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# **A Study on Regional Government Innovation: An Innovation Study of the Poverty Alleviation Program in West Bandung Regency**

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**Abstract.** This study is conducted to address three research questions and explain the study's focus, namely: (1) the process of innovation program development; (2) the innovation capacity of the local government; and (3) the construction of an effective and efficient local government innovation model. This study applies a qualitative approach, where data was collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, using a spiral model of data analysis. The study finds that (1) the process of developing the poverty alleviation innovation program occurs through political (regulatory function) and managerial (management process) channels, which have been conducted innovatively; (2) there are four elements of innovation capacity analyzed, namely the innovative leadership of the Regent, implementing apparatus, budget, and program regulations. Innovation capacity is highly influenced by the Regent's leadership initiative and innovation is highly dependent on the budget (Regional/National Budget), while other capacity elements remain weak. Finally, a research recommendation is formulated, stating that the development of poverty alleviation innovation programs must be supported by innovative political and managerial processes. Innovation programs can originate from the government's internal or external partners through adoption with a replication strategy. Local government innovation policies and programs can be effective in both the short and long term if they are based on an innovation capacity that includes innovative leadership, quality of the work team, strong structures and systems, and the ability to manage external influences, all framed within a national innovation policy and program design.

**Keywords.** innovation, innovation capacity, local government, poverty alleviation

## **Introduction**

Hoessein (2011) argues that in the era of regional autonomy, autonomous regions (provinces, regencies/cities) increasingly have the power to control their own governance. Autonomous regions require the courage and ability to differentiate themselves from other regions (ability to create a difference). Regional autonomy provides space for regions to perform "political maneuvers" in expressing their autonomous policies. From an administrative perspective, there is significant room for creativity in the management of local government, which is referred to as discretion.

The problem identified by previous researchers, as indicated by Orange et al. (2007), is that innovation in local government often overlooks the important aspect of social values, which is crucial to consider. These social values encompass the human aspect, the process aspect, and the technological aspect in innovation development. These three social aspects must be mutually sustainable; if not, the innovation will encounter obstacles in its development. The issue of values in innovation development is also raised by Pekkarinen et al. (2011), who state that innovation in public sector organizations often experiences a clash between old and new values. This conflict of values inevitably creates problems for their respective proponents.

The complexity of challenges in local government innovation development, emerging from the several perspectives above, can be grouped into several elements, namely: (1) weak political drive and a lack of inspiring leadership commitment to foster innovation growth, including an over-reliance on specific individual leaders; (2) an organizational culture resistant to innovation (innovation culture) embedded within public organizations; (3) an ineffective innovation process, encompassing unimplemented strategies for engaging other stakeholders and conflicts of values in innovation development; (4) the low institutional capacity of the government bureaucracy to innovate; (5) the absence of a legal foundation for innovative practices; (6) the issue of sustainability, where innovation programs often fail to be sustained; and (7) the lack of integrated innovation development policies between local and national governments.

Within the context of this research, the importance of understanding the essence of local government innovation can be viewed from various perspectives: theoretical, normative, and empirical. From a theoretical or conceptual perspective, it must first be clarified that the use of the term 'innovation' differs from the term 'reform'. Although semantically the terms innovation and reform share a similar meaning change for the better and Caiden & Puniha (2011:155) state that 'reform is an innovation', their meanings have diverged over time. However, in its development, innovation has a different meaning compared to reform.

Innovation signifies novelty or newness. This characteristic of novelty possesses two important factors: the creation of new value and, secondly, the generation of new knowledge. A method, product, or process within an organization is considered innovative if it generates new value. The emergence of this method, product, or process yields something more valuable or of greater worth to the public or other parties. Often, this value is economic, as in the case of innovation in business organizations. Nevertheless, in the context of local government innovation, Orange et al. (2007) emphasize that social value ought to be placed at the center of attention.

However, in the case of local government innovation, Scientific research on local government innovation related to poverty alleviation is essential because poverty is a primary issue in our country, characterized by precarious conditions across various sectors marked by vulnerability, powerlessness, isolation, and an inability to voice aspirations. Furthermore, Gusri et al. (2022) explain that these poor conditions can lead to issues such as low active public participation, low quality and productivity of the community, socio-economic burdens on society, a decline in public order and peace, and a decrease in public trust in the bureaucracy regarding public services.

The context of this study on local government innovation will therefore focus on the realization of regulatory authority (policy planning function) and administrative authority (policy implementation function) concerning poverty alleviation, which has been devolved to autonomous regions. This authority is in accordance with Article 12 Paragraph (1) point (f) of Law No. 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government and Article 7 Paragraph (2) letter a of

Government Regulation No. 38 of 2007 concerning the Division of Governmental Affairs between the Central Government, Provincial Regional Governments, and City/Regency Governments.

Based on the logical flow of the research background and the research focus as previously outlined, several research problems are formulated to sharpen the analysis in this study, including: (1) How is the current process of developing local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency? (2) What is the capacity for local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency? and (3) What is an effective and efficient recommended model for local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency?

Based on the research questions formulated above, this study aims: (1) To describe and analyze the current process of developing local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency, (2) To describe and analyze the capacity for local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency, and (3) To construct a recommended model for effective and efficient local government innovation development related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency.

The utility of this research encompasses two aspects: (1) Theoretically, this research aims to examine the application of the innovation concept in public sector organizations, specifically in autonomous regions, concerning the regulation and management of areas related to the poverty alleviation program devolved by the central government. Therefore, this study provides a more detailed explanation of the application of the innovation concept within government bureaucracy. According to Wilson (1994), government bureaucracy includes the executive, managerial, and operational levels. Furthermore, this study on innovation also aims to identify the trends in the types of innovations being developed and the level of innovation that has been achieved, as well as to understand the innovation capacity of the local government. Through the use of qualitative analysis methods, the primary expectation from the results of this research is to enrich the development of public administration studies, particularly those concerning current urban innovation issues. (2) Practically, the results of this research can provide input for the considerations and deliberations of West Bandung Regency in regulating and managing its region related to the creation of poverty alleviation programs in its area. Specifically, the results of this study will provide input to the Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), the local government, and stakeholders involved in the development of local government innovation related to the creation of poverty alleviation programs, both at the policy level, the administrative (organizational) level, and the operational level. Another benefit of this research is that it can serve as an additional reference or a resource for other researchers, particularly those interested in studying the topic of innovation in the public sector, especially in local government.

## **Literature Review**

### **Public Administration**

1. According to Mufiz (2017:56), public administration is a science that studies cooperation in the public sector. Public administration is a branch of administrative science. Therefore, all theories, concepts, and analyses related to administrative science also apply to public administration science. From the perspective of (Shafritz et al., 2000:56) in their book "Introducing Public Administration," the meaning of public administration cannot be captured through a single definition, as every public management enthusiast has a different point of view,

leading to different definitions. In line with this, (Shafritz et al., 2000:56) develop the understanding of public administration into four categories or perspectives, which include: (1) a political perspective, (2) a legal perspective, (3) a management perspective, and (4) a professional perspective.

**Table 1.** Category of The Definition of Public Administration

No.	Category/Perspective	Definitions of Public Administration
1.	Political	As what government does?; Both direct and indirect; A phase in the public policy; Implementing the public interest; and Doing collectively that which cannot be so well done.
2.	Legal	As law in action; Regulation; The King's largesse; and Theft.
3.	Managerial	As the executive function in government; Management specialty; Mickey mouse; Art, not science-or-Vice versa.
4.	Occupational	As an occupational category; An essay contest; Idealism in action; An academic field; and a profession.

Source: (Shafritz et al., 2000:56).

Table 1 shows that the classification of public administration definitions can be understood from four angles: First, from a political point of view, public administration is considered as "what government does" either directly or indirectly, the public policy-making cycle, the realization of public interest, and as activities carried out collectively because they cannot be performed individually. Second, from a legal perspective, public administration is regarded as the application of law (executive law), regulation, the act of providing something from a sovereign or "king" to the people (broadly by the king), and as a form of "theft"—that is, the act of appropriating goods from some people to be lawfully distributed to the poor in the form of tax legislation (tax regulations), where the affected party must submit and comply. Third, from a management standpoint, public administration is the executive function in a state, a form of management specialization (achieving results through others), the "Mickey Mouse" symbol of public administration, poor administrative behaviors like bureaucracy, inefficiency, corruption, collusion, etc. It is also seen as an art, involving common sense and judgment, where a director's skill is sometimes more decisive than their specific knowledge. Fourth, the career perspective, where public administration can be understood as a specific type of profession, describing certain government-funded and implemented programs or projects, as the application of principles and ideals through which people seek to achieve their dreams, and as an academic field that continues to study the art and craft, the science of management for application in the public sector. The study and understanding of public administration can also be viewed through models constructed by public management experts.

### **Local Government Management**

Understanding the various issues of local government management is essential for examining the innovations undertaken by local governments in greater depth. Bingham, (1991)

edited a book titled *Managing Local Government: Public Administration in Practice*. In this book, Bingham presents writings from numerous experts in the field of public administration. These various chapters are categorized into several sections, which represent important aspects to understand in local government management. These aspects include: (1) the relationship between elected officials and experts (professional staff); (2) budget and financial management; (3) public personnel management; (4) making local government more efficient and responsive; and (5) citizen participation in local government. The first section discusses the aspect of the relationship between elected officials and specialized staff in local government, which is still heavily influenced by the notion of the politics-administration dichotomy (Bingham, 1991:45). In the context of local government in Indonesia, elected officials refer to members of the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) and regional heads, while the expert staff are the appointed civil servants who fill the local government apparatus. In this first section, various perspectives are offered on the relationship between elected officials and local government experts, firmly asserting that "the manager is a politician," because their primary role is as a political leader and a community leader. They also have strong influence over budgetary matters, bureaucratic decisions, and the ability to advise the city council. Another view states that managers cannot fully play either a political or an expert role, as they must be cautious and often straddle the two poles (the political pole and the professional pole). Wikstrom, in Bingham, (1991:48) argues that the governing Mayor/Regent is often merely a titular role; their function remains limited and is frequently only a ceremonial symbol representing the local government.

Svara in Bingham, (1991:68) simultaneously argues that the traditional concept of the politics-administration dichotomy is insufficient for explaining the complex relationship between elected officials and city managers. Therefore, the roles of both must be delineated across four aspects of the governance process: mission, policy, administration, and management. He predicts that city managers assume a stronger regulatory role and a reduced policy role, based on changing political realities. Bingham, (1991:70) after reviewing several contemporary literatures, concludes that there are two dichotomies: the policy-administration dichotomy and the policy-governance dichotomy. The literature well documents the role of the city manager in policy formulation. However, an equally important role for the city manager is to limit the inclusion of certain policies in local government management decisions, serving as a bulwark against department/service heads who operate based on unprofessional practices or who are overly responsive to the political demands of elected officials. Finally, Svara (1999) in Bingham, (1991:70) concludes that the city manager should have the roles of initiator and implementer (of activities), while elected officials act more as supervisors, resolvers of current issues, and overseers of administrative work.

The second most crucial aspect of local government management is budget and financial management. Bingham, (1991:80) contends that if local government managers do not utilize and control their financial resources, they will fail. This failure subsequently leads to a decline in public trust in the government and negatively impacts the elected officials working with them. This forms the fundamental rationale for the importance of financial management for local government managers. It also demonstrates that a local government's ability to fulfill its mission is a reflection of the quality of its budget management and financial management practices. Experts have widely observed that the budget reflects the public's political values and choices, as well as those of politicians and professional public administrators. Bingham, (1991:90) identifies the third most important aspect of local government management as the transformation in public personnel management. It is assumed that governments at all levels are

undergoing significant changes due to persistent external forces. For instance, an anti-government political movement that has lasted over two decades has pressured governments to become smaller and more efficient. Technological progress has rendered many types of public sector jobs obsolete, necessitating new skill sets. The push for privatization has led to the transfer of certain functions from the public to the private sector. Legal and constitutional issues have radically altered how public administration is managed over the last three decades. These diverse influences on public administration create numerous challenges for local governments, such as ensuring equal opportunity for all types of citizens in the workplace, protection against workplace accidents, addressing the influence of alcohol and drugs, preventing sexual harassment, and others.

### **A Study on Regional Government Innovation**

Kareem et al. (2020) in Hasna Haningtyas Rahman (2025) stated that bringing about change in an organization using an innovative approach can have a positive impact on organizational performance. Studying the concept of sustainability innovation also requires consideration of the preservation of the innovation. The basic concept of innovation is sustainability and the ability to preserve the use of technology over a long period of time (Khanra, et.al in Syamsul Pahmi, Agus Heruanto Hadna, Muhadjir Muhammad Darwin, 2025). Local governments play a crucial role (a strong public sector) in the public service sector, including in regulating the roles of community groups and the private sector (Fauzi, 2019:56). Consequently, this condition encourages local governments to continually study effective techniques and strategies for performing their public service functions through innovative policies and programs. Innovation also encompasses structural or habitual changes and renewals that occur on a regular basis. Brown (2008), as cited by Fauzi (2019:60) indicates that there are two concepts of innovation: Extended Learning Theory (ELT) and Sociocultural Theory (SCT). The Extended Learning concept conveys the understanding that innovation occurs when traditional perspectives provide guidance for performing tasks but are insufficient to meet new challenges and situations, thus requiring new development and practice through technology transfer. An essential part of this perspective is the combination of old and new views in implementing something aimed at change and innovation.

### **Local Government Innovation Capacity**

The fundamental concept for better understanding the importance of local government innovation capacity can generally be derived from the capacity development theory by J. M. Cohen (2002), in his book *Capacity Building in the Public Sector in developing countries*. This book emphasizes that this capacity relates to three aspects: (1) the human resources aspect; (2) the organizational dimension (organizational strengthening); and (3) the institutional reform dimension. Each of these capacity dimensions has a specific focus and a type of effort required to develop each focus within every dimension, constituting a measure of capacity (J. M. Cohen, 2002:10). The following table describes each aspect, its objective, and the type of supporting effort in more detail.

The innovation capacity of local government can be assessed through the governance and innovation capacity management model developed by Kim et al. (2007), as cited in Novillo-Villegas et al. (2022:67). Research on government innovation capacity in Korea has established a model termed the Government Innovation and Capacity Management Model (a model of managerial competency and novelty). This government innovation capacity management model encompasses four dimensions for enhancing government innovation management capacity. The

four aspects of this innovation management competency model are understood as: 1) Innovation Leadership, which refers to the availability of innovative leadership committed to sustaining and disseminating innovation; 2) Quality of Teamwork, which denotes the quality of personnel (civil servants) in terms of their skills and competencies, enabling them to work professionally; 3) Systems/Structure, concerning the availability of organizational systems and structures that support innovation programs; and 4) Managing External Influence.

### **Research Methodology**

According to Lexy (2017:67), to determine the research object, a researcher does two things: (1) delimits the study, intending to possibly narrow the scope of the investigation; (2) ensures that the data collected is relevant and supports the research direction. Therefore, based on the developed research problems and objectives, three research axes are identified as follows: 1) The current process of developing local government innovation related to the ongoing poverty alleviation program; 2) The capacity for local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program; and 3) Constructing a recommended model for effective and efficient local government innovation development in West Bandung Regency related to the poverty alleviation program.

**Table 2 . Research Direction Description**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Research Focus</b>	<b>Research Focus Description</b>
1.	The process of developing local government innovation related to the ongoing poverty alleviation program	<p>1.1 The mechanism for developing innovation programs occurs through the political (regulatory) process, namely policy establishment by the DPRD and local government in the form of regional regulations governing how innovation programs for poverty alleviation are developed</p> <p>1.2 The mechanism for developing innovation programs occurs through the political (regulatory) process, namely policy establishment by the DPRD and local government in the form of regional regulations governing how innovation programs for poverty alleviation are developed</p>
2.	The innovation capacity of the local government related to the poverty alleviation program	The innovation capacity of the local government in developing policies and innovation programs related to the poverty alleviation program, specifically in terms of leadership, implementation structure, regulations, and innovation networks (Kim, et al (2007) in Novillo-Villegas et al. (2022:67))

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3. Constructing a recommended modelA proposed or recommended model for for effective and efficient localeffective and efficient local government government innovation in Westinnovation within the poverty alleviation Bandung Regency related to theprogram in West Bandung Regency. poverty alleviation program
- 

Source: Processed Research Data

### **Results and Discussion**

The current process of developing local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program in West Bandung Regency is as follows: 1) The policy formulation or regulatory function stage is conducted by the Regional Government institutions and the DPRD. A pure initiative from the West Bandung Regency Government (Regent), represented by the Education Office, Health Office, Social Office, and DPMD as the primary sectors in education, health, social affairs, and community empowerment, is subsequently discussed with the DPRD regarding this innovation program; 2) Evidence indicates that policy development or the formation of Regional Regulations (Perda) only involves these four agencies (executive) and the DPRD. Meanwhile, the Education Council, Health Expert Team, and local NGO forums only play a role in hearings regarding the innovation program. Under these conditions, it appears that no new elements or breakthroughs are found in the political process of innovation program development. In fact, the development of innovation programs should be supported by a political process in policy formulation (Perda) that is also innovative in value; 3) The managerial/administrative stage is the phase of policy implementation (Perda) or the management function carried out by the West Bandung Regency Government (Regent), assisted by regional apparatus (local bureaucracy); 4) Data shows that the management/administration implementation in developing local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program is entirely executed by the bureaucratic structures of the Education Office, Health Office, Social Office, and DPMD. Technically, the development process is implemented by these four Regional Apparatus Organizations (SKPD), which also involve third parties, namely the community and partner consultants (private sector) in specific innovation programs; and 5) The Sticker and RISTI Bracelet Programs involve greater community participation at the village level, as these programs are indeed designed based on local communities. The Social Entrepreneurship and BUMDes Programs with their Appropriate Technology (TTG) involve third parties as consultant partners, while the Package B (Junior High School Equivalency) Program is fully implemented by the Education Office, where the community functions as program participants.

The innovation capacity of the local government in developing innovation programs related to poverty alleviation is as follows: (1) There are four elements constituting the capacity of the West Bandung Regency government that influence the development of innovation programs for poverty alleviation. These four elements include the leadership of the West Bandung Regent, the program implementing apparatus, the budget, and regulations concerning innovation programs for poverty alleviation; (2) The leadership of the West Bandung Regent plays a very significant role, and the success of innovation programs is closely tied to the substantially high budget capacity (Regional Budget and State Budget); and (3) Other elements of regional innovation capacity, such as the implementing apparatus and supporting regulations for innovation programs, appear not to be functioning optimally, despite efforts such as

specialized training to enhance the competence of local community members involved in the innovation programs.

The formulation of a recommended model for local government innovation related to the poverty alleviation program is as follows: (1) In practical terms, West Bandung Regent Aa Umbara Sutisna (AUS) launched innovative initiatives (Package B Education Program equivalent to junior high school and the Petadik website; the Sticker and RISTI Bracelet Program; the Social Entrepreneurship Program; and Village-Owned Enterprises with their Appropriate Technology). The progress of these initiatives led West Bandung to receive an award as the best new autonomous region among 57 autonomous regions established between 2007–2009; (2) The process undertaken through political and managerial channels has not demonstrated innovative breakthroughs, and these initiatives have not yielded significant and sustainable impacts; the top-down determined innovation capacity is dominated by the Regent and heavily reliant on fund allocation; and (3) It is recommended to develop innovation within a democratic, participatory, and responsive political process, alongside an effective, efficient, and professional managerial process, so that innovation initiatives can generate short-term/long-term impacts, supported by robust local government innovation capacity.

### **Conclusion**

The process of developing local government innovation programs related to poverty alleviation can be viewed from two perspectives: first, from a political standpoint, which encompasses policy-making (regulation); and second, from a management or administrative aspect, which involves policy implementation. (1) The political process constitutes the policy formulation or regulatory function stage carried out by Regional Government institutions and the DPRD. The policy formulation initiative for these innovation programs originated from the West Bandung Regency Government (Regent), represented by the Education Office, Health Office, Social Office, and the Office of Community and Village Empowerment (DPMD) as the main sectors related to the poverty alleviation program, and was subsequently discussed with the DPRD. Evidence indicates that in the policy formulation process or establishment of Regional Regulations (Perda), only these four Regional Apparatus Organizations (SKPD - executive sector) and the DPRD were involved. Meanwhile, the Education Council, Health Expert Team, and local NGO forums only participated as attendees during hearing activities (audiences) related to the innovation programs under discussion. Given these circumstances, it appears that the political process for developing innovation programs lacks new or groundbreaking elements. This is noteworthy, as the development of innovation programs should be supported by a political process that is also innovative in policy formulation or the establishment of Regional Regulations. (2) The aspect of innovation program development related to the managerial or administrative process. This stage involves the implementation of policies (Perda) or the executive function carried out by the West Bandung Regency Government (Regent) with support from the Regional Apparatus (local bureaucracy). Findings show that the entire process of developing innovation programs related to poverty alleviation, when viewed from the managerial or administrative aspect, is fully executed by the bureaucratic structures of the Education Office, Health Office, Social Office, and DPMD. Technically, the development process is implemented by sub-district facilitators and families, involving third parties - specifically the community and partner consultants (private sector) - in specific innovation programs. The Package B Education Program (equivalent to junior high school) and the Sticker and RISTI Bracelet Program have involved participation from local communities (villages) as they were designed as community-based programs. The Social Entrepreneurship

Program (ProKUS) and the Village-Owned Enterprises (BUMDes) Program based on Appropriate Technology (TTG) involved third parties as consultant partners.

The innovation capacity of the West Bandung Regency Government in developing poverty alleviation programs can be described as follows: (1) There are four capacity elements of the West Bandung Regency Government that are central to the development of poverty alleviation innovation programs. These four local government innovation capacity elements are: the leadership capability of the West Bandung Regent; the capability of the program implementing apparatus; financial capacity; and regulatory capacity concerning poverty alleviation innovation programs; (2) The leadership capability of the West Bandung Regent is highly influential, and the success of innovation programs depends significantly on substantial budgetary capacity (Regional Budget and State Budget). Other elements of local government innovation capacity, such as the implementing apparatus and supporting regulations for innovation programs, appear not yet fully optimized, despite existing initiatives in the form of specialized Education and Training to enhance the competence of officials involved in innovation programs.

Empirically, West Bandung Regent Aa Umbara Sutisna (AUS) has initiated innovative poverty alleviation measures since 2018. The development of these initiatives led West Bandung to receive recognition as the best new autonomous region among 57 autonomous regions established between 2007-2009. However, in reality, the development process reveals several political and managerial mechanisms that remain suboptimal. Therefore, this study recommends that the creation of poverty alleviation initiatives be supported by equally innovative political and managerial/administrative elements. Initiatives can originate from both internal and external government partners through adoption processes with replication strategies. The development of poverty alleviation programs by the West Bandung Regency Government can achieve effectiveness in both short and long terms when supported by innovation capacity that includes innovative leadership, quality of personnel (work teams), robust structures and systems, capability to manage external influences (political and network), and integration within national-level innovation policy and program design.

### **Study Implications**

Generally, this study provides tangible evidence regarding the significant differences between innovation in the public sector and the business sector. As explained by Koch & Hauknes (2005:69), there are several prominent characteristics of innovation in the public sector (government organizations), namely: (a) public sector innovation is more influenced by political cycles that generate new or modified policies; (b) innovation is influenced by more complex organizations often characterized by internal conflicts; (c) there are typically numerous performance indicators, frequently creating measurement ambiguities; (d) leaders (managers) often operate under political pressure without genuine independence, as political interests dominate, making innovation impossible without political approval; (e) the end users of innovation are the public as citizens, not as consumers (customers); and (f) innovation is frequently perceived as challenging since it may trigger change and disrupt stability, though such discoveries are still adopted for public service improvement.

Although the results of this study indicate that the formulation and implementation of policies related to innovation program development are not yet innovative, it is evident that the program development process must be supported by guiding policies (Regional Regulations). This finding aligns with the perspective of Mulgan & Albury (2003), who state that innovation programs require support from policy direction and new initiatives; innovation in the policy-

making process; and policies that promote innovation and its dissemination. It is also consistent with R. Roberts' (2005) view on legislatively-designed innovation and managerially-designed innovation. Furthermore, it corresponds with Watson (2020), argument that the innovation process functions effectively when there is political support and administrative competence, even if organizational culture prerequisites are not fully met.

These findings also align with Farazmand (2004), view, which states that innovation is the key to good governance, with policy and administrative innovation at its core. Without innovation in policy and administration, governance can deteriorate into poor and ineffective conditions, lose governing capacity, and become subject to criticism and failure. Conversely, when viewed from Eggers & Singh (2009) perspective on the innovation development process—which includes idea generation and discovery; idea selection; idea implementation; and idea diffusion—it appears that not all aspects are adequately met in this case, with the exception of the implementation and diffusion of ideas from programs that have already been executed.

Regarding the variety of innovative programs that have been developed, the findings appear consistent with the view of Eggers & Singh (2009) that one source of innovation in government organizations is internal partners. All types of innovation programs created were initiatives of the local government itself, which were then socialized and processed together with the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) to become priorities in the local government's work program. This also relates to Eggers & Singh (2009) perspective on innovation strategy, which includes the replication strategy—emulation as an innovation method derived from other government agencies and/or private organizations.

This is also relevant to the views of Mulgan & Albury (2003) and Muluk (2020), who categorize innovations into three levels: incremental; radical; and systemic/transformational. An innovation program is considered at the incremental level if it creates minor changes in existing processes or services, which is common in the public sector. An assessment of the innovation types developed in education—such as the Package B education program (equivalent to junior high school) and the Petadik website, the Sticker and RISTI Bracelet program, ProKUS, and BUMDes with Appropriate Technology (TTG)—indicates that all these innovation programs fall into the incremental innovation category. This is because the tangible impact of these programs has only resulted in minor improvements in public services. Furthermore, most innovation programs represent developments or continuations of similar programs from higher levels of government (provincial and national). Although these innovation programs remain at the incremental level, they can play a significant role in public sector reform by being sustainably implemented, supporting service provision that is responsive to local and individual needs, and delivering value for money.

The theoretical implications concerning local government capacity in innovation development appear consistent with the perspective of Novillo-Villegas et al.(2022), who posit that three main strategies influence government organizations' ability to innovate: leadership credibility; strong management teams; and governance board functions. However, when examined through the lens of Grindle (1997) dimensions and focus of capacity and Kim (2015) model of government innovation and management capacity, these requirements appear not fully met. This is evidenced by research findings indicating that innovation remains heavily dependent on the Regent's leadership capacity and the availability of substantial budgets for innovation programs.

Referring to the concept proposed by Kirton (1980), or the "Kirton Adaption-Innovation Theory (KAI)", the development of poverty alleviation innovation programs in West

Bandung Regency can be classified as innovation programs adapted by the local government (Regent). This classification is based on the assumption that adaptors are characterized as "doing things better". According to Stum (2009), the characteristics of adaptors include: (1) prioritizing problem-solving over problem creation; (2) consistently seeking solutions to problems through understanding and experimentation; (3) maintaining high accuracy and working with attention to detail; (4) demonstrating consistent compliance with regulations; (5) being sensitive to group/team cohesion; and (6) providing a secure foundation for innovation.

Nevertheless, it is not entirely accurate to categorize the development of poverty alleviation innovation programs by the local government as characteristic of "innovators" described as "those who prefer to do things differently." This is evident from the characteristics of innovation program development in West Bandung Regency, which do not fully align with the inherent traits of innovators, namely: (1) appearing undisciplined and consistently employing approaches from unexpected perspectives; (2) treating resources as secondary to achieving objectives; (3) capable of detailing tasks within short timeframes; (4) generating revolutionary change dynamics within specific periods; and (5) experiencing doubt and insecurity when encountering new ideas.

### **Limitations and Recommendations**

Although the concept of innovation has only recently emerged in public administration discourse, a growing number of academics and government practitioners are recognizing innovation as an alternative tool for addressing increasingly complex public problems. In this context, the practical implication of this study that requires further development is the necessity for a comprehensive national framework for government innovation related to the execution of core government functions and duties—specifically, public service delivery and public goods provision.

Local governments developing innovation programs, including the West Bandung Regency Government, should carefully consider their existing capacity aspects when implementing innovations. This relates directly to the research findings indicating persistent weaknesses in local government organizational capacity, particularly across the three capacity dimensions of human resources, organizational strengthening, and institutional reform.

More specifically, when referring to the government innovation and capacity management model developed by Kim and colleagues (2007) - encompassing innovative leadership, workforce quality, systems/structure, and management of external influences - these elements require systematic development. Regardless of the research findings presented in this dissertation, the researcher hopes this work will prove beneficial and useful, providing intellectual contributions for various stakeholders with policy access, both at local and central government levels. Furthermore, it is hoped that the phenomenon of local government innovation implementation regarding poverty alleviation programs in West Bandung Regency can serve as rational foundation for refining government innovation practices in other regions.

Based on the perceived limitations in research depth, other researchers and students - particularly those in the Doctor of Public Administration Program - are recommended to continue studying local government innovation across various contexts to enrich the treasury of public administration science. Given the constrained scope and coverage of this study, subsequent researchers are encouraged to explore other dimensions more deeply, such as those related to innovation culture, supporting and hindering factors of innovation, and especially those concerning the innovation capacity possessed by local governments.

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