for education in 2017 fiscal year.

1. Elementary and Middle School (Primary Education)

The SPG activities in primary education provided maximum expected results. The targets and realization of primary education SPG are detailed in Table 3.1. A total 18 activities were obtained. Of the 18 activities, only 11 activities were realized. Thus, the achievement of primary education SPG activities was 61%. However, only one factor hindered the implementation of primary education SPG activities. This factor was related to fiscal policy and the recipient school. The financial policy concerns the differences in the procedures for public and private schools when receiving funds. The results in public schools could be achieved in the same year, whereas those in private schools materialize the following year. This phenomenon relates to other policies; thus, it cannot be considered a problem in SPG activity implementation. The solution to the problem is insufficient to involve only one agency. Hence, the influence of a policy is implicated by other policies. Regarding the expected influence (benefit) of the policy, the SPG activities for primary education have had a positive influence. Teaching and learning activities become comfortable and smooth. The results of elementary school graduation have increased (Tables 3.3 and 3.4). Elementary school graduation in the school year of 2012/2017 achieved 99.98%, whereas 100% was

achieved in the 2017/2018. Junior high school graduation from the schoolyears of 2012/2017 to 2017/2018 have also increased.

The purpose of SPG activities in primary education has been realized but has yet to achieve maximum results. The purpose was written in the Decree of the Regent of Pandeglang Nos. 425/428/14 of 2017 concerning the Establishment of Educational Institutions for SPG for education in 2017.

With the descriptions of the indicators of input, process, and output, the researchers found that all the elements were satisfactory. The efforts made by the Education Office and the recipient school were maximized. Thus, the expected influence was proportional to the effort that had been done. Graduation rates were high, and the number of non-graduates in primary education was extremely small. Although the achievement of primary education SPG activities in this study was 61%, graduation rate remained high for at least 95%–100%. The Education Office claimed that the graduation rate was indirectly influenced by SPG but the ability of students to accomplish the National Examination because all students receive the same learning facilities.

2. High School and Vocational School (Secondary Education)

The SPG activities in the secondary education sector did not fully provide the expected results. As shown in Table 3.2, 3 out of 6 activities or 50% was realized. The factors that hindered the implementation of secondary education SPG activities included no damage to recipient schools, no land to construct on, and a delay in the auction of SPG product shopping in the form of textbooks. Thus, SPG activities could only be realized in the following year. Regarding the influence of the policy, this SPG activity had a positive influence; that is, 100% graduation rate or close to 100% with various majors in high school (some increasing, some decreasing). Although the graduation rate for the school year of 2012/2017 was higher than that for 2017/2018, their graduation rates were extremely small.

The purpose of the secondary education SPG activities, as written in the Decree of the Pandeglang Regent Nos. 425/428/14 of 2017 concerning the Establishment of Education Institutions for SPG for education in 2017 fiscal year has not been fully realized. Given the

target in Table 3.2, the realization was 50%. The objective of this activity was only 50%; hence, the objective was partially materialized.

On the basis of the efforts made by the Education Office and recipient schools from the indicators of input, process, and output, the expected influence was proportional to the efforts done. The graduation rates were high and never lower than 95%. The number of non-graduates in secondary education was extremely small. Student graduation is not an SPG problem because every student is given the same facilities. The same obligation is also in the implementation of the National Examination.

Conclusion

The SPG activities in the field of primary education have provided maximum expected results. The factors that hinder the implementation of such activities are related to fiscal policy and not technical factors at schools. Fiscal policy is related to other policies; thus, it cannot be considered a problem in SPG activity implementation. Here, the influence of a policy is implicated by other policies. Regarding the expected influence (benefit) of the policy, the primary education SPG activities have had a positive influence. Teaching and learning activities become comfortable and are run well. The results of elementary school graduation showed an increase. Junior high school graduation, or its equivalent, also increased. Meanwhile, SPG activities in the secondary education sector have not fully provided the expected results. The factors that hinder the implementation of secondary education SPG activities include recipient schools that are undamaged, schools without infrastructure in the form of land to build, and a delay in the auction of SPG product shopping in the form of textbooks; hence, such activities could only be realized in the following year. Regarding the influence of the policy, this SPG activity has had a positive influence.

From the results of this study, the authors suggest several things the following. The Education Agency should prepare lands as an infrastructure for SPG implementation. In addition, the performance of the auction process (shopping), especially shopping for reference or textbooks, which has previously caused delays, must be improved. In determining the target, the Budget Recipient List should be written with caution, such that no duplication of

data occurs in this list. Finally, the SPG policy in the education sector should be expanded because it works well, and the negative influence is relatively small.

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