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Impact Analysis of Sister Province Cooperation Between the Government of South Sulawesi Province (Indonesia) and Ehime Prefecture (Japan)

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the impact of cooperation between the South Sulawesi government and Ehime Prefecture within the Sister Province framework. The approach used in this article is paradiplomacy and sister province. By using qualitative research methods with a literature study approach. The results showed that since the signing of the MoU, sister province cooperation between the South Sulawesi government and Ehime Prefecture has not been effective and massive in its application. The application carried out is by sending 10 people from South Sulawesi to Ehime Japan to conduct training in tuna fish technology management. In addition, in 2021, the Ehime government provided grant assistance to the South Sulawesi government in the form of ambulances and fire fighting vehicles. However, behind the positives, the cooperation between the two provinces experienced several obstacles, namely first, the replacement of Mr. Nurdin Abdullah as Governor of South Sulawesi which caused communication and interaction to not run smoothly. Second, there was overlapping coordination between South Sulawesi government institutions. Third, facing the Covid 19 pandemic, so that mobility activities are not going well.

Keywords: Sister Province, Paradiplomacy, Sulawesi Selatan, Prefektur Ehime

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INTRODUCTION

Paradiplomacy cooperation is a strategic step to conduct foreign cooperation carried out by local governments. Where the implementation of paradiplomacy has been carried out by the provincial government of South Sulawesi (Indonesia) and Ehime Prefecture (Japan). Linguistically, foreign cooperation in the form of sister province or sister city is known as twin provinces or twin cities. This cooperation can encourage increased economic growth of the two provinces (Francisco Aldecoa, 2000). Cooperation between the two parties is built on the basis of mutually beneficial opportunities in terms of improving the economic sector, especially in the superior sectors in South Sulawesi, namely marine agriculture, animal husbandry, tourism, plantations, and education. However, every opportunity that exists, of course, challenges and obstacles cannot be avoided, both in terms of the process of building an agreement, as well as in terms of implementing the cooperation (AGUIRRE, 2009).

It should be noted that the South Sulawesi province is one of the regions that has its own characteristics and uniqueness. South Sulawesi has a significant role in national geography and economy, where the region has a type of coastal land and beautiful and high mountains. Not only that, South Sulawesi also has diverse natural potential that can be managed properly. This area is also the epicenter of trade activities and transportation mobility in eastern Indonesia using the most important and busiest port in the city of Makassar, which in fact greatly supports connectivity with other provinces such as Kalimantan, Java, Papua, and so on. The coastal areas of South Sulawesi province are well known as strategic maritime areas, and have mountains that are popular tourist destinations with unique local wisdom and culture. Based on data from the South Sulawesi provincial government, the agriculture, livestock, fisheries and other industries also play a significant role in regional economic growth. Therefore, seeing the significant flow of globalization, the South Sulawesi provincial government practices paradiplomacy cooperation in the form of sister provinces.

In terminology, sister province comes from the sub-concept of paradiplomacy, where in paradiplomacy itself there is also the concept of sister city. There are many international relations

experts who provide the terminology of the phenomenon such as twinning city/province, city to city, friendship city, and so on (Cornago, 1998). However, this research focuses more on the concept of sister province. Based on the rules of the Ministry of Home Affairs through the regulation of the Minister of Home Affairs no. 25 of 2020 concerning procedures for local government cooperation abroad and institutional cooperation abroad, as well as the rules of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the regulation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs no. 3 of 2019 concerning general guidelines for foreign relations by local governments. It should be noted that Indonesia has long practiced foreign cooperation not only by the South Sulawesi provincial government. But it has been carried out by several other regions both in Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and so on. Cooperation in the form of paradiplomacy should have become a mandatory agenda to be carried out, because this will encourage independence in conducting foreign cooperation, as well as improving the domestic economy of mutually beneficial regions. In addition, since the reform era, local governments have been given basic rules, namely regional autonomy. This regional autonomy will be the right to determine the political direction of regional policies. Therefore, local governments, especially South Sulawesi, must intensify cooperation in the form of sister provinces. The most important thing in this cooperation is not to ignore the laws and regulations, and the interests of the people of the region (Elvawati, 2015).

Seeing the conditions that are currently happening in the province of South Sulawesi, the South Sulawesi regional government has carried out sister province cooperation with the Ehime Prefecture regional government in Japan. This cooperation is the same level of both parties. The political direction of the cooperation between the two provinces is to strengthen the friendship of the two regions, which in fact the central government has a close friendship with the Japanese central government. In addition, these two regions build cooperation on the desire to gain favorable values for sustainable development. The selection of regions by the South Sulawesi government against Ehime Prefecture Japan sees from the geographical aspects and natural resources owned, so that this cooperation can be carried out because it has the same characteristics and advantages. It can be seen from the leading sectors of Ehime Prefecture, namely the agriculture, fisheries and plantation sectors (Palopo, 2020). This is what encourages the government to cooperate with the Ehime province, because the leading sectors are similar to those owned by the South Sulawesi region. Then, these sectors need to mutually utilize and benefit, where the province of South Sulawesi really wants the knowledge and innovation technology used by the province of Ehime (Japan). Vice versa, the Ehime Prefectural government sees South Sulawesi as having the potential for various sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, plantations, tourism that can be managed and developed (Timur, 2018).

Therefore, seeing the status quo that exists in both regions, these two local governments are willing to build cooperation within the framework of sister provinces. Right on January 15, 2019 at Baruga Karaeng Pattinggaloang, Makassar, Mr. Nurdin Abdullah (Governor of South Sulawesi) and Mr. Tokihira Nakamura (Governor of Ehime Prefecture) made a Letter of Intent (LoI) statement. Furthermore, the Letter of Intent states that the two regions must prioritize the principles of equality and mutual benefit, and also add strengthening to improve human resources, tourism, fisheries, trade, livestock, culture, education and other sectors. After signing the LoI, the two local governments, each represented by the Governor, followed up in the form of an MoU or Memorandum of Understanding which was carried out via zoom meeting on December 16, 2020. The MoU contains that this cooperation in the form of a sister province is only valid for 5 years, and can be extended according to the results of the Cooperation agreement in each previously agreed sector.

Therefore, this research will explain the formulation of the problem of the impact of sister province cooperation between the local government of South Sulawesi province (Indonesia) and Ehime Prefecture (Japan). This article will show the extent of the impact of this cooperation on the sustainability of the development of the two regions that have been agreed through the MoU.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Paradiplomacy

Paradiplomacy is an approach used by local governments to establish cooperation with institutions or local governments from other countries. This approach aims, among others, to develop trade and various international cooperation opportunities. According to Takdir Ali Mukti's view, paradiplomacy refers to the ability and foreign relations activities carried out by sub-state entities such as local governments to achieve their specific interests. Paradiplomacy actors have the opportunity to

encourage investment, trade and various forms of cooperation with international parties (Mukti, 2015).

In its development, paradiplomacy has become a popular analytical framework for studying international relations involving regional actors. Based on Duchaeck's ideas, paradiplomacy falls into three categories: Paradiplomacy between border regions, Paradiplomacy between regions, and Paradiplomacy at the global level. Paradiplomacy can be classified into three main forms. The first form is Transborder Paradiplomacy, which involves cooperative cooperation between regions that share borders, such as provinces, states or other local governments. The second form is Cross-Regional Paradiplomacy, which describes cooperative relationships between local governments that do not share geographical borders but are still within the same country (Novialdi & Rassanjani, 2022).

Meanwhile, the third form is Global Paradiplomacy, which is characterized by direct interaction between the local government of a country and regional partners in other countries that are located far apart. An example of the application of Global Paradiplomacy can be seen in the cooperation between South Sulawesi Province and Ehime. The implementation of paradiplomacy cooperation can be realized in various formats such as sister city, sister province, and twinning-city (Pasan, 2017).

Sister Province

Cooperation in the form of sister provinces is a derivative of paradiplomacy that has been carried out by the provincial government of South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture. This is a form of international cooperation by prioritizing friendship and mutual benefit. In general, before the practice of sister province was recognized, sister city was known first or the practice of paradiplomacy carried out by the city government. In practicing the province system, it must be supported by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), so that the cooperation is legal and strong in carrying out the Cooperation. If the cooperation is not supported by an MoU, there will be overlap between the two parties. The sister province cooperation partnership needs to involve the community, so that the cooperation can lead to the needs of the community, both in the education sector, tourism, and so on.

It should be noted that substantially, sister province cooperation is always driven by mutually beneficial domestic interests between the two parties, and this is a form of multitrack diplomacy as a means of public diplomacy. Not only that, the strategy to encourage increased prosperity and welfare of the people is the main goal of the sister province cooperation, so this will also strengthen friendship between regions because it is supported by equality and similarity of principles or characteristics. Local governments establish international cooperation with several main objectives, namely strengthening friendly relations between nations, supporting global peace, and opening new opportunities in market development and increasing investment. In implementing sister province cooperation, there are a number of provisions that must be met by local governments (Prawitno et al., 2022).

Referring to the regulations stated in the Minister of Foreign Affairs Regulation No. 3 of 2019 and the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 25 of 2020, one of the fundamental requirements in the establishment of sister provinces is the existence of equal administrative status. This implies that regions that establish sister province cooperation should have similarities in government structures, such as the existence of governors, DPRD, and other government institutions. This equality in administrative status is considered important because it can facilitate more effective communication and coordination between the two parties in government management and handling various challenges that arise.

Similarity of characteristics is an important aspect in establishing sister province cooperation, which covers several dimensions. In the cultural and historical dimension, regions with similar cultural backgrounds can develop more contextual and meaningful cooperation programs. For example, they can hold joint cultural festivals, artist exchange programs, or cultural heritage documentation projects. In the context of tourism, the similarity of geographical characteristics can encourage the development of integrated tourism packages or the promotion of mutually beneficial joint destinations.

In the economic dimension, regions with similar economic structures can share experiences and strategies in developing leading sectors. This can be realized through joint creative industry development, technology transfer, or skills training programs relevant to the needs of both regions.

Similar environmental challenges also open up opportunities for collaboration in natural resource management or the development of sustainable solutions (Darmayadi, 2019).

Furthermore, sister province cooperation allows both regions to share experiences in addressing similar socio-economic issues. For example, if one region has successfully implemented an innovative poverty alleviation program, they can share best practices and valuable lessons learned with their partner. This collaboration also allows for resource optimization, where the strengths of one region can fill the gaps of another. For example, regions with technological advantages can assist partners with abundant natural resources in developing more efficient management systems. This synergy between regions ultimately creates a mutually beneficial relationship, where both parties can achieve their development goals more effectively through the exchange of knowledge, experience and resources.

METHOD

This research uses a literature study by looking at data taken from reports and journals that discuss sister province cooperation between the government of South Sulawesi, Indonesia and Ehime Prefecture, Japan. The conceptual framework used in the research is paradiplomacy within the framework of sister province, where the concept of sister province can analyze the phenomenon of cooperation between the South Sulawesi government and Ehime Prefecture, the fact that the event is cooperation carried out by sub-state actors or provincial governments. The author will start by looking at the dynamics of cooperation between the South Sulawesi provincial government and Ehime Prefecture.

Researchers used various literature or data related to the topic of this article, then reduced and analyzed to find a concrete conclusion. The cooperation has shown a form of cooperation that pays attention to mutual benefits and losses, in this case the cooperation is driven on the basis of brotherhood between regions while encouraging mutual regional progress through human resource capacity building, aquaculture, agriculture and plantations, and creative economic development. These four forms of cooperation are the result of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Therefore, the author begins by presenting the dynamics of sister province cooperation between the governments of South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture. then, reviews the implementation of cooperation between the two provinces by outlining the successes and shortcomings in this cooperation. As a result, this cooperation has not been fully effective and massive.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results showed that sister province cooperation between the government of South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture is still not effective and massive in its application. Since the signing of the MoU, the application has been carried out by sending 10 people from South Sulawesi to Ehime Japan to conduct training in tuna fish technology management. In addition, in 2021, the Ehime government provided grant assistance to the South Sulawesi government in the form of ambulances and fire fighting vehicles. However, behind the positives, the cooperation between the two provinces experienced several obstacles, namely first, the replacement of Mr. Nurdin Abdullah as Governor of South Sulawesi which caused communication and interaction to not run smoothly. Second, there was overlapping coordination between South Sulawesi government institutions. Third, facing the Covid 19 pandemic, so that mobility activities are not going well.

Dynamics of Sister Province Cooperation between South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture

The complexity of international cooperation is good news for both state and non-state actors. International cooperation is built on the basis of domestic interests and strengthening identity. In this case, cooperation is used as an instrument to overcome a domestic problem that needs to be resolved collectively. Interestingly, international cooperation is not only carried out by the state or central government, but can be carried out by sub-national actors, namely local governments. Foreign cooperation carried out directly by local governments is referred to as Paradiplomacy (Koenjaini Putri et al., 2023). One of the countries that actively implements the practice of paradiplomacy is Indonesia. Indonesia itself has established a cooperative relationship in the form of sister province or sister city, where this cooperation is carried out by provincial or district / city governments in Indonesia with regional governments abroad (Humas, 2023).

There are many paradiplomacy practices carried out by local governments in Indonesia, one of which is cooperation in the concept of sister province. Sister province cooperation has been implemented by the South Sulawesi provincial government and Ehime Prefecture in Japan. It should be noted that the sister province cooperation of these two regions is a form of subnational and multidimensional diplomacy. The study shows that the practice of this bilateral relationship is not only to show identity, but a step in strengthening the strategic partnership between Indonesia and Japan at the local government level.

Historically, cooperation between the province of South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture has long established bilateral relations in 2009. In the course of this cooperation, the South Sulawesi government received grant assistance from the Ehime Prefectural government in the form of ambulances and fire trucks, as well as sending representatives from the business community to help entrepreneurs invest in the South Sulawesi area. Not only that, over time, these two provinces have signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) or commonly called a letter of intent to cooperate which was held at Baruga Karaeng Pattinggalloang (South Sulawesi Governor's Office House) on January 15, 2019. Both parties want this future form of cooperation to prioritize the principles of equality, care, and mutual benefit. In the study of international relations itself, effective cooperation needs to implement cooperation that is Positive Sum Game or mutually beneficial to both parties. This LoI was signed to strengthen the quality of human resources (HR), trade sector, education, agriculture, fisheries, and so on.

Along with the complexity of the dynamics of cooperation between the two regions, there was a renewal of the MoU by Ehime University as an effort to encourage the development of human resources, especially in the province of South Sulawesi in March 2019. According to Mr. Nurdin Abdullah as the Governor of South Sulawesi, stated that the step of renewing the MoU by Ehime University was an important effort to continue the cooperation relationship between South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture (Diskominfo, 2020). On December 16, 2020, even though these two provinces faced the problem of the Covid 19 pandemic, the two provinces still managed to take concrete steps to continue this collaboration through the signing of an MoU or Memorandum of Understanding which was carried out virtually. The signing of this MoU was respectively represented by the Governors, namely Mr. Nurdin Abdullah (South Sulawesi) and Tokihiro Nakamura (Ehime Prefecture). In the MoU itself, there are 4 priority sectors in carrying out the sister province cooperation, namely (1) improving the quality of human resources; (2) agriculture and plantations; (3) creative economic development; (4) and fish farming and seafood processing industry. This sister province cooperation is expected to be a driver of provincial development growth for both parties.

Implementation of Sister Province Cooperation between South Sulawesi and Ehime Prefecture

The sister province cooperation that has been carried out by the South Sulawesi government and Ehime prefecture has been going on since 2020, where in that year the MoU was signed. In implementing the cooperation between the two provinces, there are certainly successes and shortcomings. There are several forms of implementation of this sister province cooperation such as conducting a review of places to explore tuna fish in South Sulawesi by the Ehime side. The Ehime government sent a delegation to conduct a feasibility study offered by the South Sulawesi government, namely in the districts of Pangkep, Bulukumba, and Selayar Islands. In addition, Ehime also requested written data on the potential of other marine fish in South Sulawesi. Not only that, the Ehime government also brought fisheries entrepreneurs to directly review the potential of marine fish farming, and the development of agricultural commodities in the form of local oranges in South Sulawesi. This will encourage entrepreneurs to invest in South Sulawesi province. According to the author, this step is an initial manifestation to strengthen the follow-up of the cooperation agreement between the two parties (ANTARANEWS, 2021).

Not only that, this twin province cooperation also carries out cooperation in the form of sending 10 human resources (HR) from the province of South Sulawesi to Ehime Prefecture (Japan) to increase knowledge through training in tuna fish management. It should be noted that of the 10 people, there are 5 people from the provincial government and 5 people from the strategic partner companies. The delegates sent to Japan are expected to be able to become coaches or trainers, while those from the company will become workers who can foster and encourage the development of tuna fish production. Furthermore, the practice of tuna fish management in Ehime Prefecture can also be implemented in South Sulawesi province, so that the concept of sister province cooperation can be

achieved in accordance with the agreement and corridor. Therefore, the goal of making this Cooperation into a sister province can be seen directly as both parties demonstrate mutually beneficial knowledge transfer to each other (Amra & Benyamin L, 2023).

Governor Nurdin Abdullah also hopes that the people of South Sulawesi need to understand and learn the concept of infrastructure development in Japan, where in Japan itself has a REST AREA that has a unique and comfortable architecture. This Rest Area is sought to be present to facilitate and local communities. Therefore, the inspiration taken by the South Sulawesi government has been implemented by building a REST AREA in each district, one of which has been realized, namely Takalar district, Bantaeng, and so on. However, the construction of the Rest Area in several districts / cities cannot be built and continued as in Jeneponto district which is currently stalled. In addition, Governor Nurdin also hopes that salt commodities in Jeneponto Regency can be exported to Ehime Japan, so that this commodity market can be directed and have a clear market (Marsya, 2021).

Over time, on February 5, 2021, the South Sulawesi provincial government received grant assistance in the form of 13 ambulance and fire fighting units from the Ehime government. This grant is a form of strengthening sister province cooperation through assistance that can encourage the development of South Sulawesi province (Pokhrel, 2024).

Furthermore, the implementation of cooperation has been hampered by several factors. One of the main problems is the change of officials or top policy makers, which requires re-socialization of the cooperation program to new leaders. This problem occurs due to a lack of communication between old and new officials, so that information about ongoing cooperation is not conveyed properly. As a result, the change in leadership created obstacles in the continuation of the planned cooperation process.

Internal miscommunication between the government bureau and related agencies is a significant obstacle in the cooperation process. Both parties waited for information and initiatives from each other, which resulted in a communication bottleneck. The government bureau kept asking the departments about the progress of the process, while the departments replied with similar questions about the continuation of cooperation with Ehime Prefecture. This state of waiting substantially hinders the progress and continuation of the cooperation being pursued.

The Covid-19 pandemic has limited the communication that can be done, with the consequence that all interactions must take place virtually. This situation poses significant challenges, especially in the context of international cooperation, where direct observation becomes impossible. Employees who are enforced to work from home (WFH) have difficulty following up on cooperation-related tasks, requiring adaptation and strategic adjustments due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic. These communication barriers and movement limitations have far-reaching impacts, not only on ongoing cooperation, but also on various other sectors.

The Head of the Deconcentration, Assistance and Cooperation Section of South Sulawesi Province revealed problems in the involvement of third parties in ongoing cooperation. The South Sulawesi Provincial Government, which initially acted as a facilitator, was forced to become the main implementer because the third party did not make an adequate contribution. Furthermore, the process of issuing the implementing decree (SK) was hampered, considering that the presentation of the cooperation program had not been completed perfectly. As a result, the highest policy maker has not been able to issue the decree needed to launch the cooperation.

After signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), the South Sulawesi Provincial Government has prepared a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) as the next step of the previously agreed cooperation. The main focus of the cooperation plan is agriculture and plantations, particularly the development of tangerines in the Selayar region. However, these efforts have been hampered by the fact that Ehime Prefecture has yet to respond to the draft MoA that has been sent. This lack of response is a significant obstacle in the cooperation process between the South Sulawesi Provincial Government and Ehime Prefecture (Mauliddiyah, 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

Basically, sister province cooperation between the governments of South Sulawesi (Indonesia) and Ehime Prefecture (Japan) is a manifestation of paradiplomacy that should continue to be carried out. However, seeing the conditions that occur in the field, the cooperation between the two parties does not run effectively as expected by the community. This will be a lesson learned in the

future to be an evaluation material for the South Sulawesi provincial government and Ehime prefecture. Not only that, the turmoil of the problems that have been faced needs to be explored more deeply and become an important note to be given a comprehensive solution. The author concludes that the efficiency of this cooperation can run well, if the governments of both parties can communicate massively and actively to always coordinate regarding the development of the cooperation. In addition, the special body mandated to carry out this foreign cooperation, needs to understand the strategy of public diplomacy, where this will greatly support the effectiveness of the cooperation. Therefore, this cooperation should support the development of both parties, but the implementation of this cooperation has experienced various obstacles or challenges in the field. It should be understood that this cooperation needs to be continued in the future, seeing the benefits obtained by the South Sulawesi government in developing human resources, especially in the field of marine fish farming management, to improve their skills. And for the South Sulawesi provincial government which has just been elected in the 2024 elections, it can pay attention and return to run proportionally and effectively as expected by the community and mutual agreement.

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