

Regional Autonomy in the Indonesian Constitutional System: Between Decentralization and Centralization

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Abstract

Regional autonomy is a strategic policy within the Indonesian state system, aimed at creating an effective, democratic, and responsive government. However, in practice, the implementation of regional autonomy still faces a dynamic tug-of-war between decentralisation and centralisation, giving rise to problems such as overlapping authority, regional fiscal dependence, and a tendency towards recentralization by the central government. Therefore, this study aims to analyse the concept, legal basis, and implementation of regional autonomy in the context of the relationship between the central and regional governments. This study uses normative legal research with a statutory and conceptual approach. Data sources consist of primary legal materials, such as the 1945 Constitution and Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, as well as secondary legal materials in the form of books, scientific journals, and previous research results. Data collection techniques were carried out through literature studies, while data analysis techniques used descriptive qualitative analysis by systematically interpreting and reviewing legal materials. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia is not fully optimal due to the ongoing imbalance between central and regional authorities. In addition, policy inconsistencies were found that trigger a tendency towards recentralisation. Therefore, it is necessary to harmonise regulations, strengthen regional capacity, and maintain policy consistency to create an ideal balance between decentralisation and centralisation within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Keywords: Regional Autonomy, Decentralization, Centralization

Abstrak

Otonomi daerah merupakan salah satu kebijakan strategis dalam sistem ketatanegaraan Indonesia yang bertujuan untuk mewujudkan pemerintahan yang efektif, demokratis, dan responsif terhadap kebutuhan masyarakat. Namun, dalam praktiknya, pelaksanaan otonomi daerah masih menghadapi dinamika tarik ulur antara desentralisasi dan sentralisasi, yang memunculkan berbagai permasalahan seperti tumpang tindih kewenangan, ketergantungan fiskal daerah, serta kecenderungan re-sentralisasi oleh pemerintah pusat. Oleh karena

itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep, dasar hukum, serta implementasi otonomi daerah dalam konteks hubungan antara pemerintah pusat dan daerah. Penelitian ini menggunakan jenis penelitian hukum normatif dengan pendekatan perundang-undangan dan konseptual. Sumber data terdiri dari bahan hukum primer, seperti UUD 1945 dan Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2014 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah, serta bahan hukum sekunder berupa buku, jurnal ilmiah, dan hasil penelitian terdahulu. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui studi kepustakaan, sedangkan teknik analisis data menggunakan analisis kualitatif deskriptif dengan menafsirkan dan mengkaji bahan hukum secara sistematis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pelaksanaan otonomi daerah di Indonesia belum sepenuhnya optimal karena masih adanya ketidakseimbangan antara kewenangan pusat dan daerah. Selain itu, ditemukan adanya inkonsistensi kebijakan yang memicu kecenderungan sentralisasi kembali. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan harmonisasi regulasi, penguatan kapasitas daerah, serta konsistensi kebijakan guna menciptakan keseimbangan yang ideal antara desentralisasi dan sentralisasi dalam kerangka Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: Otonomi Daerah, Desentralisasi, Sentralisasi

A. Introduction

Regional autonomy is a crucial pillar of Indonesia's constitutional system, which has undergone significant development since the reform era. The implementation of regional autonomy essentially aims to grant local governments broader authority to regulate and manage government affairs. This aligns with the principle of decentralization, which is expected to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and community participation in development. However, in practice, the implementation of regional autonomy is inseparable from the dynamics between decentralization interests and the central government's tendency toward centralization. This situation indicates a conceptual tension within Indonesia's constitutional system.¹

Historically, Indonesia's system of government has tended to be centralized, particularly during the New Order era. During that period, almost all strategic policies were controlled by the central government, severely limiting the scope of regional governments. This centralization resulted in development disparities between regions and low local participation in decision-making. Therefore, the 1998 reforms marked a turning point, encouraging the implementation of decentralization through regional

¹ Hari Suriadi dkk., "Sejarah Perkembangan Desentralisasi dan Otonomi Daerah di Indonesia," *Jurnal Media Ilmu* 2, no. 2 (2023): hlm. 195., <https://doi.org/10.31869/jmi.v2i2.4974>.

autonomy policies. These changes were expected to create a more democratic government that was responsive to the needs of local communities.²

Despite the implementation of various regulations, such as Law Number 32 of 2004 and its amendments, decentralization remains largely unfulfilled. The central government still exerts dominant control over regional authorities, especially concerning strategic policies and resource management. This clearly demonstrates that decentralization has not been consistently applied and, in practice, actually signals a re-centralization of authority.³

This tension between decentralization and centralization is clearly evident in public policy and regional financial management. Fiscal decentralization, designed to increase regional independence, still relies heavily on central government transfers. This reliance demonstrates that regional autonomy remains far from fully and effectively implemented. Moreover, overlapping regulations between the central and regional governments directly hinder policy implementation at the local level.⁴

On the other hand, decentralization also faces various internal challenges from within local governments themselves. Not all regions have adequate human resources and institutional capacity to manage the authority granted to them. This leads to disparities in the quality of public services between regions. Furthermore, corruption and abuse of authority at the regional level are also serious problems that hamper the primary objectives of regional autonomy.⁵

The concept of regional autonomy in a unitary state like Indonesia cannot be separated from the principle of centralization. In this context, centralization remains necessary to maintain the integrity of the state and ensure national standards in governance. Therefore, the challenge is finding the right balance between decentralization and centralization. This balance is crucial for regional autonomy to operate effectively without threatening national integration.⁶

² Angye Mareta Y dkk., "Sentralisasi Kebijakan dan Keterbatasan Otonomi Daerah: Desentralisasi Pemerintahan Lokal pada Masa Orde," *JESS (Journal of Education on Social Science)* 10, no. 1 (2026): hlm. 21., <https://doi.org/10.24036/jess.v10i1.631>.

³ Raharjo Jati W., "Inkonsistensi Paradigma Otonomi Daerah di Indonesia: Dilema Sentralisasi dan Desentralisasi," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 9, no. 4 (2012): 115.

⁴ Adissya Mega Christia dan Budi Ispriyarso, "Desentralisasi Fiskal Dan Otonomi Daerah Di Indonesia," *LAW REFORM* 15, no. 1 (2019): hlm. 151., <https://doi.org/10.14710/lr.v15i1.23360>.

⁵ Selvi Rahmawati dkk., "Desentralisasi dan Otonomi Daerah: Tantangan dan Peluang dalam Era Reformasi," *Jurnal Media Ilmu* 4, no. 2 (2025): hlm. 27.

⁶ Mulyadi Golap, "Implikasi Kebijakan Sentralisasi terhadap Prinsip Otonomi Daerah," *Journal Governance and Politics (JGP)* 5, no. 2 (2025): hlm. 68.

Furthermore, the dynamics of central-regional relations also demonstrate a paradigm shift in Indonesia's constitutional system. Decentralization is no longer viewed as a mere relinquishment of authority, but rather as a mechanism to strengthen good governance. In this regard, the central government remains crucial as a regulator and supervisor, while regional governments serve as policy implementers closer to the community.⁷

However, in practice, inconsistencies persist in the implementation of regional autonomy policies. Some policies adopted by the central government actually reduce regional authority, creating uncertainty in the administration of regional governance. This inconsistency indicates that the concept of regional autonomy in Indonesia is still in the process of finding its ideal form between decentralization and centralization.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that regional autonomy within the Indonesian constitutional system is a complex and dynamic concept. The tension between decentralization and centralization is a key issue affecting the effectiveness of regional governance. Therefore, this research is crucial for further examining how regional autonomy is implemented within the context of central-regional relations, and how to find an ideal model within the framework of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia.

B. Research Methods

This research employs a normative legal research method, focusing on the study of legal norms enshrined in legislation and literature relevant to regional autonomy within the Indonesian constitutional system. The approaches employed are a statute approach and a conceptual approach, aiming to analyze various regulations related to the relationship between the central and regional governments within the framework of decentralization and centralization. This approach was chosen because the issues studied are closely related to positive legal norms, particularly the Law on Regional Government and its derivative regulations. Therefore, this research seeks to examine the consistency, synchronization, and implementation of these legal norms in state practice.

The data sources in this research consist of primary and secondary legal materials. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations such as the 1945 Constitution, Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, and

⁷ Tulus Santoso, "Relasi Pusat-Daerah Dalam Menangani Covid-19 Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi: Media Pengembangan Ilmu dan Praktek Administrasi* 17, no. 2 (2020): hlm. 169., <https://doi.org/10.31113/jia.v17i2.571>.

other related regulations governing regional autonomy. Meanwhile, secondary legal materials were obtained from books, scientific journals, and previous research relevant to the topic of decentralization and centralization. Data collection techniques were conducted through library research, systematically reviewing and examining various legal sources. The data analysis technique used was qualitative analysis, which involves interpreting the collected legal materials and then compiling them descriptively and analytically to address the research questions. This analysis was conducted by connecting legal theories and norms with the reality of the situation, thus gaining a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of regional autonomy in Indonesia.

C. Discussion and Research Results

The Concept and Legal Basis of Regional Autonomy in Indonesia

The concept of regional autonomy in Indonesia is essentially an integral part of the constitutional system, which adheres to the principle of a unitary state. In this context, regional autonomy is not interpreted as regional sovereignty, but rather as the delegation of authority from the central government to regions to regulate and manage certain government affairs. This concept emerged as an implementation of the principle of decentralization, which aims to increase the efficiency of government administration and bring services closer to the community. Thus, regional autonomy is a crucial instrument in realizing a democratic and participatory government.⁸

Theoretically, regional autonomy is closely linked to the concept of decentralization in government. Decentralization is understood as the process of distributing authority from the central government to local governments, whether in administrative, political, or fiscal terms. In practice, decentralization provides space for regions to independently manage their potential and resources. However, the implementation of decentralization remains within the framework of a unitary state, so the central government retains a strategic role in maintaining national unity and stability.⁹

The primary legal basis for the implementation of regional autonomy in Indonesia can be found in the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, specifically Article 18, Article 18A, and Article 18B. These articles regulate the

⁸ Roy Marthen Moonti, "Hakikat Otonomi Daerah Dalam Sistem Ketatanegaraan Di Indonesia," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum* 20 (2017): hlm. 30.

⁹ Christia dan Ispriyarso, "Desentralisasi Fiskal Dan Otonomi Daerah Di Indonesia," hlm. 150.

division of Indonesia's territory into regions and the principles of regional governance. Furthermore, these provisions emphasize that the relationship between the central and regional governments must be conducted fairly and harmoniously. Thus, the constitution provides a strong normative foundation for the implementation of regional autonomy.¹⁰

In addition to the 1945 Constitution, further regulations regarding regional autonomy are stipulated in various laws, which have changed in line with the dynamics of politics and governance in Indonesia. One important regulation is Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, which serves as the primary legal basis for the current implementation of regional autonomy. This law regulates the division of government affairs between the central and regional governments and affirms the basic principles in the implementation of regional autonomy.¹¹

Law Number 23 of 2014 introduced significant changes to regional autonomy regulations, particularly regarding the division of authority between the central, provincial, and district/city governments. The law differentiates government affairs into absolute, concurrent, and general government affairs. This division aims to create clarity of authority and avoid overlapping policies between the central and regional governments. However, in practice, various problems remain regarding the implementation of this division of authority.¹²

The concept of regional autonomy is also inseparable from the dynamic relationship between the central and regional governments. In Indonesia's constitutional system, this relationship frequently changes, depending on evolving political policies. On the one hand, the central government seeks to strengthen control over the regions to maintain national stability, but on the other hand, regions demand broader authority to manage their own affairs. This dynamic demonstrates that regional autonomy is a constantly evolving concept.¹³

¹⁰ Firas Firas dkk., "Implementasi Prinsip Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia Dalam Pengaturan Otonomi Daerah Menurut Sistem Ketatanegaraan," *Jurnal Diskresi* 3, no. 2 (2024): hlm. 168., <https://doi.org/10.29303/diskresi.v3i2.6026>.

¹¹ Winda Wijayanti, "Eksistensi Undang-Undang Sebagai Produk Hukum dalam Pemenuhan Keadilan Bagi Rakyat (Analisis Putusan Mahkamah Konstitusi Nomor 50/PUU-X/2012)," *Jurnal Konstitusi* 10, no. 1 (2016): hlm. 121., <https://doi.org/10.31078/jk1018>.

¹² Farina Gandryani dkk., "Konsep pemerintahan daerah berdasarkan UU No. 23 Tahun 2014," *Jurnal Rechts Vinding: Media Pembinaan Hukum Nasional* 10, no. 1 (2021): hlm. 121., <https://doi.org/10.33331/rechtsvinding.v10i1.622>.

¹³ Yusdianto Yusdianto, "Hubungan Kewenangan Pusat dan Daerah Menurut Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2014 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah," *PADJADJARAN Jurnal Ilmu Hukum (Journal of Law)* 2, no. 3 (2015): hlm. 490., <https://doi.org/10.22304/pjih.v2n3.a4>.

Furthermore, regional autonomy is also closely related to fiscal decentralization, which grants regions the authority to manage finances and economic resources. Fiscal decentralization is expected to increase regional independence and reduce dependence on the central government. However, in reality, many regions still rely on transferring funds from the central government. This indicates that the implementation of regional autonomy has not been fully optimal in creating regional independence.¹⁴

Furthermore, the concept of regional autonomy in Indonesia also reflects variations in its implementation, such as asymmetric decentralization. Asymmetric decentralization provides special treatment to certain regions with unique characteristics, such as Aceh, Papua, and the Special Region of Yogyakarta. This policy demonstrates that regional autonomy is not uniform, but rather tailored to the social, cultural, and political conditions of each region. This also poses a challenge in maintaining a uniform national legal system.¹⁵

However, the implementation of regional autonomy also faces various challenges, both in terms of regulation and implementation. One major issue is the overlapping authority between the central and regional governments, which often leads to policy conflicts. Furthermore, institutional capacity and human resources in the regions are also factors influencing the success of regional autonomy. Therefore, efforts are needed to improve the regulatory system and strengthen regional capacity..¹⁶

The concept and legal basis for regional autonomy in Indonesia are firmly grounded, both constitutionally and legally. However, its implementation still faces various challenges that need to be addressed, particularly in terms of policy synchronization and the division of authority between the central and regional governments. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach to managing central-regional relations is needed to optimally achieve the goals of regional autonomy within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

¹⁴ Christia dan Ispriyarso, "Desentralisasi Fiskal Dan Otonomi Daerah Di Indonesia," hlm. 147.

¹⁵ Ardika Nurfurqon, "Politik Hukum Otonomi Daerah Studi terhadap Desentralisasi Asimetris di Indonesia," *Khazanah Hukum* 2, no. 2 (2020): hlm. 77., <https://doi.org/10.15575/kh.v2i2.8504>.

¹⁶ Dian Herlambang dan Kamal Fahmi Kurnia, "Analisis Perubahan Isu Desentralisasi Atas Digantinya Undang-Undang Nomor 32 Tahun 2004 Menjadi Undang-Undang Nomor 23 Tahun 2014 Tentang Pemerintahan Daerah," *Justicia Sains: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 7, no. 1 (2022): hlm. 68., <https://doi.org/10.24967/jcs.v7i1.1636>.

Implementation of Decentralization in State Administration Practice

The implementation of decentralization in Indonesian constitutional practice represents one of the fundamental reforms following the fall of the New Order regime. This policy emerged in response to the previously highly centralized system of government, which was deemed incapable of meeting the needs of local communities. Within the framework of a unitary state, decentralization was expected to create a more democratic, effective, and responsive government. However, in practice, the implementation of decentralization has not always been in accordance with its stated normative objectives.¹⁷

Conceptually, decentralization grants regional governments the authority to regulate and manage government affairs independently. In state practice, this authority is realized through the delegation of government affairs from the central government to the regions, including in the administrative, political, and fiscal fields. However, the implementation of this authority often faces various obstacles, both in terms of regulations and regional institutional capacity. This demonstrates that the implementation of decentralization depends not only on legal regulations but also on the readiness of regional institutions.¹⁸

In practice, the implementation of decentralization in Indonesia also demonstrates the dynamic relationship between the central and regional governments. Although regions are granted broad authority, the central government retains oversight and control functions. In some cases, central government intervention remains quite dominant, particularly in strategic policies. This situation creates the impression of a tendency towards recentralization in the Indonesian constitutional system.¹⁹

Furthermore, the implementation of decentralization also impacts the development of local democracy. Direct regional head elections are one concrete example of the implementation of political decentralization. Through this mechanism, communities have the opportunity to directly elect their leaders.

¹⁷ Kardin Simanjuntak, "Implementasi Kebijakan Desentralisasi Pemerintahan di Indonesia," *Jurnal Bina Praja* 07, no. 02 (2015): hlm. 121., <https://doi.org/10.21787/JBP.07.2015.111-130>.

¹⁸ Genoveva Pupitasari Larasati, "Implementasi Desentralisasi Dalam Kerangka Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia," *Jurnal Komunikasi Hukum (JKH)* 8, no. 1 (2022): hlm. 248., <https://doi.org/10.23887/jkh.v8i1.44063>.

¹⁹ Golap, "Implikasi Kebijakan Sentralisasi terhadap Prinsip Otonomi Daerah," hlm. 69.

However, in practice, local democracy is also marred by various problems, such as money politics, political dynasties, and low levels of public participation.²⁰

From an economic perspective, decentralization grants regions the authority to manage resources and finances independently. Fiscal decentralization policies are expected to increase regional independence and accelerate development. However, in practice, many regions still rely on transfer funds from the central government. This indicates that the objectives of fiscal decentralization have not been fully achieved.²¹

Furthermore, the implementation of decentralization also faces challenges in terms of coordination between levels of government. Overlapping authority between the central and regional governments often gives rise to policy conflicts, resulting in legal uncertainty. Furthermore, the lack of regulatory synchronization also hinders policy implementation at the regional level. This situation highlights the need for regulatory harmonization within Indonesia's constitutional system.²²

On the other hand, decentralization also opens up opportunities for abuse of authority at the regional level. The practice of corruption, collusion, and nepotism (KKN) remains a serious problem in regional governance. In fact, in some cases, regional autonomy is exploited by local elites to strengthen their power. This poses a major challenge to achieving good governance.²³

The implementation of decentralization also shows variations in its application, such as asymmetric decentralization. This policy grants special authority to certain regions with unique characteristics, such as Aceh and Papua. In constitutional practice, asymmetric decentralization is considered a solution to accommodate regional diversity in Indonesia. However, its implementation also poses challenges in maintaining the uniformity of the national legal system.²⁴

²⁰ Oleh R. Siti Zuhro, "Demokrasi, Otonomi Daerah Dan Pemerintahan Indonesia," *Interaktif: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial* 10, no. 1 (2018): hlm. 7.

²¹ Rahmawati dkk., "Desentralisasi dan Otonomi Daerah: Tantangan dan Peluang dalam Era Reformasi," hlm. 28.

²² Firdaus Arifin, "Analisis Terhadap Kebijakan Pemerintah Dalam Mengatur Urusan Pemerintahan Daerah Di Era Desentralisasi Asimetris," *PROGRESIF: Jurnal Hukum* 18, no. 2 (2024): hlm. 212.

²³ Kusnandar Marsono Putro dan Firstnandiar Glica Aini Suniaprily, "Implementasi Sistem Otonomi Daerah di Indonesia Beserta Dampak Penerapannya," *Jurnal Bevinding* 02, no. 02 (2024): hlm. 65.

²⁴ Gunawan A. Tauda, "Desain Desentralisasi Asimetris Dalam Sistem Ketatanegaraan Republik Indonesia," *Administrative Law and Governance Journal* 1, no. 4 (2018): hlm. 420., <https://doi.org/10.14710/alj.v1i4.413-435>.

In certain contexts, the implementation of decentralization is also tested in crisis situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Under these conditions, coordination between the central and regional governments becomes crucial. However, in practice, differences in policy often arise between the central and regional governments, creating confusion among the public. This indicates that the implementation of decentralization still requires improvement in coordination and communication between government institutions.²⁵

Therefore, the implementation of decentralization in Indonesian constitutional practice is a complex and dynamic process. While it has provided various benefits, such as increased local democracy and government efficiency, decentralization also faces numerous challenges that need to be addressed. Therefore, continuous improvement efforts are needed, both in terms of regulations, institutions, and oversight, so that the goals of decentralization can be optimally achieved within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Problems and the Push and Push between Decentralization and Centralization

The problematic relationship between decentralization and centralization in Indonesia's constitutional system is a persistent issue. While these two concepts fundamentally have different goals, they complement each other in governance practices. Decentralization grants authority to regions, while centralization asserts control by the central government. In practice, this relationship often creates a tug-of-war between central and regional interests, impacting the effectiveness of governance.²⁶

One of the main problems in this relationship is the inconsistency of policies issued by the central government. On the one hand, the central government encourages decentralization, but on the other hand, it maintains strong control over the regions through various regulations. This creates unclear divisions of authority and triggers policy conflicts between the central and regional governments. This situation indicates that the regional autonomy paradigm in Indonesia remains unstable.²⁷

²⁵ Gusnar Ismail, "Implementasi Otonomi Daerah Dalam Penanganan Pandemi Covid-19," *Jurnal Lemhannas RI* 8, no. 3 (2022): hlm. 198., <https://doi.org/10.55960/jlri.v8i3.342>.

²⁶ Jati W., "Inkonsistensi Paradigma Otonomi Daerah di Indonesia : Dilema Sentralisasi dan Desentralisasi," hlm. 115.

²⁷ Rahmawati dkk., "Desentralisasi dan Otonomi Daerah: Tantangan dan Peluang dalam Era Reformasi," hlm. 29.

The tension between decentralization and centralization is also evident in the distribution of authority in strategic sectors, such as land, natural resources, and education. In some cases, the central government has taken over authority previously granted to regions. This has created tension between the central government and regions, as regions feel their authority is being restricted. As a result, policy implementation is ineffective and often leads to administrative conflict.²⁸

Furthermore, another problem that arises is overlapping regulations between the central and regional governments. Many regional regulations conflict with national policies, creating legal uncertainty. This situation is exacerbated by weak coordination between government agencies. As a result, policies that should benefit the public are not implemented optimally.²⁹

From a political perspective, the tug-of-war between decentralization and centralization is also influenced by power interests. The central government tends to maintain control over the regions to maintain national stability, while local governments seek to expand their authority. This conflict of interest often arises in the public policy-making process, particularly on strategic issues related to the national interest.³⁰

In practice, decentralization also opens up the opportunity for horizontal and vertical conflict. Horizontal conflict occurs between regions or community groups, while vertical conflict occurs between the central and regional governments. These conflicts are often triggered by differing interests and unclear divisions of authority. Therefore, a clear mechanism is needed to manage these conflicts to prevent them from disrupting government stability.³¹

On the other hand, the emergence of the phenomenon of re-centralization is an indication of the failure of decentralization implementation. The central government is again withdrawing some authority from the regions, citing

²⁸ Elita Rahmi, "Tarik Menarik antara Desentralisasi dan Sentralisasi Kewenangan Pemerintah Daerah dalam Urusan Pertanahan," *Ius Quia Iustum Law Journal* 16, no. 2 (2016): hlm. 145.

²⁹ Firdaus Arifin, "Distribusi Kewenangan Pusat Dan Daerah Dalam Bingkai Otonomi Daerah Di Indonesia," *Justicia Sains: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 9, no. 1 (2024): hlm. 39., <https://doi.org/10.24967/jcs.v9i1.3226>.

³⁰ R. Siti Zuhro, "Otoda Dalam Uu Pemda Baru: Masalah Dan Tantangan Hubungan Pusat Dan Daerah," *Jurnal Penelitian Politik (JPP)* 13, no. 2 (2016): hlm. 216., <https://doi.org/10.14203/jpp.v13i2.566>.

³¹ Priyatno Harsasto, "Desentralisasi dan Resentralisasi: Upaya Menyeimbangkan Pendulum Pusat-Daerah," *JlIP: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pemerintahan* 5, no. 2 (2020): hlm. 151., <https://doi.org/10.14710/jiip.v5i2.8593>.

efficiency and oversight. While this step is considered necessary in some circumstances, if carried out excessively, it can hamper regional independence. This demonstrates that the balance between decentralization and centralization remains elusive.³²

Another problem is the low capacity of local governments to manage the authority they have been given. Many regions lack adequate human resources and institutions, thus preventing them from optimally implementing their autonomy. This situation is one reason for the central government to strengthen its control over the regions. However, this move actually reinforces the tendency for centralization.³³

In certain contexts, the trade-off between decentralization and centralization is also influenced by social and political conditions in the regions. For example, in areas with a high potential for conflict, the central government tends to take a greater role to maintain stability. This demonstrates that the implementation of decentralization cannot be uniform but must be tailored to the conditions of each region.³⁴

The problematic trade-off between decentralization and centralization is an unavoidable phenomenon in the Indonesian constitutional system. Both concepts must be positioned proportionally to complement each other. Therefore, consistent policies, effective coordination, and strengthened regional capacity are needed to ensure harmonious relations between the central and regional governments within the framework of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

D. Conclusion

Regional autonomy in the Indonesian constitutional system is a form of implementation of the principle of decentralization, aimed at increasing government effectiveness, strengthening local democracy, and bringing public services closer to the people. Normatively, the regulation of regional autonomy has a strong constitutional foundation in the 1945 Constitution and is clarified

³² Hilma Lathifah dkk., "Transformasi Kebijakan Desentralisasi Di Indonesia Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Stabilitas Pemerintahan Daerah Di Era Globalisasi," *Professional: Jurnal Komunikasi & Administrasi Publik* 11, no. 2 (2024): hlm. 581., <https://doi.org/10.37676/professional.v11i2.7223>.

³³ Simanjuntak, "Implementasi Kebijakan Desentralisasi Pemerintahan di Indonesia," hln. 122.

³⁴ Nur Ika Fatmawati, "Desentralisasi Asimetris, Alternatif Bagi Masa Depan Pembagian Kewenangan di Indonesia," *MADANI Jurnal Politik dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan* 10, no. 1 (2018): hlm. 125.

through various laws and regulations. However, in practice, the implementation of decentralization still faces various challenges, such as imbalances in regional capacity, overlapping regulations, and fiscal dependence on the central government.

On the other hand, the emergence of a tendency toward centralization again indicates a tug-of-war of authority between the central and regional governments. This condition reflects that the balance between decentralization and centralization has not yet been fully achieved. Therefore, consistent policies, strengthening the capacity of regional governments, and effective coordination between the central and regional governments are needed to ensure optimal implementation of regional autonomy without compromising the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

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