

MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE ANALYSIS IN THE BOUNDARY DISPUTE BETWEEN PALEMBANG CITY AND BANYUASIN REGENCY IN THE TEGAL BINANGUN AREA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the dynamics of resolving the regional boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in Tegal Binangun within a multi-level governance framework. The trigger for the conflict was Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 134/2022, which changed administrative boundaries, eliciting objections from the Palembang City Government and public rejection. A qualitative method using purposive sampling involved informants from the Provincial Government Bureau, the City/Regency Governance Section, and village officials. The data were analyzed using NVivo 15 and supplemented with a literature review. The results indicate that the South Sumatra Provincial Government plays a strategic role as a mediator, while the district/city governments act as policy implementers. However, interactions between levels are not optimal, particularly in terms of communication and coordination at the village level. Community participation remains asymmetrical, and the role of NGOs has not been structurally facilitated, adding to the complexity of the conflict. Minister of Home Affairs Regulation 134/2022 serves as the legal basis for policy integration, but its effectiveness depends on social legitimacy, implementation flexibility, and support from public service information systems. The research recommends cross-actor collaboration, adaptive public communication, and capacity building for local governments to achieve sustainable, fair, and service-oriented dispute resolution.

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the Indonesian government officially passed the Job Creation Law, marking a significant milestone in national regulatory reform, particularly in accelerating the flow of domestic and international investment. One of the strategic implications of this policy is the emphasis on legal certainty in regional governance, as part of creating a conducive investment climate. To support this agenda, the Ministry of Home Affairs has established a program to accelerate the resolution of regional boundary disputes throughout Indonesia. This initiative aims to ensure clarity in administrative areas, from village boundaries to



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broader regions, in order to maintain territorial integrity and sustainable resource governance. Determining regional boundaries is not merely a technocratic matter; it also has complex political, social, and cultural dimensions. Regional boundary policies play a crucial role in defining administrative space, enabling each government unit to carry out its functions legally and effectively in accordance with applicable legal mandates. In this context, regular evaluation of boundary determination and implementation is crucial to avoid overlapping authority and prevent future conflicts of interest (Sukoco & Sutanta, 2021).

However, in reality, the determination of regional boundaries often gives rise to new problems in the form of inter-regional boundary disputes. These disputes are often triggered by top-down determinations by the central government without the active involvement of local governments and local communities. One clear example is the boundary between Jambi Province and South Sumatra, particularly in the Sarolangun and North Musirawas areas (Semil et al., 2021). Minimal community participation in decision-making is also a significant factor contributing to dissatisfaction with the results of regional delimitation. This is also reflected in many village development planning meetings (*musrenbangdes*) in various regions, which often do not represent the interests and aspirations of local communities (Mardianto et al., 2022).

Another factor complicating the dynamics of territorial boundaries is the existence of local traditions and values deeply rooted in community life. Culture and customary norms are often crucial variables in the relationship between communities and government institutions. In many cases, policy insensitivity to these sociocultural aspects has the potential to create resistance from indigenous communities to unilateral decisions (Lestaluhu & Maruapey, 2021).

On the other hand, the spirit of decentralization promoted in government reforms provides greater participation for regions in the process of determining administrative boundaries. This participation is crucial for avoiding overlapping authority and responsibility, as well as promoting effective governance (Patarai, 2021). Unresolved boundary disputes can significantly impact public services, spatial planning, economic development, and social stability in border areas. Uncertainty about administrative boundaries creates a vacuum of authority that is prone to government dysfunction and social vulnerability (N.S. et al., 2024).

South Sumatra Province is one of the regions in Indonesia that is quite vulnerable to boundary disputes. Since the Ministry of Home Affairs implemented a policy to accelerate boundary delimitation in 2022, several border conflicts have emerged, one of the most prominent being the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in the Tegal Binangun area. This dispute has been ongoing for quite some time and involves several strategic points, but it resurfaced following the issuance of Home Affairs Ministerial Regulation No. 134 of 2022, which established the new administrative boundaries between the two regions.

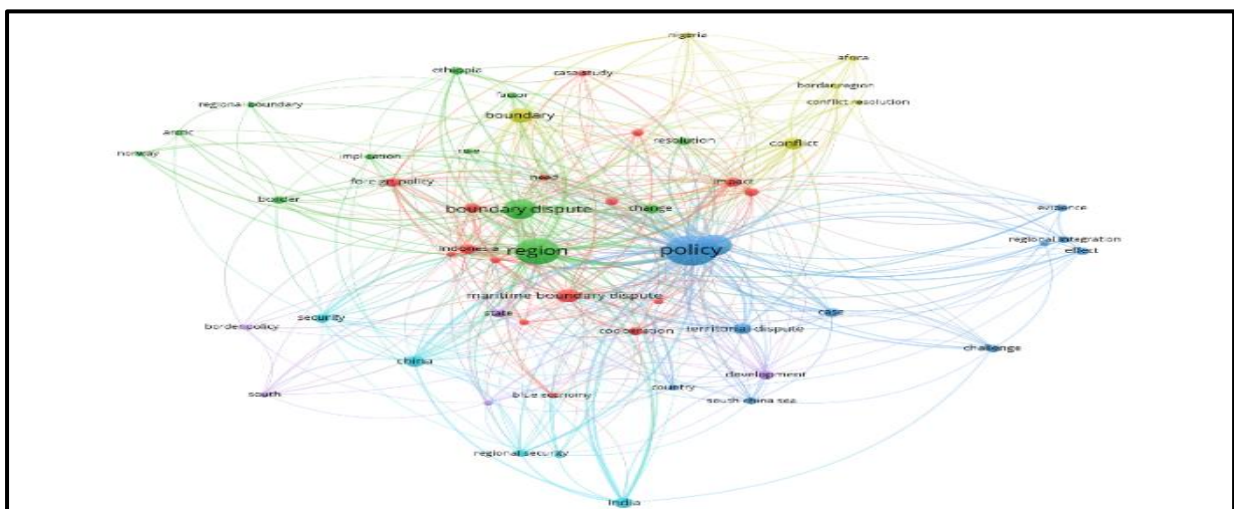
The main issue in this case stems from the reduction in the area of Palembang City, as specified in Home Affairs Ministerial Regulation No. 134/2022, which records a decrease of approximately 400 to 4,800 hectares compared to the data in Government Regulation No. 23 of 1988 (Budi, 2023). This policy drew objections from the Palembang City Government and the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) as it was deemed administratively and politically detrimental. Rejection also came from residents of Tegal Binangun, who felt they had lost their administrative rights and experienced difficulties accessing public services following the enactment of the policy (Boim, 2024).





Source: Harianmuba.bacakoran.co

This study aims to analyze the resolution of the territorial boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency using a multi-level governance approach. The main focus lies in how the government interacts and involves itself at every level, from provincial to sub-district/urban village levels, in responding to and implementing Home Affairs Ministerial Regulation Number 134 of 2022. Furthermore, this study will also examine community participation and the accompanying social dynamics. Based on existing literature trends, research on territorial boundary disputes in Indonesia remains dominated by studies on the implementation of public policy or conflict-based analysis, which generally focus on national borders. Research related to Regional Boundaries from 2015 to 2025 is visualized as follows:



Source: processed by researchers



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Based on the bibliometric analysis above, it is evident that research on regional boundary disputes at the local level remains limited. However, since the accelerated regional boundary policy was implemented in 2022, following the enactment of the Job Creation Law, numerous boundary disputes and lawsuits have arisen against the Minister of Home Affairs' regulations concerning several regional boundaries in Indonesia. This study attempts to fill this gap. It focuses on hierarchical analysis and community participation in resolving regional boundary disputes. The theoretical framework used is the approach. Multi-Level Governance by Bache, et al., who explained that analysis with this approach can be identified through the interaction between various levels of government and the actors involved, as well as the need to understand how policies and practices produced at various levels interact with each other (Bache, Bartle, and Flinders 2016).

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted through information gathering from key informants, who were identified using the Purposive Sampling technique. Research informants included representatives from institutional elements at each level of government involved in resolving boundary disputes, namely the Provincial Government Bureau, the Governance Section, and both sub-district and village elements from the two disputing regencies/cities. The data and information obtained were processed using NVivo 15 Software, which was then presented and analyzed in conjunction with several relevant literature sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chronology of Regional Boundary Disputes

Based on information obtained from the South Sumatra Provincial Government Bureau, the Tegal Binangun area was originally part of the administrative area of Palembang City. However, the dynamics of regional expansion that have occurred since the formation of Banyuasin Regency, resulting from the division of Musi Banyuasin Regency, have brought significant changes to the applicable administrative boundaries. One important milestone in this change was the establishment of the Jakabaring District by the Palembang City Government. The determination of the map for this sub-district expansion involved the approval of three regional heads: Palembang City, Banyuasin Regency, and Ogan Ilir Regency, which served as the initial guideline for determining regional boundaries between regions.

Subsequently, the Banyuasin Regency Government adjusted its administrative area by establishing the South Jakabaring Village in response to the agreed boundary changes. According to the Palembang City Governance Agency, the initial reference used to determine the boundaries of Palembang City was Government Regulation No. 23 of 1988. However, as the region developed and governance requirements became increasingly complex, significant shifts in boundaries occurred. This prompted the Central Government to enact Minister of Home Affairs Regulation (Permendagri) Number 134 of 2022, which officially became the legal basis for the delimitation of the area between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency, particularly in the Tegal Binangun area.

This border conflict is not only administrative in nature, but also has social impacts on the local community. According to informants in Plaju Darat Village, the community has no political stake in the conflict, but they have demonstrated a strong desire to remain recognized as residents of Palembang City. This is based on long-standing historical, social,



and economic ties. The demonstrations carried out by residents represent an expression of their demands for administrative rights and territorial identity. Therefore, the dynamics of this boundary dispute cannot be separated from the history of regional expansion, regulatory changes, and community social preferences, all of which are integrated into the administrative delimitation process in Tegal Binangun.



Figure 3. Overlay Map of the Border of Palembang City and Banyuasi Regency

Source: Geographical Data of the South Sumatra Provincial Government Bureau

The map above illustrates the changes in the boundaries of Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency, as outlined in PP No. 23 of 1988 and Permendagri No. 134 of 2022. The blue line is the boundary of Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency based on PP No. 23 of 1988, while the red line is the boundary of Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency based on Permendagri No. 134 of 2022.

Structure and Interaction Between Levels of Government

In relation to the structure and interaction between levels of government in resolving the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in the Tegal Binangun Area, research data and information were obtained, which are visualized as follows:

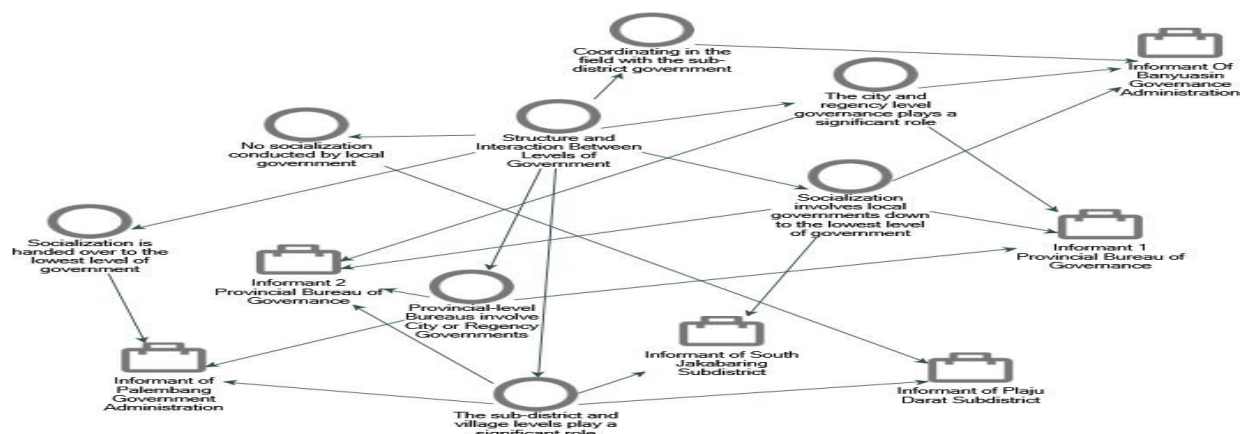


Figure 4. Structure and Interaction between Levels of Government

Source: processed using Nvivo 15



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The visualization results show that the government system in the context of the territorial boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in the Tegal Binangun area is characterized by a layered structure (multi-level) and interdependent relationships between levels of government. This emphasizes that governance in territorial boundary disputes is not carried out hierarchically and linearly, but rather through a dynamic two-way pattern of coordination and communication between levels of government.

At the provincial level, the South Sumatra Provincial Government acts as the primary mediator and coordinator, bridging the relationship between the Palembang City Government and Banyuasin Regency. Two informants from the Provincial Government Bureau confirmed the province's strategic role in ensuring policy synergy and interregional communication. In practice, provincial involvement extends beyond administrative policymaking to coordination and facilitation, ensuring that dispute resolution processes adhere to the principles of equality and collaboration between regions.

Meanwhile, at the city and regency levels, the Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency governments play an operational and implementation role in the governance process in the border region. Both are the primary implementers of policies that directly impact the community, such as public services, spatial planning management, and population administration. The involvement of both regional governments is also evident in the socialization activities involving local governments down to the lowest levels of government, demonstrating their active role in cross-level coordination activities to ensure that provincial policies are effectively adapted in the field.

At the sub-district and village levels, the lowest government units play a crucial role in implementing and accepting policies at the community level. This role is reinforced by the involvement of informants from Plaju Darat and Jakabaring Selatan Villages, indicating that sub-districts are at the forefront of addressing the social and administrative impacts of boundary disputes. However, several parties also reported that there has been no open outreach in the field, indicating a persistent gap in communication and coordination between the policy level (provincial and city/district) and the implementing level (sub-district and village). This reflects that interactions between levels of government have not been fully effective and continue to face obstacles in public communication.

Interaction between levels of government is also evident in the coordination between field departments and sub-district governments, as well as in the distribution of outreach roles to the lowest levels of government. Both demonstrate a mechanism for delegating responsibility and decentralizing policy implementation to lower levels of authority. In other words, higher-level governments (provinces and cities/districts) provide autonomy for sub-districts and urban villages to adapt policy implementation to the social and geographic context of their respective regions. This pattern aligns with the concept of multi-level governance, which emphasizes the importance of horizontal and vertical coordination in modern governance systems.

Overall, the structure and interaction between different levels of government play a crucial role in resolving boundary disputes, as seen in the case of Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency. The effectiveness of governance depends not only on the clarity of bureaucratic structures but also on the quality of interaction and communication between different levels of government. For example, a study by Budiningsih stated that coordination between government agencies is crucial for optimal outcomes, particularly in the context of forest fires, where internal structures and leadership can influence clarity and communication (Budiningsih, 2017).



The provincial level acts as a policy director and mediator, while the city/district level serves as an operational policy implementer. Relevant research indicates that effective program implementation and capacity building at the local level can enhance policy outcomes and effectiveness (Nurcholis & Satria, 2017). Furthermore, research by Maharani et al. suggests that paying attention to public opinion and engaging in effective stakeholder outreach are crucial factors in increasing public participation in public policy (Maharani, Huda, and Swasanti, 2024).

Although interaction patterns between levels of government have been established, there are still indications of weak socialization and coordination mechanisms, which can hinder the effectiveness of policies at the local level. Nurcholis and Satria note the importance of monitoring and evaluation in policy implementation, which can be affected by inefficient communication between the provincial and district levels (Nurcholis & Satria, 2017). More broadly, implementing an institutional strengthening model that includes enhanced inter-agency communication can contribute to conflict resolution and increased program efficiency (Bele, Kanto, and Susilo 2021).

Thus, stronger integration across levels of government is crucial for optimizing policy implementation and resolving boundary conflicts sustainably. Active and ongoing engagement between all parties in this process is crucial to achieving a sustainable solution. Unfortunately, there are no strong references to support the claim that work units that support one another and engage in open dialogue tend to be more successful; therefore, this section has been omitted.

Policy Stakeholder Engagement

The involvement of policymakers in resolving the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in the Tegal Binangun area can be visualized as follows:

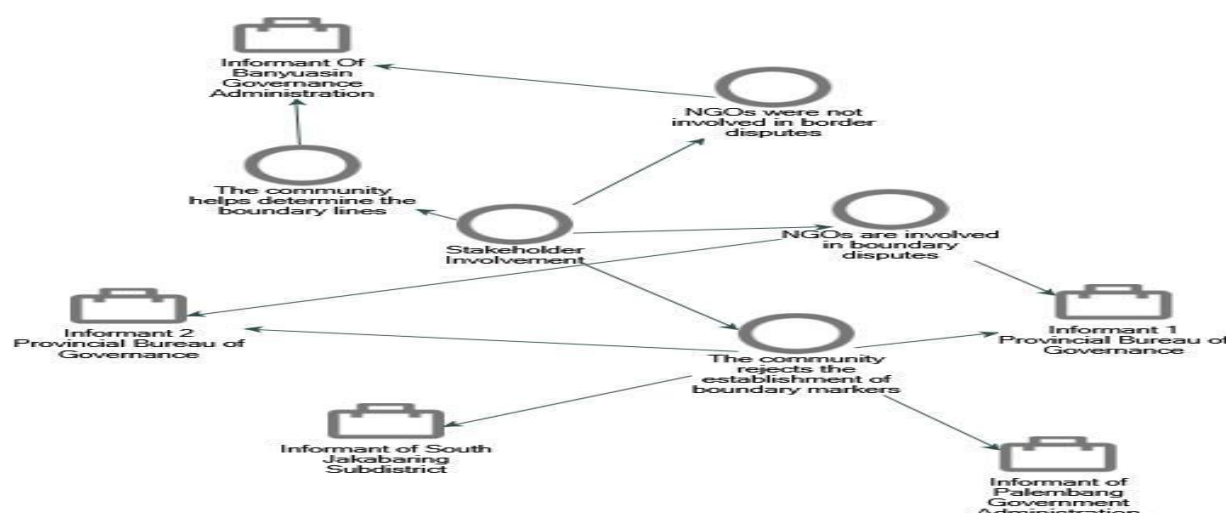


Figure 5. Policy Stakeholder Involvement

Source: processed using NVivo 15

The visualization above illustrates the dynamics of multi-stakeholder involvement in resolving the territorial dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in the Tegal Binangun area. In the image, the involvement of policymakers is a central link connecting the roles of the community, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and various government actors at both the bureau and regional levels. This boundary dispute



reflects the complexity of governance, which involves multiple stakeholders but is often not optimally facilitated.

From the community perspective, there are two contrasting forms of participation. On the one hand, the community plays an active role in helping determine regional boundaries, as explained by informants from the Banyuasin Governance Unit. However, on the other hand, some residents reject the results or process of boundary determination. This rejection is linked to information provided by informants from the Palembang Governance Unit and informants from the South Jakabaring Village, which indicates differences in perceptions and interests between communities in the two disputed administrative areas. This situation is evident in the asymmetric dynamics of community participation, where some communities are involved in the process, while others show resistance to the outcome due to differing perceptions and administrative interests. According to Elva et al., in the context of collaborative governance, the involvement of all parties in the decision-making process is key to achieving legitimacy at the grassroots level, but formal participation does not guarantee legitimacy without the meaningful inclusion of all stakeholders (Elva, Samin, and Kurnianingsih 2023; Wesselink et al., 2011).

Meanwhile, NGO involvement has two dimensions. Some NGOs are said to have been excluded from the boundary determination process, while others are involved in the boundary conflicts or disputes themselves. This situation illustrates that the role of NGOs in multi-level governance is not optimally structured and can even create new complexities in conflict resolution if not properly managed. Some NGOs are not involved in decision-making, while others are actively engaged in the conflict, which can exacerbate the situation (Nipa & Hasan, 2023). This aligns with the view of Siddiki et al., who emphasize that diversity in stakeholder engagement in a collaborative process can often lead to complex and sometimes exclusionary dynamics, which in turn require careful management to avoid exacerbating uncertainty and tensions (Siddiki, Kim, and Leach, 2017). Therefore, efforts are needed to restructure the roles and coordination mechanisms among all actors involved, particularly in light of their often conflicting interests.

Government actors, represented by the Government Bureau (Informants 1 and 2), serve as a liaison between policymakers and social dynamics at the community level. They act as mediators, attempting to balance the involvement of various parties and maintain the legitimacy of public policy. However, the diversity of actors and interests involved presents challenges in creating effective collaborative governance. The role of the government, particularly the Government Bureau, as a mediator between policymakers and the community is a crucial element in this process. However, challenges arise when managing the diversity of actors and interests, and a lack of synchronization between different levels of government can hinder effective governance. Research by Lawelai and Nurmandi indicates that effective communication and coordination among the government, the private sector, and civil society are crucial for addressing existing problems and achieving optimal outcomes (Lawelai & Nurmandi, 2023). Without a comprehensive conflict resolution scheme, this situation has the potential to escalate into community dissatisfaction (Sianturi & Dwicaksono, 2023).

Overall, the situation in this boundary dispute reflects shortcomings in a sound collaborative governance framework. To prevent the delegitimization of implemented policies, a more inclusive and transparent approach is needed. Improvements in collaboration mechanisms would help enhance the integration of NGO roles and accelerate more effective and inclusive dispute resolution at the local level. Adopting a more holistic and collaborative approach to community engagement is crucial in multi-level governance



to achieve more sustainable and equitable outcomes (Stepanova, 2024; Stringer & Paavola, 2013).

Policy Adaptation

Policy adaptation is a crucial part of public policy implementation, particularly in cases of boundary disputes. Mistakes in mapping and adapting socio-political conditions to policy targets can significantly determine whether a regulation is accepted or rejected by the public.

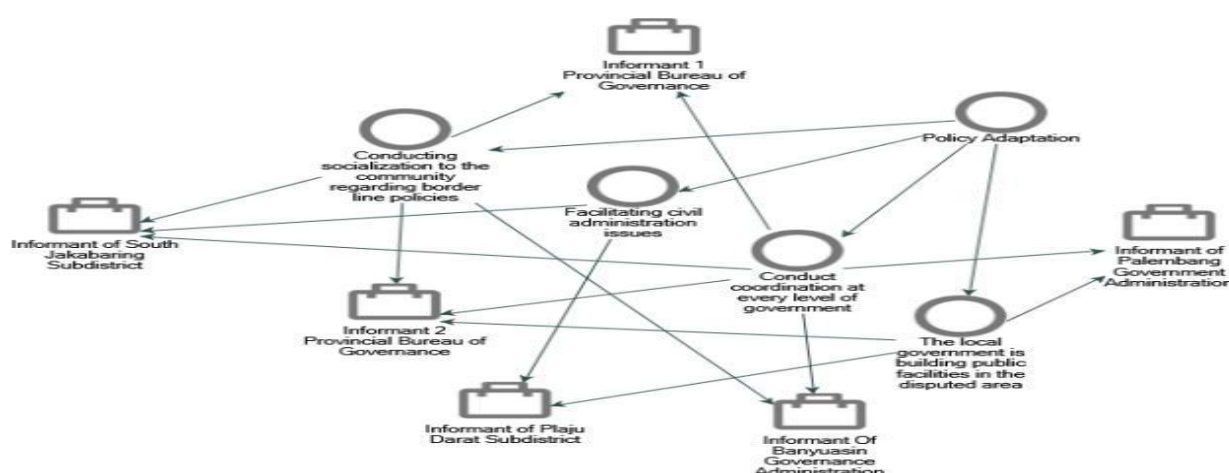


Figure 6. Policy Adaptation

Source: Processed using NVivo 15

The visualization in the image above shows the pattern of interaction and coordination across levels of government in the context of resolving the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency, particularly in the Tegal Binangun area. The image illustrates how various government actors, ranging from the provincial level to the sub-district level, network in the process of adapting policies to address the social, administrative, and political dynamics that arise from boundary uncertainty. This pattern illustrates that the approach of multi-level governance is interdependent, where no single actor is dominant; rather, they are interrelated in their policy roles and functions.

One of the central elements in this visualization is the coordination nodes that occur at each level of government. Informants from the Provincial Government Bureau, both Informant 1 and Informant 2, appear to play a key role as vertical liaisons between the provincial government and the governments of Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency. They not only facilitate information exchange but also regulate the communication rhythm and policy synchronization to prevent overlapping policies at the regional level. This process reflects the adaptive capacity of the government system in responding to regional issues with a contextual and inclusive approach.

In its implementation, the visualization shows that local governments are also implementing practical policy adaptations, one of which is building public facilities in disputed areas. Although the legal status of the area has not been fully determined, the government continues to provide services as part of its commitment to meeting the needs of residents. Informants from Jakabaring Selatan and Plaju Darat sub-districts play a crucial role in bridging macro-level policies to the local level. Their roles reflect the micro dimension of policy adaptation, where boundary issues are seen not only as spatial issues but also as challenges for public services and population administration.



Meanwhile, the socialization activities conducted by the Banyuasin Governance Informant and the Provincial Government Bureau, as part of the boundary policy, illustrate the communication mechanism as part of the adaptation strategy. This not only conveys information to the public but also builds social legitimacy for the policy in progress. On the other hand, the Palembang Governance Informant is actively facilitating population issues, reflecting a form of administrative adaptation for residents affected by boundary uncertainty. This approach demonstrates that policy adaptation directly touches the structural, social, and administrative levels.

The process of policy adaptation in this dispute resolution demonstrates complex and interdependent interactions between actors across levels of government. This collaboration does not occur linearly, but rather forms a dynamic network of interactions. The Provincial Government Bureau plays a crucial role as a policy coordinator between the two disputing regions (Judijanto & Datumula, 2024). Policy effectiveness is significantly influenced by each actor's capacity to adapt to constantly changing social and administrative conditions (Craig et al., 2017), while also acknowledging the importance of public trust and legitimacy in the policy process (Aoki et al., 2017; Dewantara & Widjiastuti, 2025). This reinforces the argument that policy legitimacy cannot be derived solely from adherence to the rule of law, but also from responsiveness to social realities.

In practice, managing boundary disputes requires an approach that integrates three main elements: structural integration, administrative adaptation, and a social approach. Structural integration is necessary to establish a robust regulatory framework as a legal foundation for policy, while administrative adaptation enables flexibility in policy implementation amid field dynamics (Awad, Bartlett, and Conaldi 2021; Torfing et al., 2024). The social approach itself serves to increase community participation in decision-making, ensuring that implemented policies are not only legally valid but also socially legitimized (Storeng & Puyvallée, 2018).

The public must be actively involved to ensure that policies are non-exclusive and address citizen aspirations (Egwu et al., 2025). In this context, the conflict resolution process cannot rely solely on legal approaches. The success of boundary conflict management is largely determined by the government's ability to build communication and collaboration across levels of government, while also accommodating existing social conditions (Bezbradica, 2024; Subrata, Arifin, and Maarif, 2025).

Good governance emphasizes not only the dominance of formal authority but also the active involvement of local governments and stakeholders through open dialogue and participatory mechanisms (Bernard et al., 2010; Thaler & Seebauer, 2025). Within this framework, the policy adaptation process does not simply follow bureaucratic logic but also fosters a collaborative ecosystem that leads to more contextual and effective policy outcomes. Therefore, collaboration across levels of government not only supports the accuracy of policy substance but also strengthens the resulting public value. This ultimately strengthens public trust in government institutions and increases the likelihood of successful boundary conflict resolution (Darma et al., 2024; Suprianto, 2024).

Integration of Policies at Every Level of Government

The integration of policies across levels of government in the context of resolving the Tegal Binangun boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency demonstrates that the success of a policy is determined not only by the strength of legal norms alone, but also by the effectiveness of cross-governmental coordination and the policy's adaptability to local dynamics. In this regard, Minister of Home Affairs Regulation



(Permendagri) Number 134 of 2022 plays a central role. The regulatory backbone serves as the primary reference for determining boundaries and resolving various administrative and population issues in disputed areas. This regulation not only provides legal certainty but also provides direction for regional governments in carrying out their functions in a consistent and structured manner.

Substantively, Home Affairs Ministerial Regulation No. 134 of 2022 serves as an administrative framework that provides legal certainty for regional governments and provincial government bureaus in exercising their authority. Informants from the South Sumatra Provincial Government Bureau and informants from the Palembang and Banyuasin Governance Departments emphasized that this regulation helps clarify the interregional coordination framework while simultaneously strengthening the province's role as a mediator in maintaining consistency and equality in cross-regional policy implementation. Interviews also demonstrated that the provincial government's strategic position as a balancing force is crucial in mitigating potential conflict and establishing dialogue between disputing government actors (Krishna, Sagita, and Centia 2025).

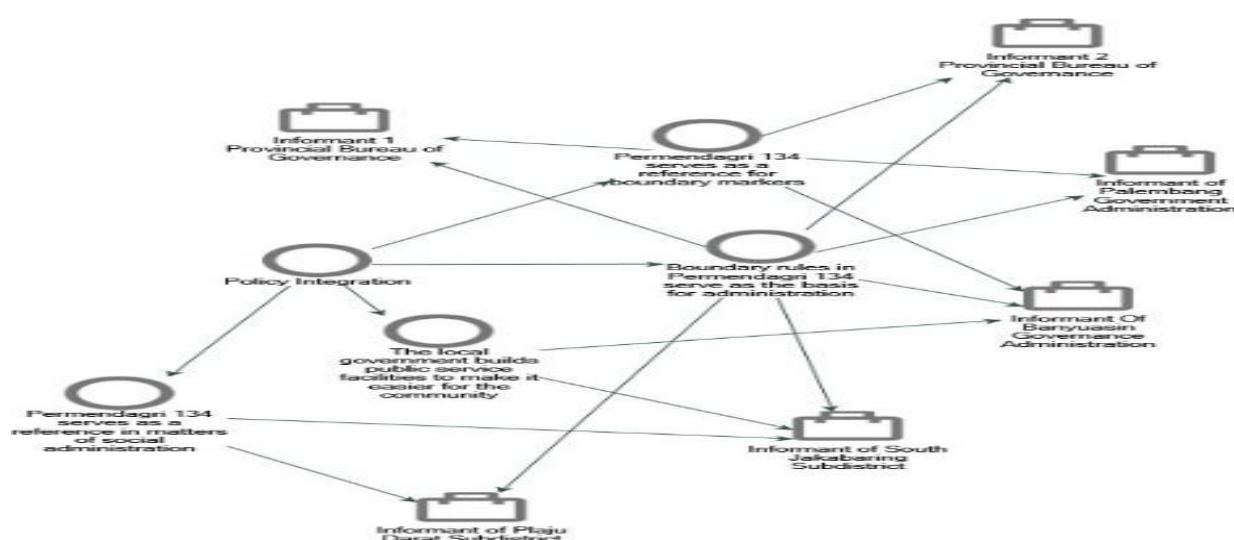


Figure 7. Integration of Policies at Each Level of Government

Source: processed using NVivo 15

The data visualization in the image above shows that Home Affairs Ministerial Regulation No. 134 of 2022 serves not only as a legal basis for territorial delimitation but also as an important guideline for managing population administration and public services at the sub-district level. Informants from South Jakabaring and West Plaju Sub-districts stated that this regulation provides clarity regarding service and administrative boundaries, thereby reducing overlapping authority between the two regions. This clarity encourages efficient public services. This aligns with research findings that demonstrate strategies for enhancing public services through information systems and administrative clarity can improve efficiency and increase citizen satisfaction (Fitriani & Jaya, 2023).

Meanwhile, at the sub-district level, the role of policy integration is also reflected in local government efforts to build public service facilities that can reach affected communities. The implementation of the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation is translated into concrete actions, such as improvements to the population service system and other basic administration. This emphasizes that regulations are not merely normative documents, but rather serve as a foundation for building public service practices that are

responsive to local needs. Furthermore, these administrative improvements are supported by the strengthening of digital information systems, which help clarify the status and scope of public services across previously overlapping regions (Ria & Indartuti, 2023; Sadida, Fachruddin, & Pramono, 2024).

These findings confirm that effective policy integration relies on synergy across all levels of government. The central government, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, establishes normative regulations, while provincial and district/city governments coordinate implementation based on their respective regional conditions. In this regard, coordination is not merely technocratic but also incorporates collaborative and adaptive aspects to local contexts. Previous research has demonstrated that cross-sector collaboration is crucial for enhancing policy effectiveness, particularly in cross-jurisdictional issues such as territorial disputes (Aras et al., 2022).

The results of this study also indicate that the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation has provided significant benefits for population administration and public services at the sub-district level. Informants from the South Jakabaring and Plaju Darat sub-districts explained that the regulation clarified the boundaries of administrative authority and improved the quality of public services, which were previously impacted by unclear territorial boundaries (Fitriani & Jaya, 2023; Sadida et al., 2024). The implementation of information systems also supports transparency and accountability in public services (Ria & Indartuti, 2023), demonstrating that the success of regulatory implementation is highly dependent on the capacity for adaptation and technological transformation at the local level.

Overall, the integration of policies in resolving boundary disputes demonstrates that strong legal norms must be balanced with responsive and adaptive governance practices. Research on good governance confirms that cross-actor collaboration and shared commitment are key to the success of quality public services at the sub-district level (Surahman, Tavip, and S 2022). Therefore, successful dispute resolution rests not only on available regulations but also on effective intergovernmental coordination, functional information systems, and the readiness of local actors to translate policies into concrete actions.

Accountability and Transparency of the Dispute Resolution Process

In relation to accountability and transparency in the process of resolving the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency, a map of data and information obtained from several informants is visualized as follows:



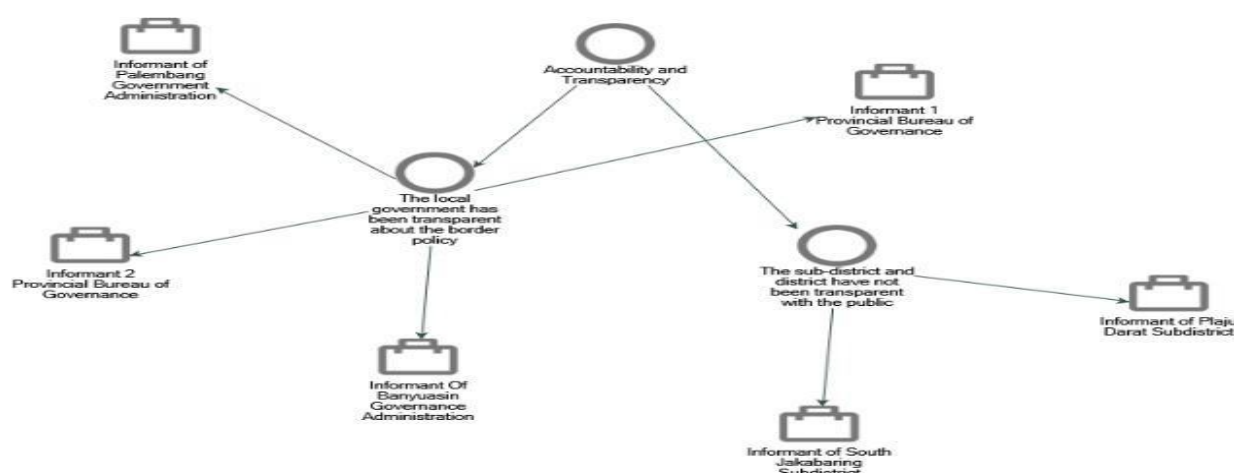


Figure 8. Accountability and Transparency of the Dispute Resolution Process

Source: processed using NVivo 15

The application of the principle of transparency in the governance of the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency reveals two main trends that reflect implementation gaps at various levels of government. On the one hand, local governments at the provincial and district/city levels have attempted to uphold transparency in boundary policies by providing the public with information on the legal basis, administrative procedures, and results of inter-regional coordination, all in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Various informants from the Provincial Government Bureau and the Palembang and Banyuasin Governance Offices emphasized that this information transparency reflects the vertical accountability of the regional government to the public and the central government, while also strengthening the legitimacy of the policies adopted. Multi-level governance signifies the presence of a relatively well-functioning coordination mechanism between regional governments and higher administrative institutions, in line with the principles of good governance (Gaol, Santoso, and Prasetyo, 2024; Hafshah & Bhilawa, 2025).

However, on the other hand, at the local level, particularly at the sub-district and district levels, the implementation of transparency towards the public is still suboptimal. According to informants from South Jakabaring and West Plaju Villages, officials at this level have not been fully open to the public regarding policies or developments in resolving territorial disputes. This lack of transparency at the lower levels creates an information gap between the government and citizens, potentially reducing public trust and weakening public participation in the decision-making process (Jaya & Yamin, 2025). This demonstrates that accountability and transparency in governance are not evenly distributed across all levels of government.

This problem reflects not only technical limitations in information delivery but also structural and cultural barriers inherent in lower-level government institutions. Reliance on instructions from higher levels without local initiative in disseminating policy information prevents citizens from gaining a comprehensive understanding of the status of their territory. However, in the context of boundary disputes, community involvement is crucial for fostering social acceptance of government-determined delimitation results.

This imbalance creates a paradox: while higher-level officials promote transparency and policy legitimacy, communication with citizens at the field level is ineffective.

Studies in various regions also show that good transparency and accountability at the top level are not always reflected at the lower levels. For example, research in East Lampung Regency showed that although public participation in the budgeting process increased, access to information in remote areas still needed improvement (Gaol et al., 2024). Similarly, an analysis of village budget allocations in Baubau City found that despite efforts to increase transparency, some villages were still unable to effectively convey information to the public (Rusdin & Pardana, 2022). Therefore, the gaps that arise indicate the need to improve public communication mechanisms, increase the capacity of local officials, and strengthen the vertical coordination system between local and lower-level governments to ensure that the principles of governance are upheld. Good governance can be applied uniformly (Hafshah & Bhilawa, 2025; Rahajeng, 2021).

To close this gap, approaches can be taken not only by improving regulations but also by enhancing training, policy literacy, and information technology at the local level. Local governments need to develop public communication strategies that adapt to the social and cultural context of their communities so that information regarding boundary policies can be understood and well-received. Furthermore, active community involvement in discussion forums or regional deliberations can be a means of building trust and strengthening the responsiveness of village and sub-district officials. In this way, the principle of transparency becomes not merely a symbol at the top level but becomes a concrete practice at the grassroots level, supporting the sustainable resolution of regional conflicts.

CONCLUSION

The resolution of the boundary dispute between Palembang City and Banyuasin Regency in the Tegal Binangun area demonstrates the complexity of governance within a multi-level government system. The South Sumatra Provincial Government plays a crucial role as a mediator and liaison between regional policies in Palembang City and Banyuasin, while the regency/city level serves as policy implementer and public service provider. At the lower level, sub-districts and urban villages (kecamatan) serve as policy implementers, directly interacting with the community. However, interactions between these levels have not been fully effective, particularly due to gaps in communication and coordination at the sub-district level. Furthermore, the involvement of non-governmental actors, such as communities and NGOs, has not been optimally facilitated. Public participation is asymmetrical, and the role of NGOs is not well structured, potentially leading to new conflicts. Policy adaptations have been implemented through the construction of public facilities and the dissemination of boundary policies, but their success depends on social legitimacy and flexible implementation. Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 134 of 2022 serves as a crucial foundation for integrating policies across various levels of government. However, the principles of transparency and accountability remain uneven, particularly at the sub-district level. Therefore, resolving boundary disputes requires cross-actor collaboration, more effective public communication, and policy integration that is responsive to local dynamics.



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