



to improve the performance of local government administration through improving public services, community empowerment and participation, and increasing regional competitiveness.

Based on the explanation above, one of the local government innovations can be done in the community empowerment process because the current community empowerment approach is still problem based. Community powerlessness covers all aspects, including educational factors, structural and social factors, environmental conditions and policies that are not conducive to fostering creativity, productivity, and developing local potentials in the community.

Efforts to carry out community empowerment involve all components of society. There is also a need for leaders who are not only populist, but also capable as leaders and managers who have moral strength. Community empowerment needs innovation, because the community as the main actors must be able to understand their potential and require innovation to carry out activity programs according to their potential. Innovation will be able to encourage activities and be a solution for community empowerment.

The purpose of this paper is to find out and analyze community empowerment and participation in encouraging policy innovation in the regions. Community empowerment and participation play a very important role in encouraging regions to innovate in order to provide excellent service for the community.

## **2. Literature Review and Hypotheses**

Writing about community empowerment and participation is not new, but it is Community Empowerment And Participation In Promoting Policy Innovation In The Region that characterizes the authenticity of this paper. Some of the previous writings include by Dede Mariana with the title Community Participation in the Policy Process (Mariana, 2015), Ahmad Sururi with the title Public Policy Innovation: A Conceptual and Empirical Review (Sururi, 2016), Marzuki with the title Bureaucratic Reform and Innovation in Community Empowerment (Marzuki, 2016), Husnul Imtihan et al with the title The Role of Government and Community Participation in Regional Development Planning (Musrenbang Ds. Taman Sari Gunungsari District, West Lombok Regency 2016) (Imtihan, Wahyunadi, dan Firmansyah, 2017), and Hamim Wadji and Ambaryanto with the title of Quality of Public Services (Regional Market) With Community Participation (Wadji dan Ambaryanto, 2019).

Community participation not only involves the community in decision-making in every development and innovation program in the region, but the community is also involved in identifying problems and problems that exist in the community as well as supervising the implementation of development and innovation. One of the keys is to empower the community to encourage innovation in the regions. Community empowerment in innovating in the regions is a must because basically public services are for the community. Community involvement will encourage regions to innovate.

## **3. Methods**

This type of research is qualitative research with a focus on community empowerment and participation in encouraging policy innovation in the regions. This type of data consists of primary data and secondary data with data collection techniques using literature studies. The data analysis technique uses descriptive analysis.

## **4. Results**

Robert N. Belah stated his opinion on the stages of the formation of civil society below: (1) Natural society is a society without rules/free to act without being bound by the rule of law; (2) Political society is a society that is bound by the interests of the political power of the group/state; (3) Civil society is a society that has the sovereignty to make, influence and supervise public policies and all people are equal before the law (Hamidi et al., 2008). The way to create civil society is through democracy because democracy guarantees the freedom of the people to participate.

Philipus M. Hadjon stated that the concept of community participation is related to the concept of openness (Hadjon, 1997). The concept of participation is related to the concept of democracy as stated (Hadjon, 1997).

That statement is in line with (Soemantri, 1992). Who stated that the idea of democracy manifests itself in five things, two of which are: the government must be open (*openbaarheid van bestuur*) and it is possible for interested people to submit complaints regarding the actions of officials that are considered detrimental.

This control is carried out through two means. This is because if the parties want to be re-elected in the next election, they cannot simply play with the confidence of their supporters, so they must be held accountable for it. Second, openness of decision making is a must. Since the government acts for and on behalf of the entire community, the entire community has the right to know what it is doing. Not only have the right to know, they also have the right to participate in the decision-making process (Suseno, 1987).

Ann Seidman, Robert B. Seidman, and Nalin Abeysekere are in line with the statement above (Seidman et al., 2001), they interpret participation as parties who are influenced by a decision determined by the stakeholders (the parties who have an interest) have the widest opportunity to provide input, criticism and take part in making government decisions. The notion of participation, that political participation is the activity of citizens acting as individuals intended to influence government decision-making (Budiarjo, 1981). The definition of political participation as an activity of citizens involved in the decision-making process, as well as in the public policy literature in the Netherlands is called *inspraak* or direct political participation (Budiarjo, 1981).

## 5. Discussion

The concept of innovation can also generally be understood in the context of behavior change (Rogers, 2003). Sherwood explained that innovation as a process requires four stages: (1) The stage of submitting an idea, it means having an idea first; (2) Evaluation stage of ideas that will be followed up; (3) The development stage, which means improving the idea from a concept to a reality that produces something; and (4) The implementation stage, which means trying to make the idea come true (Sherwood, 2002).

The study of local government innovation is within the scope of the organization. So, it is very important to understand the relationship between innovation and organizational theory perspective. As a quoted by Lam who stated that *“organizational creation is fundamental to the process of innovation”*. Organizational creation is the main basis for the innovation process. The ability of an organization to innovate is a pre-condition for success in utilizing the discovery of new resources and technologies. In contrast, the introduction of new technologies often presents complex opportunities and challenges for organizations, leading to changes in managerial practice and the emergence of new organizational forms (Lam, 2004).

Local innovation based on Government Regulation Number 38 of 2017 is primarily intended to support the improvement of local government performance and public services in a comprehensive manner optimally in the welfare of society. Local innovation targets lead to accelerated implementation.. The proposed local innovation do not have to be limited by the local government, but have been opened as wide as possible, allowing the community to propose local innovations.

Empowerment is a concept related to power. The term power is often synonymous with the ability of individuals to make themselves or others do what they want. Empowerment is a process to give power to the weak (Djohani, 2003; Wicaksana et al., 2021). Empowerment is a way by which people, organizations, and communities are directed to be able to control or have power over their lives (Rappaport, 1987). Active participation in development will foster community empowerment so that this provides ample space for the community to involve themselves from the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of the results of the development itself.

Community empowerment can be done individually, although in the end it is still related to the collectivity. Empowerment in its implementation, process and goal achievement is carried out through Enabling, Strengthening, Protecting, Supporting and Maintaining (Nawawi, 2009): (1) Enabling; (2) Strengthening; (3) Protecting; (4) Supporting; (5) Maintaining.

Community empowerment continues to need to be done because it has urgency or importance as follows: (1) Provide enlightenment on changes in people's mindsets, in addition to changes in attitudes and skills; (2) Foster community participation and self-reliance; (3) Helping funding sources of development financing; (4) Generating social support and legitimacy; (5) Revitalization of local wisdom of community mutual cooperation that has been rooted in the social system of society.

Community empowerment and participation in policy innovations in the regions is needed. Local governments in community empowerment innovation can at least be seen from several aspects, including (Marzuki, 2006): (1) Empowerment Role. Regions in carrying out government and development tasks do not have to try to do it themselves, but steer (steering rather than rowing), or choose the optimal combination of steering and rowing if these steps are the best way to achieve maximum social welfare. Something that can be done by the community, no longer needs to be done by the government. If the community or some of them are not capable or powerless, then they must be empowered. Empowerment also means giving a role to the lower layers of society in their participation in various development

activities; (2) Service Role. Empowerment efforts require a spirit to serve the community (a spirit of public services), and become a partner of society; or cooperate with the community (coproduction or partnership). This requires behavioral changes that can be carried out through cultivating a code of ethical conduct that is based on environmental support (enabling strategy) which is translated into standards of behavior that are generally accepted, and used as a reference for the behavior of government officials both at the center and in the regions..

Regions in carrying out their duties and functions, in addition to complying with the code of ethics, apparatus and public management systems must develop openness and accountability systems. They must be open and responsible to encourage leaders and all human resources in them to play a role in implementing and institutionalizing the code of ethics intended to make themselves role models for the community; and it is carried out as part of the implementation of responsibilities and accountability to the community and the state.

Based on the principle of transparency, efforts to empower the community and the business world, increase participation and partnerships, in addition to: (1) Requiring the openness of the government bureaucracy; (2) Requiring firm steps to reduce regulations and procedures that hinder their creativity and autoactivity; and (3) Provide opportunities for the community to be able to participate in the process of drafting policy regulations, implementing, and supervising development. Empowerment and openness can encourage accountability in the use of resources, and the existence of development decisions that are truly directed according to the priorities and needs of the community, and are carried out in a real and fair manner according to the aspirations and interests of the community.

Innovation is the key to increasing economic growth, regional competitiveness, and improving people's welfare. Innovation is one of the tools in accelerating the improvement of Indonesia's competitiveness. Every element of the state which includes the government, the private sector, and civil society must innovate. Innovation in government agencies including ministries, non-ministerial government agencies (Lembaga Pemerintah Non-Kementrian), provincial governments, and regency or city governments is very important because it can accelerate private and community innovation in improving public services.

Local governments are one of the spearheads of public services that are obliged to innovate. Innovative public services will improve services, community empowerment, economic growth, and higher competitiveness. The ability of high regional competitiveness in turn can improve the welfare of the community. Innovation, apart from being needed to increase regional competitiveness and improve the quality of people's welfare, is basically also an inseparable part of bureaucratic reform.

Innovation can actually be interpreted as contextual bureaucratic reform, meaning the implementation of bureaucratic reform that is tailored to the needs and challenges of the local area. The current awareness of the importance of innovation is marked by the issuance of Act of the Republic Indonesia Number 23 of 2014 on the Local Government which provides opportunities for local governments to innovate. Precisely in article 386 which states that "in the context of improving the performance of local government administration, local governments can innovate".

The paradigm shift of regional government in positioning the "people" is a breakthrough and innovation of government. Placing "the people as subjects" means giving respect to them, considering that the people are the holders of power. The criteria for regional policies to innovate include: (1) Contain the renewal of all or part of the elements of the innovation; (2) Providing benefits to the Region and/or the community; (3) Does not result in impositions and/or restrictions on the society that are not in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations; (4) It is a Government Affairs which is under the authority of the Region; and (5) Can be replicated.

In addition to being creative, the government hopes that Local Innovation can improve the competitiveness and performance of government administrators so that later regions can progress. The innovations carried out must and absolutely involve community participation as one of the keys to empowerment.

## **6. Conclusion**

Local governments in carrying out innovations, need to provide full support for various innovations carried out by the community by empowering and involving community participation. One way is to position the "people" as government breakthroughs and innovations. Placing "the people as subjects" means giving appreciation to them, considering that the people are the holders of power, while taking an inventory, compiling an innovation directory, and evaluating community inventions and creativity so that they can develop more.

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