

The Implementation Gap in Poverty Alleviation Policies Based on Pentahelix Collaborative Governance at the Local Level

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Abstract: Poverty alleviation policies at the regional level are increasingly directed towards a collaborative pentahelix governance approach in response to the complexity of poverty issues that cannot be resolved unilaterally by the government. However, various studies indicate a gap between collaborative policy design and its implementation practices in the field. This study aimed to empirically examine the implementation of such policies and to identify the concrete forms of the gap between policy design and practice. This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis, and were subsequently analyzed thematically. The results show that although regional policies have normatively adopted the principle of multi-actor collaboration, their implementation is still dominated by local governments. The participation of non-governmental actors remained constrained, fragmented, and inadequately institutionalized within decision-making processes. This implementation gap is influenced by weak cross-actor communication, limited resources, a low bureaucratic disposition to share authority, and a bureaucratic structure that remains hierarchical. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of collaborative governance was not inherent, but rather depended on the degree of institutionalization of collaborative arrangements and the strengthening of actors' capacities within the context of local policy implementation.

1. Introduction

Poverty is still a structural and multidimensional development problem, especially in areas with limited geographical and institutional capacity (Karahasan & Bilgel, 2021; Rasul & Nepal, 2025; Moldabekova et al., 2025; Puspaningtyas et al., 2026). The government has designed and implemented various poverty alleviation policies and programs through both central intervention and regional policies (Supriyanto, 2023; Priambodo & Djirimu, 2024; Arfanita et al., 2025). However, empirical evidence shows that poverty reductions in several regions have been neither significant nor sustainable (Eliza et al., 2025; Ebriyani & Oktaviani, 2025). This suggests that poverty is not solely an economic issue; it also reflects the complexity of governance arrangements that have not yet effectively integrated multiple development actors. This phenomenon indicates that poverty is not solely caused by low community income, but is

also influenced by governance issues, weak institutional coordination, low community participation, and limited synergy between development actors.

In this context, the effectiveness of sectoral and hierarchical policy approaches is increasingly being questioned. Top-down poverty alleviation policies are sometimes unable to address the complexity of local issues, particularly in island and underdeveloped regions with unique social, cultural, and geographic characteristics (Permatasari et al., 2024; Nugroho, 2025). The limitations of this conventional approach necessitated a transformation in policy governance toward a more inclusive, participatory, and locally adapted approach. This context encourages the development of a new governance paradigm that emphasizes cross-sector and cross-actor collaboration as a prerequisite for public policy success (Prabowo et al., 2021; Pache et al., 2022; Williams et al., 2024; Setiono & Kustulasari, 2025). One approach that is widely adopted in contemporary public policy literature is collaborative governance, including the pentahelix model that integrates the roles of government, the private sector, academia, civil society, and the media.

To more concretely illustrate the empirical context of poverty issues at the regional level, this study also references data on the development of the poverty line and the number of poor people in the study area. This presentation aims to provide a factual picture of the poverty dynamics local governments face while reinforcing the urgency of evaluating the effectiveness of current poverty alleviation policies. Thus, these empirical findings served not only as a descriptive account of existing conditions but also as a foundation for advancing the argument for a more collaborative and integrative policy approach. The empirical evidence was presented as follows:

Table 1. Poverty Levels of Regencies and Cities in Maluku Province in 2024

Regency/ Municipality	Poverty Line – March 2022 (IDR/ capita/ month)	Poverty Line – March 2023 (IDR/ capita/ month)	Poverty Line – September 2022 (IDR/ capita/ month)	Poverty Line – September 2023 (IDR/ capita/ month)	Poor People – March 2022 (thousand)	Poor People – March 2023 (thousand)	Poor People – September 2022 (thousand)	Poor People – September 2023 (thousand)
Tanimbar Islands Regency	546,300	615,768	–	–	26.94	27.64	–	–
Southeast Maluku Regency	595,041	669,140	–	–	21.38	22.02	–	–
Central Maluku Regency	542,782	589,125	–	–	65.73	67.22	–	–
Buru Regency	530,858	584,277	–	–	23.60	25.19	–	–
Aru Islands Regency	562,416	626,086	–	–	22.36	23.13	–	–
West Seram Regency	449,297	486,747	–	–	38.57	38.87	–	–
East Seram Regency	421,902	458,176	–	–	23.71	24.26	–	–
Southwest Maluku Regency	586,021	658,036	–	–	20.36	21.23	–	–
South Buru Regency	677,044	743,721	–	–	9.35	9.77	–	–
Ambon City	661,016	716,560	–	–	22.58	25.87	–	–
Tual City	640,542	722,498	–	–	16.01	16.41	–	–
Maluku Province	631,326	684,020	672,456	–	290.57	301.61	296.66	–

This table shows the development of the poverty line and the number of poor people in Maluku Province between March and September 2022–2023, by district/city. The data show that, although there are variations between regions, the poverty line generally increases in almost all districts/cities. This is accompanied by fluctuations in the number of poor people, with some regions showing relatively significant increases. Overall, the number of poor people in Maluku Province remains high, indicating that poverty alleviation efforts have not yet produced a fully sustainable impact. These descriptive findings underscored that regional poverty was not solely linked to policy outcomes, but was also closely tied to implementation processes and the quality of underlying governance. These data confirm that regional poverty is not solely an economic issue but also reflects limited policy effectiveness and weak implementation governance.

Conceptually, collaborative governance is a collective decision-making process that brings government and non-government actors together in a formal forum to achieve common goals (Ansell & Gash, 2007). This framework is enriched by the concept of a collaborative governance regime, which emphasizes collaborative dynamics, shared motivation, and the capacity for collective action in addressing complex public issues (Emerson, Kirk, & Nabatchi, 2015). In the practice of poverty alleviation policies, the pentahelix collaborative governance approach is seen as an ideal model because it is able to integrate the resources, knowledge, and interests of various actors to produce more inclusive and sustainable policies (Rachman & Thalib, 2025; Azwar et al., 2025; Mahu et al., 2026).

However, although normatively pentahelix collaborative governance is widely promoted as a solution to the limitations of conventional approaches, its implementation at the regional level still faces various obstacles (Azwar et al., 2025). Empirical findings from various studies show that actors have not yet collaborated substantively (McNaught, 2024; Azwar et al., 2025). Regional governments still play a dominant role in the entire policy cycle, from planning and implementation to evaluation (Burhanuddin et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the involvement of the private sector, academics, civil society, and the media tends to be limited, sporadic, and often only symbolic (Waardenburg et al., 2020; Kerr, 2024; A. Hamm et al., 2025). As a result, the policy synergy expected from the pentahelix approach was not optimally realized. This condition suggested a misalignment between the normative design of collaboration and its empirical implementation, indicating an initial policy implementation gap.

These implementation issues directly impact the effectiveness of poverty alleviation policies. Programs tend to focus on short-term social assistance and are not geared toward sustainably strengthening the community's economic capacity. Furthermore, the resulting policies are often insensitive to local needs and potential due to minimal community participation in the decision-making process. This suggests that the collaborative approach had not been fully internalized within policy practice and, consequently, had not yet generated substantive policy transformation. This situation highlights the gap between normatively collaborative policy design and implementation practices that remain top-down and administrative.

This problem can be analyzed from the perspective of public policy implementation (Edward III, 1980). Four main factors heavily influence policy implementation success: communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure. In the context of pentahelix-based poverty alleviation, these four factors are often not optimally met. Policy communication among actors remains fragmented, human resources and budgets are limited, bureaucratic commitment to cross-sector collaboration is relatively low, and the hierarchical bureaucratic structure does not support institutionalizing multi-actor collaboration (Farahani, 2024; Mozin et al., 2025; Aivalli & Dada, 2025). Thus, the barriers to implementation were not solely technical in nature, but also reflected structural and cultural dimensions

within the bureaucracy. As a result, collaboratively designed policies are difficult to implement effectively in the field.

Previous studies generally position pentahelix collaborative governance as the ideal normative model for addressing poverty and other social problems (Lestari et al., 2024; As'ari et al., 2025; Sarmini et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2025). However, limited research critically examines how this model is implemented in empirical contexts, particularly at the regional and island levels. Existing literature focuses more on actor structures and formal roles, but less on the dynamics of power relations, government dominance, and the failure to institutionalize collaboration, which limits deliberative and participatory collaborative processes (Delgado-Baena & Sianes, 2024; Azwar et al., 2025). These limitations highlighted a substantial research gap in comprehending the practical implementation of collaborative governance. Thus, a research gap remains between the normative design of pentahelix collaborative governance and its practical implementation.

Furthermore, research linking collaborative governance approaches to island regions remains relatively limited. Yet, geographical characteristics, limited access, and differing institutional capacities make island regions uniquely challenging in implementing poverty alleviation policies (Permatasari et al., 2024; Nugroho, 2025; Akbar et al., 2025). Therefore, a contextual approach was deemed essential for understanding variations in policy implementation at the local level. The limitations of this contextual study open up space for research that can provide a deeper understanding of how pentahelix collaborative governance is implemented, as well as what factors influence its success in the local context.

Based on these phenomena, problems, and research gaps, this study aims to analyze the implementation of pentahelix collaborative governance-based poverty alleviation policies at the regional level by highlighting the gap between policy design and empirical practice. This research uses a qualitative, case-study approach to explore in depth the dynamics of collaboration among actors, decision-making mechanisms, and obstacles to policy implementation. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and documentation studies of poverty alleviation policies and programs.

Through this approach, the research is expected to contribute to collaborative governance studies, particularly on implementing the pentahelix in poverty alleviation policies. This study was also expected to offer a more robust empirical contribution by presenting field-based evidence on the dynamics of policy implementation. Furthermore, this research is also expected to provide practical contributions in the form of more contextual, participatory, and sustainable policy recommendations, particularly for local governments in designing and implementing poverty alleviation policies based on multi-actor collaboration.

2. Literature Review

Multidimensional Poverty

Contemporary public policy studies no longer understand poverty solely as a problem of low income, but as a multidimensional phenomenon involving limited access to education, health, food, decent work, and social participation (Karahasan & Bilgel, 2021; Rasul & Nepal, 2025). This perspective is strongly influenced by the capability approach developed by Amartya Sen, which conceptualizes poverty as a deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely an income deficiency. Building on this framework, Sabina Alkire and James Foster developed the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which empirical studies have widely used to capture overlapping deprivations across multiple dimensions.

Various empirical studies show that structural and locational factors also influence poverty, including geographical conditions, regional institutional capacity, and development disparities between regions (Permatasari et al., 2024; Moldabekova et al., 2025). Additional studies further demonstrate that multidimensional poverty tends to be more pronounced in rural and remote areas, largely due to limited access to public services, inadequate infrastructure, and institutional fragmentation (Alkire & Kanagaratnam, 2021; World Bank, 2022). Empirical evidence from developing countries also shows that disparities in service delivery and governance quality significantly shape multidimensional poverty outcomes (UNDP, 2023). In the Indonesian context, poverty alleviation policies still face serious challenges, especially in the eastern region and island regions, which have limited infrastructure and resources (Arfanita et al., 2025; Eliza et al., 2025).

Policy studies confirm that sectoral and programmatic government interventions have not effectively broken the chain of poverty sustainably (Priambodo & Djirimu, 2024; Ebriyani & Oktaviani, 2025). Prior studies document this limitation, arguing that fragmented policy approaches are inadequate for addressing the interconnected nature of multidimensional poverty (OECD, 2021; United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 2023). This stems from weak cross-sectoral policy integration, limited regional bureaucratic capacity, and minimal participation by non-governmental actors in policy formulation and implementation. Empirical research further indicates that, without integrated governance and multi-actor collaboration, poverty alleviation programs tend to yield short-term outputs rather than long-term structural transformation. Therefore, a more collaborative and participatory policy approach is increasingly seen as relevant to addressing the complexity of poverty issues.

Collaborative Governance

Collaborative governance has emerged as a governance paradigm that emphasizes the involvement of government and non-government actors in collective public decision-making (Ansell & Gash, 2007). This model positions collaboration as a mechanism to overcome the limitations of state capacity in addressing complex, cross-sectoral public issues (Ansell & Gash, 2007). The success of collaborative governance depends on initial conditions, institutional design, facilitative leadership, and continuous dialogue.

Emerson, Kirk, & Nabatchi (2015) later expanded this framework through the concept of collaborative governance regimes, which highlights collaborative dynamics, shared motivation, and the capacity for joint action. This perspective emphasizes that collaboration depends not only on formal structures but also on relationships of trust, legitimacy, and commitment among actors. In public policy implementation, trust is crucial to collaboration's sustainability and effectiveness (A. Hamm et al., 2025).

However, various studies also show that collaborative governance practices do not always work as intended. Power dynamics, resource imbalances, and the dominance of certain actors often hinder the creation of equal and deliberative collaboration (Waardenburg et al., 2020; Delgado-Baena & Sianes, 2024). Studies on power dynamics in cross-sector collaboration confirm that the government often maintains dominant control, limiting non-government actors to a symbolic role (Aivalli & Dada, 2025; Sumarno, 2025).

Pentahelix Collaborative Governance

The pentahelix model is a development of the collaborative governance concept that emphasizes the involvement of five main actors: government, the private sector, academia, civil society, and the

media. This model matters for social policy and sustainable development because it integrates diverse resources, knowledge, and interests (As'ari et al., 2025; Pratiwi et al., 2025). Several studies show that the pentahelix approach can drive social innovation and strengthen public policy impact (Pache et al., 2022).

In the Indonesian context, the application of pentahelix collaborative governance has been studied in various sectors, such as waste management Akbar et al., (2025) disaster mitigation Lestari et al., (2024), village development Prabowo et al., (2021), development of MSMEs and the creative economy Rachman & Thalib (2025), and tackling extreme poverty (Mahu et al., 2026). These findings generally indicate that multi-actor collaboration can increase policy effectiveness but still faces obstacles related to coordination, actor commitment, and institutionalizing collaboration.

Policy Implementation

From a policy implementation perspective Edward III (1980) argues that policy success depends on four key variables: communication, resources, implementer disposition, and bureaucratic structure, each of which influences how policy directives translate into action at the operational level. Communication ensures policy goals and procedures are clearly conveyed across actors; resources determine the capacity to implement programs; implementer disposition reflects actors' willingness to execute policies; and bureaucratic structure affects the flexibility or rigidity of implementation processes.

In the context of pentahelix collaborative governance, these four factors are often not met simultaneously because coordinating multiple actors with diverse institutional logics, interests, and capacities is complex. This challenge arises because collaborative arrangements require not only formal coordination but also aligned incentives, mutual trust, and a shared understanding among actors—conditions that are often lacking in practice. Recent studies show that weak cross-sector communication, limited human resource capacity, and hierarchical bureaucratic structures are the main obstacles to implementing collaborative governance (Farahani, 2024; Burhanuddin et al., 2024). For instance, fragmented communication channels impede effective information exchange, while rigid bureaucratic hierarchies limit adaptive, participatory decision-making.

Empirical research consistently demonstrates a gap between collaborative policy design and its implementation at the local level. Comparative and case-based studies have found that while policies formally adopt collaborative principles, their implementation tends to remain sectoral and government-dominated. Collaboration often stops at formal coordination, without clear role allocation and robust accountability mechanisms (McNaught, 2024; Setiono & Kustulasari, 2025). Empirical evidence from local governance contexts further indicates that non-governmental actors are frequently involved only in consultative roles, rather than in substantive decision-making processes, thereby limiting the effectiveness of collaboration.

In the context of poverty alleviation, this condition implies that implemented programs have not yet addressed the structural roots of poverty sustainably (Nugroho, 2025; Sari et al., 2025). This occurs because fragmented implementation undermines policy coherence, diminishes targeting accuracy, and constrains the integration of social, economic, and institutional interventions necessary to address multidimensional poverty.

Research Gap

Although the literature on collaborative governance and the pentahelix continues to grow, research remains limited on gaps in implementing pentahelix-based poverty alleviation policies at the regional

level, particularly in regions with limited geographic characteristics and institutional capacity. Most studies emphasize the normative success of collaboration, while power dynamics, government dominance, and weak institutionalization of collaboration remain relatively underexplored. Therefore, this study fills this gap by empirically analyzing how pentahelix collaborative governance is implemented in poverty alleviation policies and why the gap between policy design and field practice persists.

Based on a synthesis of the literature on collaborative governance and the pentahelix model, and a study of the gap between policy design and implementation practices, this study formulates a conceptual framework as an analytical basis for examining the dynamics of pentahelix collaboration implementation in the empirical context of the research.

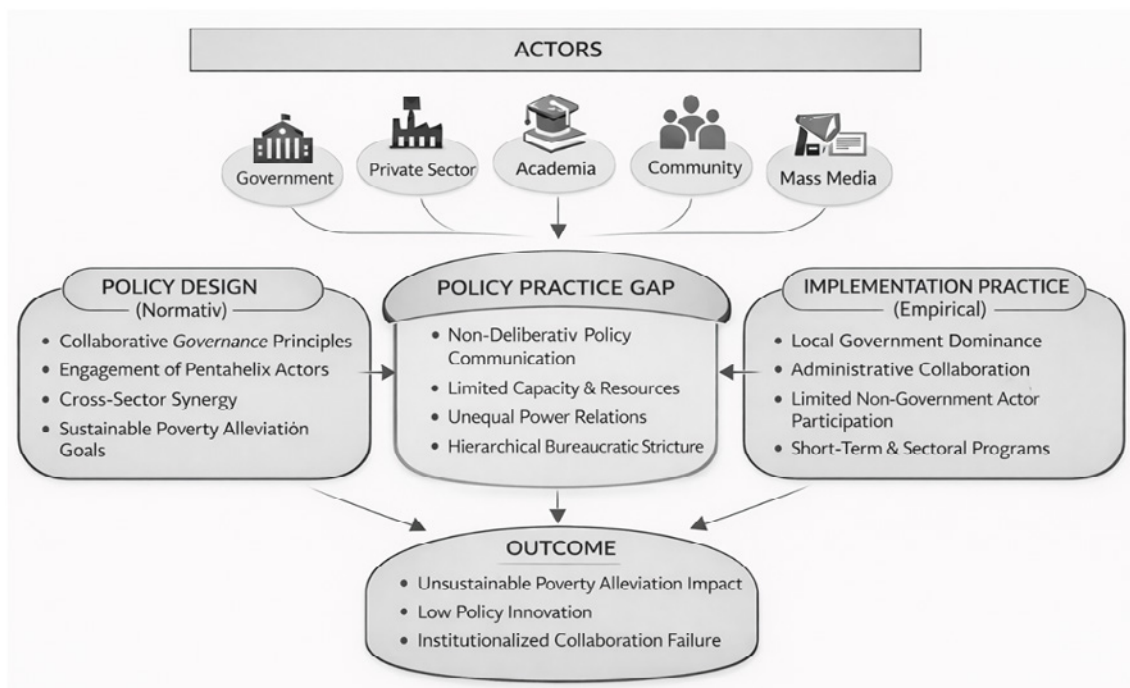


Figure 1. The Gap between Policy Design and Implementation Practice of Pentahelix Collaborative Governance

This figure shows a policy-practice gap in implementing pentahelix collaborative governance-based poverty alleviation policies at the regional level. Normatively, the policy design emphasizes collaboration, the involvement of pentahelix actors, and cross-sector synergy to achieve sustainable poverty alleviation goals. However, in practice, collaboration tends to be administrative and dominated by local governments, with limited participation from non-governmental actors. This gap is exacerbated by non-deliberative policy communication, limited capacity and resources, unequal power relations, and hierarchical bureaucratic structures. As a result, policy implementation has not yet produced sustainable impacts, policy innovation remains low, and pentahelix collaboration has not been effectively institutionalized.

3. Research Methods

Research Design

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design, aiming to deeply understand the implementation of pentahelix collaborative governance-based poverty alleviation policies at the

regional level. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore the processes, meanings, and dynamics of interactions among actors involved in poverty alleviation policies, which quantitative approaches cannot adequately explain. The case study design was used to comprehensively capture the empirical context, particularly regarding the gap between normative policy design and implementation practices in the field.



Figure 2. Stages of the Research Process

The research stages involved assessing gaps in implementing pentahelix-based collaborative governance poverty alleviation policies at the regional level. The research began with a conceptual study to develop an analytical framework based on collaborative governance theory. The next stage involved identifying informants and conducting field observations to map pentahelix actors and the dynamics of collaboration in practice. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, then analyzed thematically to identify implementation patterns and barriers to collaboration. The final stage involved data validity and reliability testing through triangulation and informant confirmation to ensure the credibility of the research findings.

Research Subjects and Informants

This research included actors directly and indirectly involved in formulating and implementing poverty alleviation policies. The researchers purposively selected informants based on their involvement, experience, and capacity within the pentahelix framework. Informants included local government representatives (relevant regional government agencies), academics, private sector representatives, community leaders and civil society organizations, and local media. The selection aimed to capture diverse perspectives and reflect the dynamics of collaboration among actors in poverty alleviation policies.

Data collection technique

The research team collected data through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, observation, and document review. Semi-structured in-depth interviews explored informants' perspectives, experiences, and assessments of the collaboration process, actors' roles, and obstacles to policy implementation. Observations were conducted to understand the context of policy implementation and interactions between actors in the field. Meanwhile, documentation studies examined regulations, planning documents, program reports, and other policy documents related to poverty alleviation. Together, these three techniques enabled researchers to obtain comprehensive and complementary data.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out thematically, following the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (2014). This included data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In

the data condensation stage, researchers coded and grouped data based on key themes relevant to the pentahelix collaborative governance framework, such as actor roles, collaboration mechanisms, power relations, and barriers to policy implementation. The data were then presented in an analytical narrative to identify patterns and relationships between categories. Conclusions were drawn iteratively by continuously checking the findings' consistency against the empirical data.

Data Validity and Validity

To ensure the validity and legitimacy of the data, this study employed several strategies, namely source and technique triangulation, member checking, and referential adequacy. The researcher triangulated data by comparing information from various informants and data collection techniques (Sugiyono, 2019). The researcher carried out member checking by reconfirming the main findings with key informants to ensure the accuracy of the researcher's interpretation (Sugiyono, 2019). In addition, referential adequacy is maintained by comparing official documents and policy data with field findings. This strategy aims to increase the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of research results.

4. Results and Discussion

Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Policies

The research findings indicate that regional-level poverty alleviation policies have formally adopted a collaborative governance approach, involving cross-sectoral actors, including local governments, the private sector, academics, community groups, and the mass media, in accordance with the pentahelix principle. The regional planning documents and program reports analyzed in this study affirm a normative commitment to building synergy between actors to reduce poverty and improve community welfare.

However, field findings show that this collaboration occurs more at the planning and administrative coordination levels, while at the program implementation and evaluation stages, government actors still dominate. Interview results reinforce this, indicating that non-governmental actors' involvement has not yet been substantive in the policy implementation process.

"Collaboration does exist in formal forums, but in program implementation the government still plays the dominant role... (local government agencies/OPD informant, 2025)".

In addition, field observations show that collaborative forums function more as formal coordination spaces than as arenas for equal, deliberative policy-making. This indicates a gap between collaborative policy design and actual implementation practices on the ground (policy-practice gap). This phenomenon aligns with findings by Lestari et al. (2024) and Akbar et al. (2025) on regional policy collaboration in Indonesia, which emphasize that collaboration is often symbolic and not yet fully institutionalized. To illustrate this condition more clearly, the following figure is presented:

Figure 3 illustrates that the local government functions as the central and dominant actor, while other stakeholders occupy peripheral positions with relatively limited levels of involvement.. From the perspective of collaborative governance Ansell & Gash (2007), this condition indicates that the prerequisites for collaboration, such as a balance of power, initial trust (starting conditions), and incentives for participation, have not been fully met. The imbalance in roles between actors prevents the collaboration process from proceeding in a deliberative and equal manner, resulting in policy outputs still reflecting a conventional bureaucratic approach.

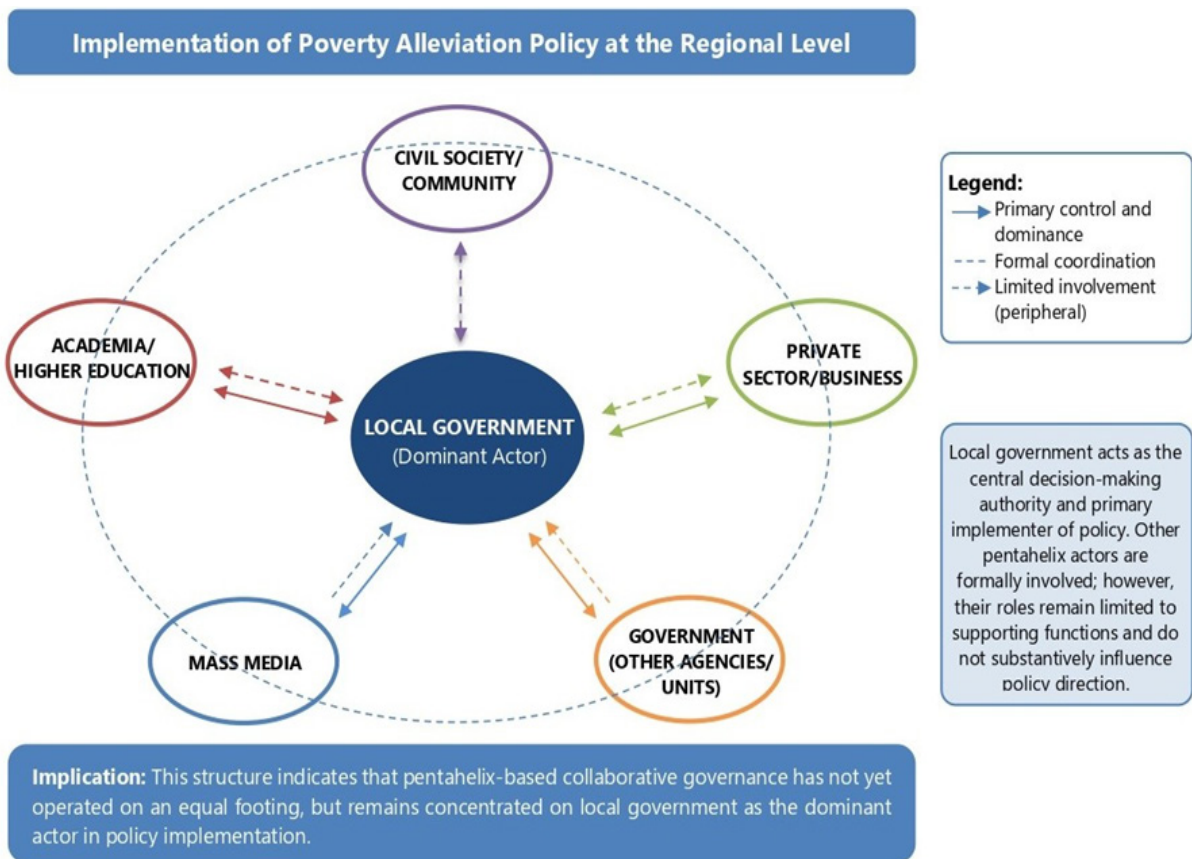


Figure 3. Structure of Pentahelix-Based Policy Implementation
Source: Author's elaboration (2025)

Actor Dynamics and Power Relations

Research findings show that although various non-governmental actors are formally involved, their roles tend to be limited to supporting roles, such as data providers, activity facilitators, or short-term technical partners. Academic actors, for example, contribute mainly to policy documents and initial studies, while their involvement in program monitoring and evaluation is relatively minimal. Interview findings indicate that academic and community actors still lack adequate space in policy decision-making processes.

"We are invited to provide input; however, we are not directly involved in determining policy directions.... (academic informant, 2025)"

The private sector and local communities also lack sufficient space to substantively influence policy direction. Observations indicate that private sector involvement remains largely ad hoc and has not yet been systematically or sustainably integrated into the policy framework.

This situation reflects asymmetrical power relations in the collaboration process, with local government remaining the dominant actor. This finding is consistent with previous studies by [Delgado-Baena & Sianes \(2024\)](#) and [Sumarno \(2025\)](#). Power dynamics are a crucial factor that often hinders the effectiveness of collaborative governance. To provide greater clarity regarding the distribution of roles among actors, the following figure is presented:

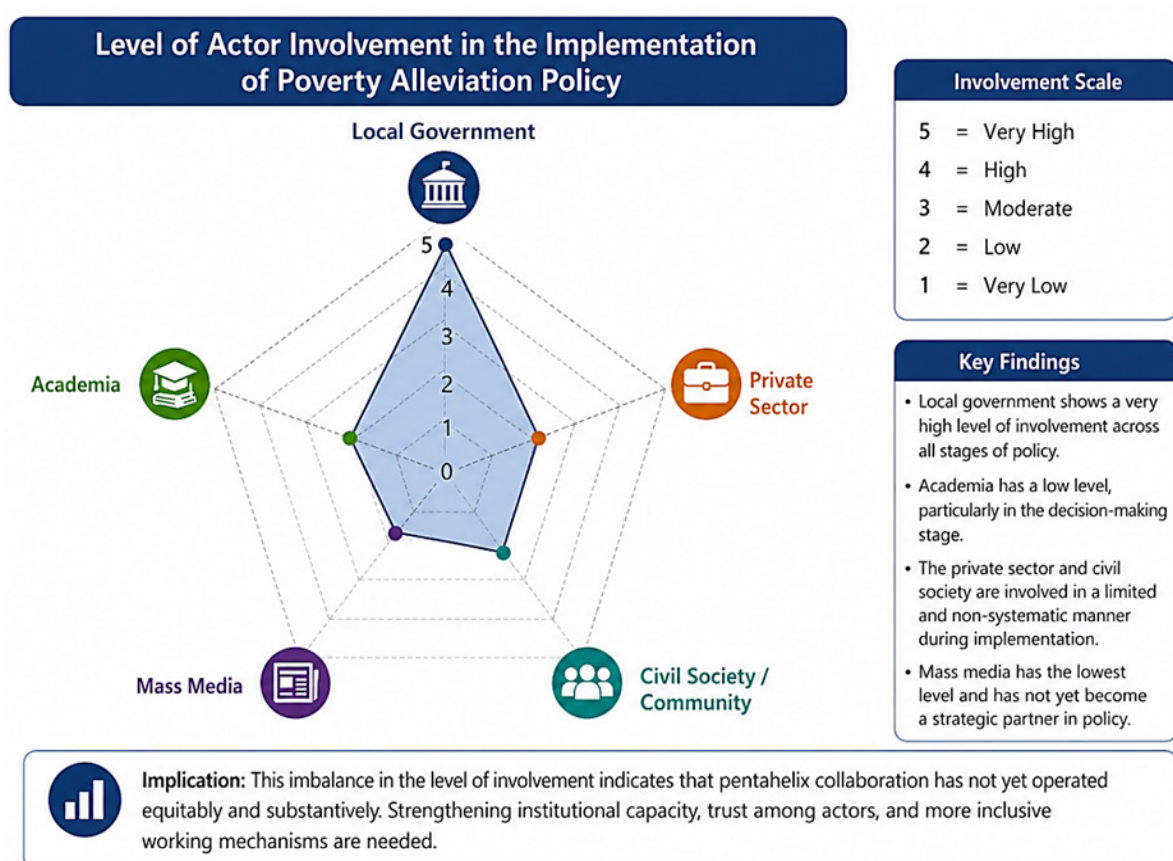


Figure 4. Level of Actor Involvement in the Pentahelix Model
Source: Author's elaboration (2025)

Figure 4 illustrates an imbalance in actor involvement, with the government showing the highest intensity of participation compared to other actors. In the Collaborative Governance Regime (CGR) framework proposed by Emerson, Kirk, & Nabatchi (2015), this condition indicates a weak dimension of shared motivation and capacity for joint action. Despite formal collaborative structures, low trust between actors and limited joint decision-making mechanisms hinder the formation of sustainable collective action.

Policy Implementation and Structural Barriers

Field observations and in-depth interviews indicate that implementing poverty alleviation policies still faces various structural obstacles. First, organizations have not systematically coordinated, resulting in programs that overlap or operate only partially.

"Programs across agencies are not yet integrated, with each operating according to its own authority... (government informant, 2025)."

Second, limited human resource capacity at the implementing level means the collaborative approach is not fully understood and is still interpreted as routine coordination. The collaborative approach is still interpreted as administrative coordination rather than as joint action across actors. Third, the absence of a joint evaluation mechanism among actors hinders collective policy learning.

From the perspective of policy implementation theory [Edward III \(1980\)](#), these obstacles are closely related to four key variables: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. Research findings indicate that policy communication between actors has not been effective, particularly in conveying collaborative objectives and clear role allocations. Furthermore, limited resources, both in terms of budget and implementation competency, also weaken the effectiveness of collaborative policy implementation.

The hierarchical bureaucratic structure is also a major inhibiting factor. Rigid working mechanisms and procedures limit non-governmental actors' flexibility to innovate and contribute actively. This strengthens the argument by [Farahani\(2024\)](#) and [Waardenburg et al. \(2020\)](#) that cross-sector collaboration often clashes with traditional bureaucratic logic. To clarify the interrelationships among implementation barriers, the following model is presented:

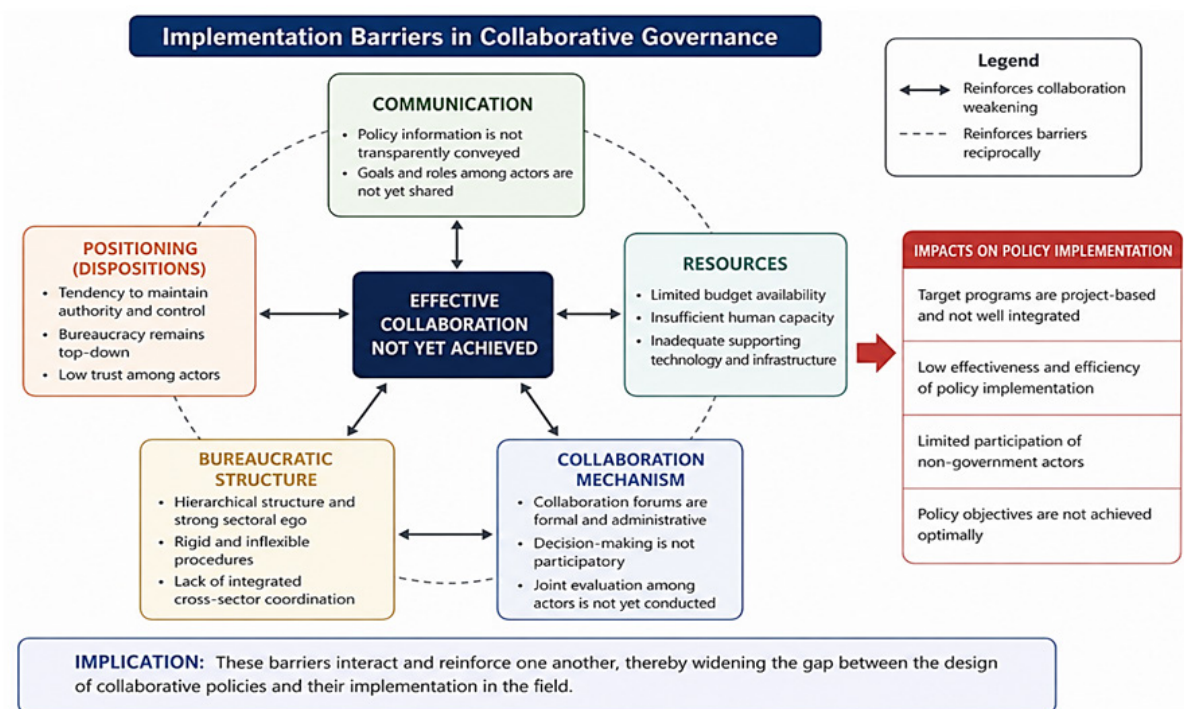


Figure 5. Implementation Barriers in Collaborative Governance
Source: Author's elaboration (2025)

Figure 5 illustrates that communication, resource, and bureaucratic structure barriers interact to reinforce the policy implementation gap.

Policy Design and Implementation Practices

One key finding is the significant gap between the design of collaborative poverty alleviation policies and their implementation on the ground. At the normative level, policies have adopted the principles of inclusivity, participation, and multi-actor synergy. However, at the operational level, policy implementation remains dominated by a sectoral, top-down approach.

This gap is empirically manifested in the absence of a clearly defined operational division of roles among actors, weak program integration, and limited participation in decision-making processes. To further elucidate this gap, the following model is presented:

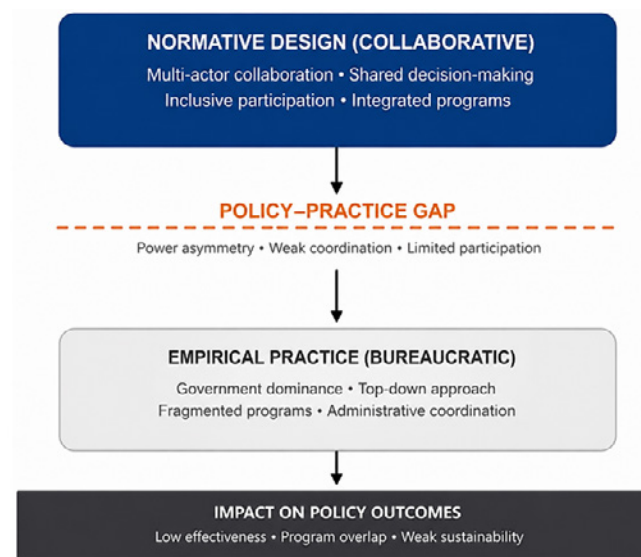


Figure 6. Policy–Practice Gap Model in Policy Implementation
Source: Author’s elaboration (2025)

Figure 6 illustrates the discrepancy between normative (collaborative) design and empirical (bureaucratic) practice, resulting in an implementation gap. This finding is consistent with the studies of Ebriyani & Oktaviani (2025) and Nugroho (2025). Within the context of collaborative governance, this gap indicates that collaboration has not yet become an established working norm.

Theoretical and Practical Implications of Research Findings

Theoretically, this study’s results enrich the study of collaborative governance by emphasizing the importance of integrating a policy implementation perspective into the analysis of multi-actor collaboration. These findings indicate that collaboration success depends not only on institutional design but also on actor capacity, power relations, and the local bureaucratic context. Practically, this study provides implications for local governments in designing more effective poverty alleviation policies. Strengthening joint decision-making mechanisms, increasing the capacity of non-governmental actors, and reforming bureaucratic procedures to be more adaptive are important prerequisites for closing the gap between policy design and implementation practices. Thus, the results and discussion confirm that the pentahelix collaborative governance approach has great potential in poverty alleviation, but its effectiveness depends heavily on the extent to which such collaboration can be substantively institutionalized in policy practice at the local level.

Table 2. Summary of Research Findings in the Perspective of Theoretical Framework

Theoretical Framework	Dimensions of Analysis	Empirical Findings of the Research	Analytical Implications
Ansell & Gash (2007)	<i>Starting conditions</i>	The initial conditions of collaboration were characterized by an imbalance in roles between actors; local governments were the dominant actors from the policy planning stage.	Unequal initial conditions hinder the creation of equal and deliberative collaboration.

Theoretical Framework	Dimensions of Analysis	Empirical Findings of the Research	Analytical Implications
Emerson & Nabatchi (2015)	Institutional design	The collaboration forum is formal and administrative in nature, and is not yet equipped with a joint decision-making mechanism.	Institutional design does not yet support substantive collaboration.
	Dialogue process	Interaction between actors is more coordinative than deliberative dialogue.	The collaboration process has not yet produced an inclusive policy consensus.
	<i>Shared motivation</i>	Trust and commitment between actors are relatively weak, especially from non-government actors.	Weak shared motivation hinders the sustainability of collaboration.
	<i>Capacity for joint action</i>	Limited technical and institutional capacity of non-governmental actors in program implementation.	The capacity for collective action has not yet been optimally formed.
Edwards III (1980)	Collaborative dynamics	Collaborations tend to be short-term projects and are not yet institutionalized.	<i>Collaborative governance regime has not developed sustainably.</i>
	Communication	Policy information and division of roles have not been conveyed clearly between actors.	Weak communication widens the implementation gap.
	Resources	Limited budget and human resources for implementation at the regional level.	Collaborative implementation is not running effectively.
	Disposition	The bureaucracy's low willingness to share authority with non-governmental actors.	Bureaucratic resistance hinders collaboration.
	Bureaucratic structure	Hierarchical and sectoral structures are still dominant.	Bureaucratic structures are not conducive to collaborative governance.

5. Conclusion

This study confirms that implementing poverty alleviation policies based on pentahelix collaborative governance at the regional level still faces a significant gap between normative policy design and implementation practices. Although regional policies have formally adopted the principle of multi-actor collaboration, empirical practice shows that local governments remain the dominant actors in policy planning and implementation, while the involvement of the private sector, academics, civil society, and the media remains administrative in nature and has not been substantively institutionalized. The empirical findings indicate that collaboration has yet to develop into the deliberative and participatory process envisioned in the collaborative governance framework, remaining largely confined to a formal, coordinative stage. Weak cross-actor communication, limited resources, a low bureaucratic disposition to share authority, and a hierarchical bureaucratic structure are the main factors explaining the gap in policy implementation. As a result, poverty alleviation policies tend to focus on short-term programs and have not been able to promote sustainable poverty reduction. Consequently, the principles of collaborative governance remain insufficiently internalized in policy practice, leading to suboptimal poverty-reduction outcomes.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the collaborative governance literature by demonstrating that the effectiveness of the pentahelix model depends not only on institutional design, but also on power relations, actor capacities, and the context of local policy implementation. The findings under-

score the importance of integrating collaborative governance with policy implementation theory to better explain the policy-practice gap. Empirically, the study reveals that the policy-practice gap in poverty alleviation is reflected in the dominance of government actors, the weak institutionalization of collaboration, and the limited involvement of non-governmental actors in decision-making processes.

This study has several limitations. First, the focus on a single regional context limits the generalizability of the findings, and the qualitative approach does not allow quantitative measurement of the impact of pentahelix collaboration on poverty reduction. Second, limited access to internal data from non-governmental actors limits in-depth analysis of collaboration dynamics. Therefore, future research should develop comparative studies across regions to identify variations in the implementation of collaborative governance in different contexts, and employ mixed-methods approaches to combine analysis of collaborative processes with quantitative measurement of policy impacts. In addition, further studies should highlight the role of facilitative leadership, strengthening non-governmental actors' capacities, and institutionalizing collaboration as key factors in bridging the gap between policy design and implementation practice. Thus, this study does not claim that the pentahelix collaborative governance approach is automatically effective; rather, it shows that its effectiveness depends on how fully collaboration can be operationalized and substantively institutionalized in regional policy practice.

6. References

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