

## **Bridging the Role of Evidence-Based Studies and Policy: A Study on Border Management Policy Formulation in North Central Timor District**

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### **Abstract**

The research approach used is descriptive qualitative research methods. Qualitative descriptive research was used to obtain communication between research and policy formulation of border management policies at the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency. Determination of sampling using snowball sampling, by collecting information continuously until the information is considered saturated. Collecting data using in-depth interview technique, observation and documentation. The results show that, First: research themes related to border area management are prioritized on several aspects, namely institutional aspects, boundary management aspects, cooperation aspects, and infrastructure aspects. Second: communication of research results in policy formulation is not optimal and is influenced by several obstacles, namely at the Interface A stage where the communication process/communication strategy between researchers and the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency has not been implemented since the stage of determining the research issue. Interface Phase B, that the proactive dissemination process involves the Regional Border Management Agency of the North Central Timor Regency, must be increased even though the published research (research results availability), related to border management in North Central Timor Regency, is sufficient and easy to access. In addition, the institutional aspects related to the human resources of the Regional Border Management Agency for the North Central Timor Regency are still very limited in quantity.

**Keyword:** Policy Formulation, Evidence Policy, Communication, Research Result

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The development of border management today has become the focus of government attention. This change in attention is due to the consequence of a paradigm shift in relation to border areas, one of which is seeing that the border is no longer an outermost area but there is a frontier area that is directly facing neighboring countries.

In realizing quality border management and having an impact on society, active participation from the government, the private sector and all levels of society are needed. For that, one of the means that can accelerate the development of border areas is through the making of quality policies.

In rapid globalization which has an impact on the needs and demands of the society which is getting bigger, the challenge for the Government today is to produce quality policies that are applicable based on adequate evidence. In addition, according (1) that evidence in the form

of research outputs can be used as a basis for information in determining a policy. This is the ideal condition expected in the public policy decision-making process. However, the fact is that there are still gaps or non-ideal conditions, namely that research is often irrelevant to the needs of public policies, very limited access to research results, as well as very limited communication in the form of policy advocacy to support quality policy formulation.

East Nusa Tenggara Province, especially North Central Timor Regency, is an area that borders on land with Timor Leste, Oecusi district. As the front porch of the country, the development of border areas needs more attention. Therefore, the government, both central and regional governments, together with the community and all interest groups must jointly focus on developing border areas for the better.

The success of a development is not only supported by aspects of the quality of human resources, finance, but also must be supported by the quality of evidence-based public policies. According (2), evidence includes expert knowledge, published research results, available statistics, stakeholder consultations, previous policy evaluations, the internet, results from consultations, cost calculations of policy options,

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and outputs from economic and statistical modelling.

To support the acceleration of border area development in North Central Timor Regency, the Regional Border Management Agency for North Central Timor Regency was formed based on the Regulation of the North Central Timor Regent Number 3 of 2019 to prepare action plans, activity programs and budgets for border area development by the priority scale (3).

In addition, as a frontier region directly adjacent to the State of Timor Leste, Timor Tengah Utara Regency is strongly supported by the existence of higher education institutions with its academic climate. Teaching, research, and community service activities are activities of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education that must always be carried out. The activities mentioned above, specific research, can be carried out by researchers who come from academics, students, researchers from government institutions, as well as certain non-governmental organizations whose research results can be used as input of knowledge stocks for the government or policymakers in formulating policies quality. For that, with the support of a good academic climate from existing universities.

Research as a type of evidence that is used as a basis in policy formulation is an academic and scientific activity intended to find solutions to problems that occur with certain data criteria/conditions. The results of in-depth studies can be used to support quality policymaking. Therefore, the role of research in the formulation of border management policies must be a concern to support the creation of quality border management public policies and have an impact on border development.

Public policy definitions in our everyday life can be found in various books that specifically discuss public policy issues. In general, the term public policy can be described as the direction of action set by an actor or several actors as a solution to a problem (4).

To increase the utilization of research results in every activity/activity formulating a policy, Hanney et.al (5), develop a model to increase the opportunities for using research results, both published and unpublished, namely formulators and researchers are expected to build communication since the interface stage (a), namely identifying research topics/themes and research questions needed by developing strategic issues, and the interface stage (b),

which is presenting research results in policy forums that include policymakers.

## **MATERIAL AND METHOD**

In this study using a qualitative descriptive method (6,7). The use of qualitative descriptive methods is used to obtain data relating to the identification of research topics on border management policies and the utilization of research results into the formulation of border management policies at the Regional Border Management Agency. The research location was conducted at the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency as a technical unit that carries out the technical function of border area management. Determination of sampling using snowball sampling, by collecting information through continuous interviews until the information feels saturated. In extracting information from informants, the author uses interview guidelines as a tool. The interview began with the Head of the North Central Timor Regency Border Management Agency, then forwarded to the Secretary, Head of Division and Head of Sub-section, whose informants were considered saturated/complete. Data collection techniques used are in-depth interviews, documentation studies, and observation.

In order for this research to be more focused and focused, this research is limited to finding solutions to problems related to (1) identifying research themes based on strategic issues that are developing and experienced by the Regional Border Management Agency of Timor Tengah Utara Regency; (2) utilization of research results.

The stages of the research carried out were first, the researcher carried out the preliminary data / information collection from the results of preliminary studies related to border management. Second, carrying out data collection in the field, namely the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency. The third stage, analyzes and describes the problems related to communication between research and policy making in order to support quality border management policy making by the Regional Border Management Agency of Timor Tengah Utara Regency.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **1) Identification of Research Themes for Border Area Management at the Regional Border**

### **Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency**

Border problems in many border provinces in Indonesia are still very numerous and require special attention for the sake of increasing welfare and development in border areas. In general, border problems can be directly intervened or resolved through management intervention and also problems that require research or research.

In its main task of preparing an action plan for the development of the border area and the preparation of a program and budget for the development of the border area, the Regional Border Management Agency for the North Central Timor Regency is required to prepare a Strategic Plan (In I Indonesia: Strategic Plan) for a period of 5 years, namely 2016-2021 and Work Plan every year.

Based on the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan (Regional Medium-Term Development Plan) of North Central Timor Regency and the Strategic Plan of the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency for 2016-2021, strategic issues regarding border area management are identified, namely (8):

- Socio-economic empowerment that is still limited and not based on the regional superior potential that is environmentally sound in a synergistically and sustainably.
- Low quality of human resources
- Lack of development of infrastructure development in border areas.
- The limited availability and service of public transportation cause the high use of private vehicles.
- Problems with regional borders and national borders
- Improving Good Governance, both District and Village Governments

To be able to resolve various strategic issues requiring public policy intervention, the North Central Timor Regency Government then formulates a strategy and policy direction contained in the Regional Medium-Term Development of North Central Timor Regency 2016-2021, as in the table below:

**Table 1. Strategy and Policy Direction for Timor Tengah Utara District, 2016 – 2021**

No.	Policy Strategi	Policy Direction
1.	Empowering a community economy based on regional superior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agricultural affairs</li> <li>➤ Food security and extension matters</li> <li>➤ Industry, trade and</li> </ul>

	potential that is environmentally friendly in a synergistic and sustainable manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ cooperative affairs</li> <li>➤ Tourism affairs</li> <li>➤ Manpower affairs</li> <li>➤ Investment affairs</li> <li>➤ Village community empowerment affairs</li> <li>➤ Environmental affairs</li> </ul>
2.	Improving the quality of human resources through the development of quality, equitable and accessible education and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Educational affairs</li> <li>➤ Health matters</li> <li>➤ Family planning matters</li> <li>➤ Affairs of women's empowerment and child protection</li> <li>➤ Social affairs</li> <li>➤ Cultural affairs</li> <li>➤ Youth and sports affairs</li> </ul>
3.	Increase accessibility through the development and distribution of regional infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Public works affairs</li> <li>➤ Spatial planning</li> <li>➤ Relationship</li> </ul>
4.	Realizing good and clean governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Affairs of regional autonomy, general government, regional financial administration, regional apparatus, personnel, and coding</li> <li>➤ Unity affairs and foreign policy</li> <li>➤ Communications and informatics affairs</li> <li>➤ Development planning affairs</li> <li>➤ Village government affairs</li> </ul>
5.	Developing regional strategic border areas by managing Kefamenanu City, developing coastal and border areas, and empowering disadvantaged rural communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ To organize and develop Kefamenanu City as a center for national strategic activities</li> <li>➤ Development of the north coast and border areas..</li> </ul>

**Source:** RPJMD North Central Timor Regency 2016-2021

As already explained, the results of research are very much needed to be able to realize a quality border management policy. To measure the theme of research results needed in order to strengthen research and the use of research

results in policy formulation, researchers used 6 aspects of issues related to problems in border areas. Based on the results of data collection, several research themes can be identified, as in the table below:

**Table 2: Identification of Research Themes in Order to Improve Management of Border Areas**

No	Aspects of Strategic Issues	Research theme
1	Development Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Master plan for border area development</li> <li>➤ Regional Spatial Plan (RTRW) for Border Areas</li> </ul>
2	Economy and socio-culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Development of Basic Settlement Infrastructure</li> <li>➤ Increased production through construction of irrigation networks, development of production roads, improvement of village axis roads, improving the quality of human resources</li> <li>➤ Increased tourism attractiveness and infrastructure</li> <li>➤ Development of cattle processing centers into intermediate products and access to outlets</li> <li>➤ Development of innovation facilities and media</li> <li>➤ Traditional border crossers</li> </ul>
3	Defense and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Boundary issues between countries</li> <li>➤ The problem of boundaries between regions and boundaries between villages</li> </ul>
4	Natural Resource (SDA) Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Over exploitation of resources</li> <li>➤ Ulayat-based land issues</li> </ul>
5	Institutional Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Organizational Management of the Regional Border Management Agency for North Central Timor Regency</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Village Organization Management as priority locations</li> <li>➤ Wini National Border Post, Napan</li> <li>➤ Human resources</li> <li>➤ Organizational management</li> </ul>
6	Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ RI - RDTL cooperation to deal with law violations at the border</li> <li>➤ Cooperation between the Regional Government, the Border Management Agency and the Village Government and other related agencies in order to support better border areas, including through cooperation in the economic sector to increase young entrepreneurs on the border</li> </ul>

**Source:** Processed by Researchers (Adopted: 2020)

Based on the research theme identification table above, it can be explained that the scope of research in the field of border area development is strongly influenced by its broad impact on the general public and is also "thematic". The identification of research themes that tend to be thematic is intended so that phenomena related to border area management can be identified, analyzed and described in detail.

In addition, from the various research themes identified above, it can be illustrated that the themes that are prioritized and require quality research support are themes related to: first: institutional aspects, which are related to elements that support the effectiveness and efficiency of task implementation. the main and institutional functions of the Regional Border Management Agency for the North Central Timor Regency and for village / sub-district institutions for priority locations in the North Central Timor Regency. Second: the aspect of border management, which deals with all resolutions of problems with State, Regional and Village boundaries. Third: the aspect of cooperation, namely all the patterns of partnership and cooperation established by the Regional Border Management Agency of the North Central Timor

Regency, the Regional Government of Timor Tengah Utara Regency to increase equitable development, fulfillment of basic rights, as well as economy and socio-culture for communities in border areas. Fourth: aspects of infrastructure, namely everything related to the development and development of facilities and infrastructure in border areas in order to support the growth of welfare of people in border areas. This aspect / field is also a priority area for the development of border areas by the Regional Border Management Agency for the North Central Timor Regency.

**2) Communication Utilization of research results in the formulation of border management policies at the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency**

The following describes the stages of the model for the use of research results in policy formulation as below.

**Interface Stage A.** This stage is the beginning where there should be a meeting or discussion process between researchers and policymakers in identifying research needs (5,9). Based on the data obtained in the field, at this stage the implementation of the communication strategy between researchers and the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency has not been maximized. This happens because communication begins when the researcher collects data, not from the stage of determining the research problem. Communication at this first stage is very important, but due to ineffective communication between researchers and policymakers since the first time determining research needs and instruments, research results become ineffective which has an impact on the formulation of border management policies. .

In addition, another part of interface A is the main output in the form of published research (availability of research results), based on the data obtained that the results of research related to border management in North Central Timor Regency are sufficient and easily accessible. . In addition, the report on the results of research conducted through the permission of the North Central Timor Regency Border Management Agency did not provide input to the North Central Timor Regency Regional Border Management Agency in making decisions regarding border management by the Regional Border Agency, as evidenced by • Based on the data, during 2020, The Regional Border

Management Agency was invited by the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Timor to participate in the dissemination of research results in a national seminar on the theme of developing border areas. In addition, throughout 2019 and 2020, none of the research reports were submitted or presented to the North Central Timor Regency Regional Border Management Agency, North Central Timor Regency Management Agency.

In terms of time, research results that contain strategic and priority issues related to border management or those related to the main tasks and functions of the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency are not always available due to the long publication time.

**Interface stage B,** at this stage the activities carried out are the dissemination of research results which is more proactive than the publication in journals. Dissemination of the results of this research is carried out in a policy format that includes policymakers, but not only scientific seminars between researchers.

The participation of the North Central Timor District Border Management Agency in the dissemination of research results must be increased because based on the data it is found that the frequency of participation of the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency in the dissemination of research results is very low, namely only 1 activity in the last 1 year (10). With the higher the dissemination of research results to the Regional Border Management Agency of the North Central Timor Regency, it will represent the advocacy of research results to policy makers and also have an impact on quality policy recommendations in policy making related to border management.

Communication at this stage will greatly affect the effectiveness of research results in the formulation of management policies and the development of border areas. A research that is not understood by policy makers has a profound impact on the frequency of use of research results.

In addition, the institutional aspects related to the human resources of the North Central Timor District Border Management Agency are still very limited in quantity to be able to carry out policy analysis activities and also interpret research results in the form of journals and policy recommendation documents in the form of policy briefs and adopt it in a policy. This lack of human resources is quite influential, so that it

allows any policy-making to be based on experience and evidence obtained from field observations as well as reports from stakeholders or related interest groups.

## CONCLUSION

First: research themes related to border area management are prioritized on several aspects, namely institutional aspects, boundary management aspects, cooperation aspects, and infrastructure aspects.

Second: communication utilization of research results in policy formulation is not optimal and is influenced by several obstacles, such as in the following stages. Interface stage A, namely the communication process /communication strategy between the researcher and the Regional Border Management Agency for the North Central Timor Regency. The borders in Timor Tengah Utara Regency are quite numerous and easy to access. However, the report on the results of research conducted through the permits of the North Central Timor District Border Management Agency, did not provide the Regional Border Management Agency for North Central Timor Regency as input for making decisions related to border management by the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency.

In terms of time, research results that contain strategic and priority issues related to border management or related to the main tasks and functions of the Regional Border Management Agency of Timor Tengah Utara Regency are not always available due to the long publication time.

Interface Phase B, that the proactive dissemination process involving the Regional Border Management Agency of North Central Timor Regency, must be increased because the frequency of involvement of the North Central Timor Regency Regional Border Management Agency in the dissemination of research results is very low, namely 1 activity in the last 1 year .

In addition, the institutional aspects related to the human resources of the Regional Border Management Agency for the North Central Timor Regency are still very limited in quantity to be able to carry out policy analysis activities and also interpret research results in the form of journals and policy recommendation documents in the form of policy briefs and adopt it in a policy.

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