

Paradox of Jakarta Special Region Autonomy in Decentralization and Deconcentration: A Governance Perspective

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Abstract: This study analyzes the paradox of regional autonomy in the Jakarta Special Capital Region (DKI Jakarta) from a governance perspective, focusing on the intersection of decentralization and deconcentration. As the capital city, DKI Jakarta possesses a unique status that allows the central government to retain significant control over strategic sectors. This research employs a qualitative approach using literature review and policy analysis, drawing on reputable international (Q1–Q3) and nationally accredited (Sinta) academic sources. The findings reveal that Jakarta's autonomy is inherently paradoxical: while decentralization is formally implemented, deconcentration mechanisms substantively constrain it. Authority remains partially distributed between central and local governments, and the region's autonomy in policymaking is limited. Central government intervention is particularly evident in strategic sectors such as transportation, spatial planning, and infrastructure development. Furthermore, decentralization's effectiveness in improving public service delivery remains inconsistent, and public participation tends to be procedural rather than substantive. The relationship between central and local governments also reflects a predominantly subordinate pattern, indicating persistent centralization tendencies. This study concludes that Jakarta's governance reflects a form of "quasi-decentralization," where decentralization and deconcentration coexist simultaneously. This condition shows that decentralization in Indonesia is neither uniform nor fully realized, as political, institutional, and strategic considerations shape it. Therefore, policy reforms are necessary to clarify authority distribution, strengthen local institutional capacity, and enhance coordination between central and local governments to achieve more balanced and effective governance.

1. Introduction

Indonesia following the Reformasi 1998. This transformation emerged in response to a highly centralized governmental system, particularly during the New Order era. From a governance perspective, decentralization is understood as a mechanism to distribute power more equitably between central and local governments. According to Rondinelli (1981), decentralization refers to transferring authority from central to local governments across various governmental functions. Therefore, decentralization encompasses not only administrative aspects but also political and fiscal dimensions.

Indonesia formally implemented decentralization with the enactment of Law No. 22 of 1999, later revised by Law No. 23 of 2014. These regulations granted local governments substantial authority to manage their own affairs. [Smith \(2023\)](#), argues that decentralization aims to enhance administrative efficiency and expand political participation at the local level. In this framework, local governments are given opportunities to innovate in governance practices. However, these policies have not always been implemented as intended.

In practice, decentralization in Indonesia faces various structural and political challenges. One major issue is unequal regional capacity to manage the authority delegated to them. [Falleti \(2010\)](#) suggests that decentralization often creates new power dynamics that do not necessarily improve governance performance. This is evident in Indonesia, where some regions have experienced governance inefficiencies. Thus, decentralization should be understood as a complex and non-linear process. DKI Jakarta, as the capital city, occupies a unique position within Indonesia's governance system. Law No. 29 of 2007 regulates its status and grants special authority in administering regional governance. As the center of national government, Jakarta functions not only as an autonomous region but also as a symbol of the state. This dual role creates a distinctive relationship between the central and local governments. From a governance perspective, this arrangement complicates the distribution of authority.

Jakarta's special status creates an overlap between decentralization and deconcentration principles. Deconcentration refers to delegating authority from the central government to its regional representatives. According to [Maddick \(1963\)](#), deconcentration is an administrative mechanism that remains under central control. Therefore, although responsibilities are delegated, the central government retains ultimate authority. This differs from decentralization, which gives local governments broader autonomy ([Salsabillah et al., 2024](#)). This overlap results in what can be described as a paradox of regional autonomy. On one hand, local governments are granted authority to manage their own affairs. On the other hand, the central government continues to exert strong influence over strategic policies. [Cheema & Rondinelli \(2007\)](#), note that such conditions are common in developing countries undergoing decentralization transitions. This suggests that decentralization does not necessarily reduce central power.

In the context of the Special Region of Jakarta, central government intervention is evident in various strategic sectors. For instance, in transportation infrastructure development, the central government plays a significant role in planning and financing. This condition demonstrates that local authorities are not fully autonomous. [Putra et al. \(2024\)](#) argue that central-local relations in Indonesia still exhibit centralistic tendencies in certain issues. This reinforces the argument that decentralization in Indonesia is partial. Moreover, spatial planning and environmental management sectors also reflect the central government's dominance. Central ministries often set policies on flood control and the development of strategic areas. This situation illustrates a dualism of authority between central and local governments. From a governance perspective, such conditions can hinder policy effectiveness. Therefore, a clear division of authority is essential.

Jakarta's autonomy paradox is also closely linked to national interests tied to its status as the capital city. The central government has a vested interest in maintaining political, economic, and security stability in Jakarta. As a result, it tends to retain control over the region. According to intergovernmental relations theory, strategic regions typically face strong central oversight. Consequently, local autonomy in Jakarta becomes constrained. From a political governance perspective, this condition reflects a continuous tension between central and local interests. Local governments seek to expand their autonomy, while the central government aims to maintain control. This dynamic creates friction in governance pro-

cesses. [Smith \(2023\)](#) suggests that such conflicts are a natural consequence of decentralization. Therefore, effective coordination mechanisms are required.

Furthermore, this phenomenon indicates inconsistencies in Indonesia's decentralization policy. On one hand, the government promotes regional autonomy; on the other, it maintains control through various policy instruments. [Falleti \(2010\)](#) argues that such inconsistencies can reduce decentralization's effectiveness. This may also create confusion in local policy implementation. These conditions have significant implications for the quality of public service delivery in the Special Region of Jakarta. Unclear authority distribution can hinder coordination among institutions, ultimately affecting efficiency and effectiveness. [Cheema and Rondinelli \(2007\)](#) emphasize that decentralization success depends heavily on clear delineation of authority. Therefore, addressing this paradox is crucial.

In addition, the autonomy paradox affects governmental accountability. When authority is ambiguous, it becomes difficult to determine responsibility for policy outcomes. This situation can reduce transparency and accountability. From a governance perspective, accountability is a fundamental principle of good governance. Hence, this issue requires serious attention. This phenomenon suggests that decentralization in Indonesia is still in a transitional phase. The process requires continuous institutional and regulatory adjustments. [Rondinelli \(1981\)](#) highlights that decentralization is a long-term process that demands policy consistency. Therefore, ongoing evaluation is necessary to ensure that its objectives are achieved.

In conclusion, examining the paradox of DKI Jakarta's autonomy is essential from a governance perspective. This phenomenon is not only academically relevant but also has practical implications for public administration. Analyzing the intersection of decentralization and deconcentration provides deeper insight into central-local dynamics in Indonesia. Moreover, this study can serve as a foundation for more effective policy formulation. Thus, it is expected to contribute to governance studies.

2. Literature Review

Decentralization

This literature review aims to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for understanding the paradox of regional autonomy in the Special Region of Jakarta, particularly the interaction between decentralization and deconcentration from a governance perspective. The relationship between central and local governments cannot be simply understood as a linear distribution of authority, but rather as a complex and evolving power dynamic. Since the Reformasi of 1998, various theories and approaches have been used to explain how Indonesia implements regional autonomy. In this regard, [Rondinelli \(1981\)](#) work serves as a foundational reference for understanding the spectrum of decentralization, which has since evolved in studies of intergovernmental relations and deconcentration mechanisms. Therefore, this section elaborates on three main theoretical frameworks: decentralization theory, deconcentration theory, and intergovernmental relations theory, as analytical tools to examine the paradoxical nature of Jakarta's autonomy.

Decentralization theory serves as the primary foundation for understanding how authority is distributed between central and local governments within a governance system. From a governance perspective, decentralization is defined as the transfer of power intended to improve administrative efficiency, enhance political participation, and bring public services closer to the people. [Rondinelli \(1981\)](#) classifies decentralization into several forms, namely deconcentration, delegation, devolution, and privatization, each reflecting different levels of autonomy. Meanwhile, [Smith \(2023\)](#) emphasizes that decentralization is not only administrative but also political, as it relates to the distribution of power within the state.

In the Indonesian context, decentralization has been widely implemented since the Reformasi era through regulatory frameworks that grant local governments substantial authority. However, as [Falleti \(2010\)](#) argues, decentralization often produces new power dynamics that do not necessarily align with its original objectives. This suggests that decentralization is not a linear process but one shaped by continuous negotiation between central and local governments. Therefore, decentralization theory is crucial for explaining how national interests both establish and constrain regional autonomy in DKI Jakarta.

Deconcentration

Deconcentration theory explains how the central government delegates authority to regional representatives without substantially reducing central control. In public administration studies, deconcentration is considered the weakest form of decentralization because it does not grant local governments full autonomy ([Jia & Nie, 2017](#); [Rahmatunnisa et al., 2018](#); [Wong et al., 2021](#)). According to [Maddick \(1963\)](#), deconcentration is an instrument used to extend the reach of central government administration more effectively across regions. In this sense, it represents not a transfer of power, but rather a redistribution of administrative functions.

In Indonesia, deconcentration is often utilized to manage strategic sectors such as infrastructure, spatial planning, and national policy implementation ([Tauda, 2018](#)). This creates a situation in which local governments possess limited authority in decision-making processes. In DKI Jakarta, deconcentration is even more prominent because it is the national capital, where national interests are highly concentrated. Thus, deconcentration theory helps explain why the central government continues to play a dominant role in governing Jakarta, despite the formal existence of regional autonomy ([Guritno et al., 2019](#); [Putra & Jeflin, 2025](#)).

Intergovernmental relations theory focuses on the dynamics of power relations between central and local governments within a state. This theory argues that these relationships are not static but are shaped by political, economic, and institutional factors. According to [Prabowo & Tjenreng \(2025\)](#), several models of central-local relations exist, including coordinative, competitive, and subordinate models, each reflecting varying degrees of central dominance. In unitary states like Indonesia, central-local relations tend to exhibit a dominant pattern, particularly in strategically important regions.

In the context of the Special Region of Jakarta, this theory is highly relevant in explaining the ongoing contestation of authority between central and local governments. Jakarta's status as the seat of national government creates strong incentives for the central government to maintain control over regional policies. This aligns with [Cheema and Rondinelli \(2007\)](#), who suggest that decentralization in developing countries is often accompanied by persistent central control. Therefore, intergovernmental relations theory provides a useful analytical framework for understanding the autonomy paradox in DKI Jakarta, where decentralization and deconcentration coexist in governance practice.

3. Research Methods

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical research design to examine the autonomy paradox in DKI Jakarta in depth from a governance perspective. This approach is chosen because it can explain the complex, contextual, and non-linear dynamics between decentralization and deconcentration. The research is conducted through a library research method by referring to various scholarly sources, including reputable international journals (Q1, Q2, Q3) and accredited national jour-

nals (Sinta 1–3), such as the works of [Falleti \(2010\)](#), [Cheema & Rondinelli \(2007\)](#), and [Haris \(2005\)](#). The data collected consist of secondary documents, including journal articles, academic books, and regulations related to decentralization and central–local government relations. In addition, the research questions are structured based on three main theoretical frameworks—decentralization theory, deconcentration theory, and intergovernmental relations—which are further operationalized into research indicators to ensure analytical focus and systematic inquiry.

The data analysis technique uses an interactive qualitative analysis model consisting of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involves selecting and focusing on information relevant to the research objectives, particularly the distribution of authority, central government intervention, and patterns of central–local relations in the Special Region of Jakarta. The data are then presented as analytical narratives and tables to facilitate understanding and comparison across findings from different sources. The final stage involves drawing conclusions inductively by linking empirical findings with the theoretical frameworks employed. Through this method, the study aims to comprehensively explain the emergence of the autonomy paradox resulting from the intersection of decentralization and deconcentration, while also contributing theoretically to governance studies, particularly in understanding the dynamics of central–local relations in Indonesia.

4. Results and Discussion

The distribution of authority between the central government and the Provincial Government of Special Region of Jakarta has been normatively regulated through various post-Reformasi 1998 policies that emphasize decentralization principles. These authorities include managing local government affairs such as public services, development planning, and regional financial administration. However, in practice, the division of authority does not operate optimally, as the central government still dominates certain sectors. This suggests that the distribution of authority is more administrative than political. Consequently, Jakarta has not fully realized the principle of full devolution.

In practice, the central government retains control over strategic policies such as transportation, spatial planning, and the management of national strategic areas. This limits the local government's flexibility to set independent policy directions. These findings align with [Falleti \(2010\)](#), who argues that decentralization often creates new power configurations without eliminating central dominance. In other words, the existing distribution of authority does not fully reflect genuine regional autonomy. This situation also suggests an imbalance in how decentralization policies are implemented.

Furthermore, this partial distribution of authority affects the effectiveness of local governance. The lack of clear boundaries between central and local authority may lead to overlapping policies and administrative inefficiencies. It also constrains regional innovation by limiting policy space. From a governance perspective, an imbalanced distribution of authority can weaken accountability and responsiveness. Therefore, restructuring authority relations in a more proportional manner becomes necessary.

Formally, the Government of Special Region of Jakarta possesses a relatively broad degree of autonomy in public policymaking. The local government is authorized to formulate policies, particularly in public service delivery and administrative governance. However, in practice, its independence remains limited in areas that carry national strategic importance. This indicates that local autonomy is relative rather than absolute. Thus, regional autonomy in Jakarta can be considered constrained.

In sectors such as mass transportation, flood control, and spatial planning, the central government often plays a direct role in decision-making processes. This involvement extends beyond regulation to

include planning and funding of major projects. Such conditions demonstrate that local governments do not have full discretion in shaping strategic policies. As [Cheema and Dennis A. Rondinelli \(2007\)](#) note, this reflects a form of decentralization that still maintains central control. This indicates that local independence operates within a framework of central supervision.

These autonomy limitations affect local governments' flexibility in responding to community needs. Dependence on central policies may slow local decision-making. Moreover, it may reduce policy innovation tailored to local contexts. In governance studies, autonomy is a key element in achieving effective and responsive administration. Therefore, enhancing local independence remains a major challenge in Jakarta's decentralization process.

The effectiveness of decentralization in improving public service quality in DKI Jakarta shows mixed results. On the one hand, decentralization has encouraged innovation in public services, including digitalization and improved accessibility. Local governments have gained space to develop policies that better respond to citizens' needs. This demonstrates a positive impact of decentralization on service delivery. However, such effectiveness is not uniform across all sectors.

On the other hand, several obstacles hinder optimal service delivery. One major issue is the lack of coordination among institutions, both within local agencies and between central and local governments. This condition leads to inefficiencies in service provision. [Dick-Sagoe \(2020\)](#) argues that decentralization does not always significantly improve public service quality. This suggests that decentralization's success largely depends on institutional capacity.

Additionally, unclear authority distribution contributes to ineffective public services. Overlapping responsibilities can confuse policy implementation. This slows government responses to public needs. From a governance perspective, effective public service requires clear structures and strong coordination. Therefore, institutional strengthening is essential to enhance decentralization outcomes.

Public participation in local governance in DKI Jakarta has developed notably in recent years. Participatory mechanisms such as development planning forums (Musrenbang) and digital platforms have given citizens opportunities to engage in policymaking. This suggests that decentralization has created space for greater public involvement. Participation is a key indicator of local-level democratic governance. However, such participation still has limitations.

The existing participation tends to be procedural rather than substantive. Citizens are often involved only in consultation stages without significant influence on final decision-making. [Hadinatha \(2025\)](#) argue that decentralization does not automatically guarantee meaningful participation. This suggests that effective participation requires more inclusive and transparent mechanisms. Therefore, public participation in Jakarta remains transitional.

These limitations affect the quality of public policies produced. Policies that do not fully incorporate public input may be less responsive to local needs. Moreover, limited substantive participation can reduce policy legitimacy. From a governance perspective, public participation is a crucial component of good governance. Hence, efforts are needed to enhance the quality of citizen engagement.

This study identifies central government intervention in strategic policymaking in DKI Jakarta as a key finding. The central government plays a significant role in major projects such as transportation infrastructure development and strategic area management. This intervention occurs through regulations, funding, and inter-ministerial coordination. This demonstrates that the central government remains a dominant actor in strategic policymaking. Consequently, local governments' role becomes limited.

This dominance reflects strong deconcentration practices within Indonesia's governance system. Under deconcentration, authority delegated to local levels remains under central control. [Manor \(2011\)](#)

emphasizes the importance of balance between central and local governments in decentralization. However, in Jakarta's case, such balance has not been fully achieved. This indicates an imbalance in power distribution.

The implications of this intervention include limited space for local innovation. Policies heavily controlled by the central government reduce local flexibility in addressing specific needs. Excessive intervention may also lead to conflicts of authority. From a governance perspective, this condition calls for redefining central–local relations. Therefore, more balanced coordination mechanisms are necessary.

The relationship between the central government and DKI Jakarta tends to follow a subordinative pattern, where the central government holds a dominant position. This is evident from its strong influence over strategic policies in Jakarta. [Hadinatha \(2025\)](#) notes that in a unitary state system, central–local relations often involve power contestation. This creates complex dynamics in governance practices. Thus, the relationship in Jakarta is not entirely equal.

The persistence of central dominance also reflects ongoing centralization tendencies. [Haris \(2005\)](#) argues that despite decentralization policies, central control is maintained through various mechanisms. This indicates that decentralization has not fully replaced centralized governance structures. In Jakarta, this condition is further reinforced by its status as the capital city. Therefore, central–local relations in Jakarta are uniquely complex.

Ultimately, this creates the autonomy paradox. On the one hand, decentralization grants authority to local governments; on the other hand, deconcentration strengthens central control. This paradox reflects a discrepancy between normative concepts and empirical realities. From a governance perspective, this phenomenon highlights the complexity and dynamism of decentralization processes. Hence, a more comprehensive approach is needed to understand central–local relations in Indonesia.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the autonomy of the Special Region of Jakarta exists in a paradoxical condition, characterized by the simultaneous coexistence of decentralization and deconcentration in governance practices. Conceptually, decentralization is meant to grant local governments broad authority to manage public affairs independently. However, in practice, the central government continues to maintain significant control through various regulatory and policy instruments. This condition reflects a discrepancy between the normative design and empirical implementation of decentralization. As a result, regional autonomy in Jakarta cannot be fully understood as a complete form of devolution. Instead, it represents a hybrid governance arrangement that challenges classical decentralization theory.

This paradox aligns with [Cheema & Rondinelli \(2007\)](#), who argue that decentralization in developing countries does not necessarily diminish central dominance. [Falleti \(2010\)](#) further argues that decentralization often produces new power configurations without eliminating central control. In DKI Jakarta, this is reflected in the central government's continued dominance over strategic sectors such as infrastructure and spatial planning. Consequently, decentralization in Jakarta appears more administrative than political. This strengthens the characterization of Jakarta's governance as "quasi-decentralized."

The special status of the Special Region of Jakarta as the capital city also plays a crucial role in reinforcing central government dominance. As the country's administrative and political center, Jakarta carries strategic national interests that extend beyond local governance. This gives the central government strong justification for retaining control over key policies. Such conditions highlight the importance of geopolitical and administrative considerations in shaping decentralization practices. Therefore, Jakarta's

autonomy cannot be separated from broader national interests. This interconnectedness complicates decentralization implementation.

Furthermore, the findings confirm that decentralization in Indonesia is inherently asymmetric. As Fauzan & Ardhanariswai (2023) highlight, different regions experience varying degrees of autonomy depending on their political, economic, and administrative contexts. DKI Jakarta, as a special region, receives distinct treatment compared to other provinces. This creates an imbalance in how decentralization is implemented nationwide. Consequently, regional autonomy cannot be viewed as a uniform policy applied equally to all regions. Instead, it must be understood as context-dependent and differentiated.

Shoesmith et al. (2020) support this argument, showing that decentralization in Indonesia is uneven across regions. Some regions have stronger institutional capacities that enable them to manage autonomy effectively, while others struggle with structural limitations. Interestingly, Jakarta's strong institutional capacity does not automatically translate into greater independence. This is largely due to persistent central government intervention. Thus, capacity alone cannot determine decentralization success. Power relations remain the dominant factor shaping governance outcomes.

Central government intervention also indicates the continued use of deconcentration mechanisms to manage strategic policies. These interventions often result in overlapping authority between central and local governments. This overlap reveals weaknesses in decentralization policy design. According to Prasetyo et al. (2021), legal politics plays a significant role in shaping decentralization policies, often reflecting political interests rather than purely technocratic considerations. This highlights the political nature of decentralization processes. As a result, competing interests shape governance outcomes.

In addition, Natsir (2025) argues that regional autonomy often fails because divisions of authority are unclear. This issue is particularly evident in DKI Jakarta, where the boundaries between central and local authority remain ambiguous. Such ambiguity can lead to conflicts of authority and inefficiencies in policy implementation. It also undermines governmental accountability, as responsibilities become difficult to assign. Therefore, clear regulatory frameworks are essential for effective decentralization. Without clear guidelines, governance performance is likely to suffer.

From a governance perspective, these findings reflect unstable central–local relations characterized by continuous negotiation and contestation. Formal regulations shape the relationship between central and local governments, but political and economic interests also do. This creates ongoing tensions in the distribution of authority. These dynamics show that decentralization is not static but evolving. Consequently, adaptive governance approaches are required to manage these complexities. Flexibility is key to addressing these challenges.

Moreover, the autonomy paradox in the Special Region of Jakarta shows that decentralization does not necessarily reduce central power. Instead, it may function as a mechanism to redistribute responsibilities while retaining central control. This creates a hybrid governance system that blends centralization and decentralization. Such arrangements are often referred to as "quasi-decentralization." This concept challenges traditional assumptions about decentralization. It suggests that autonomy requires critical re-evaluation.

Jakarta's hybrid governance also raises questions about decentralization's effectiveness as a policy instrument. While decentralization aims to improve efficiency and responsiveness, persistent central control may limit these benefits. Local governments may face constraints in adapting policies to local needs. This can reduce overall governance effectiveness. Therefore, decentralization's success depends on balancing autonomy and control. Achieving this balance remains a key challenge.

Another important implication of this study is how overlapping authority affects policy coordination. When multiple levels of government share responsibilities without clear boundaries, coordination becomes more difficult. This can delay decision-making and create inconsistencies in policy implementation. In Jakarta, such issues are particularly evident in sectors like transportation and urban planning. These sectors require integrated approaches, but fragmented authority often hinders them. As a result, governance efficiency is compromised.

The persistence of central dominance also reflects broader structural characteristics of Indonesia's unitary state system. In such systems, central governments tend to retain significant authority, especially in strategic areas. This aligns with [Hadinatha \(2025\)](#), who highlights the ongoing tension between centralization and decentralization. Jakarta's status as the capital further intensifies this dynamic. Consequently, the central government's role remains indispensable. This reinforces the subordinative pattern of central-local relations.

Beyond structural factors, political considerations also shape decentralization outcomes. Central government intervention is often driven by national political priorities. This can lead to inconsistencies in policy implementation at the local level. Local governments may be required to align their policies with national agendas, even when these do not fully address local needs. This creates a tension between local autonomy and national interests. Managing this tension is a critical governance challenge.

Economic factors further complicate decentralization in Jakarta. As Indonesia's economic hub, Jakarta holds significant financial and strategic importance. This increases the central government's interest in maintaining control over key sectors. Economic considerations often justify central intervention in local governance. However, this can limit local governments' ability to exercise autonomy. Thus, economic centrality reinforces political centralization.

The study also highlights the importance of institutional capacity in determining decentralization outcomes. While Jakarta has relatively strong institutions, these are not sufficient to ensure full autonomy. Institutional capacity must be complemented by clear authority and supportive regulatory frameworks. Without these elements, even well-developed institutions may struggle to function effectively. This underscores decentralization's multidimensional nature. Governance success depends on multiple interacting factors.

Another key issue is accountability in decentralized governance. When authority is unclear, accountability mechanisms become weakened. It becomes difficult to determine which level of government is responsible for specific outcomes. This can reduce public trust in government institutions. Strengthening accountability requires clearly delineating roles and responsibilities. Therefore, improving governance transparency is essential.

The findings also suggest that decentralization in Jakarta is influenced by historical and institutional legacies. The transition from a highly centralized system to a decentralized one is still ongoing. This transitional nature creates inconsistencies in policy implementation. Institutional inertia may hinder the full realization of decentralization goals. Thus, historical context plays a significant role in shaping current governance practices. Understanding this context is crucial for policy reform.

Furthermore, the study shows that decentralization policies often take shape through negotiation and compromise among political actors. Different stakeholders have varying interests that influence policy outcomes. This creates a complex policy environment in which decisions are not purely technical. Political bargaining becomes a central feature of governance. Consequently, decentralization must be understood as a political process. This perspective provides deeper insight into governance dynamics.

The paradox of autonomy also affects public service delivery. When authority is fragmented, service provision may become less efficient. Coordination challenges can lead to duplication of efforts or gaps in service delivery. This affects the quality of services citizens receive. Improving service delivery requires better integration of governance structures. Therefore, policy coherence is essential.

In addition, decentralization and deconcentration can coexist, creating institutional complexity. Multiple layers of authority may overlap, leading to bureaucratic inefficiencies. This complexity can slow decision-making. It may also confuse stakeholders. Simplifying governance structures could help address these issues. However, this requires significant policy reform.

The study also underscores the importance of consistent decentralization policy. Frequent regulatory changes can create uncertainty for local governments. This uncertainty may hinder long-term planning and development. Stable and coherent policies are necessary for effective governance. Therefore, policymakers should prioritize policy continuity. This will support sustainable decentralization.

Another implication is the need for improved coordination mechanisms between central and local governments. Effective coordination can reduce conflicts and improve policy implementation. It also enhances mutual understanding between different levels of government. Strengthening coordination requires institutional reforms and capacity building. This is particularly important in complex governance environments like Jakarta. Collaborative governance approaches may offer potential solutions.

The findings also highlight the role of legal frameworks in shaping decentralization. Clear and consistent legal regulations are essential for defining authority and responsibilities. Weak legal frameworks can lead to ambiguity and conflict. Strengthening legal institutions is therefore crucial. This will support more effective governance. Legal clarity is foundational to successful decentralization.

Moreover, the concept of "quasi-decentralization" provides a useful analytical lens for understanding Jakarta's governance. It captures the hybrid nature of authority distribution. This concept challenges traditional binary views of centralization and decentralization. It reflects the reality of governance in many developing countries. Thus, it contributes to theoretical development in governance studies.

Finally, this study concludes that the autonomy of the Special Region of Jakarta is not fully devolutive but closer to an expanded form of deconcentration. This paradox reflects the complexity of Indonesia's governance system, influenced by structural, political, and institutional factors. Decentralization should therefore be viewed as an evolving process rather than a fixed outcome. Continuous policy evaluation is necessary to improve governance effectiveness. Achieving a more balanced relationship between central and local governments remains a critical objective.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the autonomy of the Special Region of Jakarta exists in a paradoxical condition characterized by the simultaneous operation of decentralization and deconcentration. Normatively, decentralization is designed to grant local governments broad authority, enabling them to manage governmental affairs independently. However, empirical findings show that the central government still maintains substantial control, particularly in strategic sectors such as transportation, spatial planning, and national strategic areas. This indicates that regional autonomy in Jakarta is not fully devolutive but rather administrative and limited. Consequently, decentralization implementation does not fully align with its theoretical foundations.

Furthermore, the distribution of authority between central and local governments remains partial and imbalanced. Central intervention constrains the Jakarta provincial government's policymaking

autonomy, reducing flexibility and limiting policy innovation. The effectiveness of decentralization in improving public service delivery also varies, largely depending on institutional capacity and intergovernmental coordination. While public participation has increased through formal mechanisms, it remains largely procedural and has not yet significantly influenced strategic decision-making. These findings highlight structural and institutional challenges in achieving effective decentralization.

In addition, the relationship between the central government and Jakarta reflects a predominantly subordinative pattern, reinforcing central dominance within a unitary state system. Jakarta's status as the national capital strengthens the central government's justification for maintaining control over key policies. This confirms that decentralization in Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta, is asymmetric and context-dependent. Ultimately, the "autonomy paradox" illustrates a discrepancy between the normative concept of decentralization and its practical implementation, resulting in a form of quasi-decentralization in governance.

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