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Academic Editor: Firstname

Lastname

Received: 11 April 2026

Revised: 13 April 2026

Accepted: 13 April 2026

Published: 28 April 2026

**Citation:** To be added by editorial staff during production.

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze the application of collaborative governance in sustainable tourism development, focusing on the identification of actors, collaboration processes, and the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence them. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study strategy, through primary data collection in the form of in-depth interviews and field observations, as well as secondary data from policy documents and scientific literature. The results show that collaborative governance in Wasur National Park involves various stakeholders, but is still at the coordination and consultation stage, with the involvement of indigenous communities not optimal in decision-making. The main supporting factors include commitment to conservation, collaborative networks, and local wisdom, while inhibiting factors include limited human resource capacity, weak institutional coordination, and power imbalances between actors. This study contributes to enriching the study of collaborative governance in the context of conservation areas in eastern Indonesia, and provides practical implications for the development of sustainable tourism policies that are more inclusive and adaptive to local conditions.

**Keywords:** Collaborative Governance; Sustainable Tourism Development; Stakeholder Collaboration; Environmental Conservation; Wasur National Park

### Introduction

Sustainable tourism has become an increasingly important global agenda, striving to maintain a balance between economic growth, environmental preservation, and the social well-being of local communities. In the context of conservation areas, tourism development is oriented not only toward increasing tourist arrivals but also toward ecosystem protection and sustainable empowerment of local communities. Studies show that (Phoek et al., 2021)National park areas such as Wasur National Park in Merauke have great potential as ecotourism destinations, but also face serious challenges related to environmental degradation and limited management capacity.

The main purpose Sustainable Tourism Development The goal of sustainable tourism is to ensure that tourism activities not only provide short-term economic benefits but also maintain long-term environmental and social sustainability. This concept emphasizes the integration of natural resource conservation, local cultural preservation, and improving the well-being of local communities through an inclusive and participatory approach. Studies show that sustainable tourism plays a role in reducing pressure on the environment while improving the quality of life of local communities through a more equitable distribution of benefits (UNWTO, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284421152>). This approach also encourages responsible management practices by considering environmental carrying capacity and the sustainability of tourist destinations.(Tjilen et al., 2022)

From a regional development perspective, sustainable tourism contributes significantly to increasing regional income, creating jobs, and strengthening local cultural identity. Local governments play a crucial role in designing policies that integrate economic and conservation interests through adaptive and collaborative regulations. Research shows that the successful implementation of sustainable tourism depends heavily on the capacity of government institutions to manage resources, build partnerships, and ensure active community participation in decision-making processes.(Nguyen et al., 2024)Thus, synergy between the government, the community, and the private sector is key to promoting sustainable and highly competitive tourism development.

Although the concept of sustainable tourism has been widely adopted in policy, its implementation at the local level often faces various obstacles, particularly related to coordination between stakeholders. Numerous studies have shown a gap between policy and practice, particularly regarding local community participation and synergy between institutions. Furthermore, the conflict of interest between conservation and economic exploitation is often a major obstacle in managing conservation-based tourism areas.(Mihalič, 2000)In the context of Wasur National Park, this situation is exacerbated by the socio-cultural complexities of indigenous communities as well as limited infrastructure and accessibility.

To address these challenges, a collaborative governance approach is relevant as an analytical framework for understanding the dynamics of sustainable tourism management. Collaborative governance emphasizes the importance of engaging actors across government, the private sector, communities, and non-governmental organizations in a participatory, consensus-based decision-making process.(Diaz-Kope & Morris, 2022)This approach can be combined with Sustainable Development Theory which emphasizes the balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects.(Manioudis & Meramveliotakis, 2022), as well as Stakeholder Theory which highlights the importance of accommodating the interests of all parties involved in a system(Shah & Guild, 2022)The integration of these three approaches provides a strong conceptual foundation for analyzing tourism management practices in conservation areas.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze how collaborative governance is implemented in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park, Merauke. Specifically, this study seeks to identify the actors involved, understand the collaboration process between stakeholders, and explore the factors that support and hinder the implementation of collaborative governance. Using a qualitative approach through case studies, this research also seeks to answer key questions regarding the effectiveness of collaboration in achieving sustainable development goals in conservation areas.

This research contributes to the scientific literature on collaborative governance in the context of sustainable tourism in conservation areas, particularly in eastern Indonesia, which remains relatively underexplored in academic studies. This research offers an empirical, case-study-based perspective that can enrich our understanding of multi-actor collaboration practices in natural resource management. Therefore, the results are expected to provide theoretical and practical implications for the development of more inclusive and adaptive sustainable tourism policies in the future.

### **Literature Review (Abridged Version)**

Collaborative governance is an approach in public administration that emphasizes collective decision-making through the involvement of various actors across sectors to address complex public problems. This concept developed from the idea that resource management, including sustainable tourism, requires coordination between the government, the private sector, and local communities. In the context of tourism, collaborative governance plays a crucial role in integrating various interests to achieve a balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects. (Ahmad & Esposito, 2025)

Various studies show that collaboration between stakeholders can increase the effectiveness of tourism destination management through clear division of roles, increased institutional capacity, and participation of local communities that contribute to environmental and cultural sustainability. (Tabatabaei et al., 2025) In addition, trust and effective communication factors are key elements in the success of collaborative governance, especially in conservation areas. (Fitriani & Tjilen, 2025)

Several studies have also identified obstacles to the implementation of collaborative governance, particularly related to power imbalances between actors, limited institutional capacity, and weak policy support. These conditions often hinder the creation of inclusive and effective collaboration, particularly in developing countries. In Indonesia, studies on collaborative governance in conservation area management are still limited, particularly in the eastern region, necessitating more contextual research. (Pantiyasa et al., 2024).

This research aims to fill this gap by examining collaborative governance practices in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park. Unlike previous studies that focused on more developed destinations, this study highlights areas with distinct socio-cultural characteristics and limited infrastructure, providing a new perspective on understanding the dynamics of collaboration in peripheral areas.

Methodologically, previous studies have predominantly used qualitative approaches with case study strategies to understand interactions between actors, although some studies have also used mixed methods. In this study, the integration of Collaborative Governance Theory, Sustainable Development Theory, and Stakeholder Theory serves as a conceptual foundation for analyzing the dynamics of sustainable tourism management in Wasur National Park.

### **Research methods**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study strategy to deeply understand the dynamics of collaborative governance in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park, Merauke. This approach was chosen because it can explore complex phenomena in a real-world context, particularly regarding interactions between actors, collaborative processes, and social and institutional factors that influence tourism management.(Mørch & Litherland, 2025).

The research location was Wasur National Park, Merauke Regency, South Papua, Indonesia, a conservation area with significant ecotourism potential. Data collection was conducted during the [insert month/year of research] period, focusing on collaborative tourism management practices among stakeholders.

The data used consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through in-depth interviews and field observations, while secondary data came from policy documents, government reports, and relevant scientific literature. The combination of these two data types aimed to strengthen the validity of the findings through source triangulation.

Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews, direct observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted using guidelines based on a collaborative governance framework to gather in-depth yet focused information. Observations were used to understand empirical conditions in the field, while documentation was used to examine policies and supporting data. In this study, the researcher acted as the primary instrument (human instrument) directly involved in the data collection and interpretation process (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research subjects included key stakeholders in tourism management, namely the Wasur National Park management, local government, indigenous communities, tourism business actors, and non-governmental organizations. Informants were selected using purposive sampling with the following criteria: (1) direct involvement in tourism management, (2) understanding collaborative governance practices, and (3) minimal experience in related fields. The number of informants in this study was 11 people representing various stakeholder groups.

**Table of Primary Information Sources**

No	Resources	Data Types	Collection Techniques	Information
1	Wasur National Park Office	Primary	Interview, Documentation	Main manager of the area
2	Merauke Regional Government	Primary	Interview	Tourism policy and support
3	Indigenous Peoples	Primary	Interview, Observation	Local participation and traditional wisdom
4	Tourism Business Actors	Primary	Interview	Tourism economic activities
5	Environmental NGOs	Primary	Interview, Documentation	Conservation and collaboration programs

6	Policy Documents & Reports	Secondary	Documentation	Regulations and supporting data
7	Scientific Articles	Secondary	Literature study	Theoretical and empirical basis

Data validity was maintained through source and method triangulation techniques, and member checking was conducted to ensure the data interpretation aligns with the informants' perspectives. Furthermore, this study also considered trustworthiness aspects, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, to improve the quality and reliability of the research results. It also considered research ethics by ensuring informants' consent, maintaining data confidentiality, and respecting local social and cultural values throughout the research process.

The data analysis technique used thematic analysis through a coding process that included open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to identify patterns, themes, and relationships between categories. The analysis process was carried out iteratively and simultaneously with data collection, allowing for continuous adjustment and deepening of the analysis. To support the analysis process, researchers used qualitative analysis software such as NVivo to systematically organize the data.

### **Research result**

The results of this study were compiled based on field findings through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, which were then analyzed using a thematic approach. The analysis produced several main themes that describe the dynamics of collaborative governance in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park, Merauke, namely: (1) actors and institutional structures, (2) collaboration processes between stakeholders, (3) forms of indigenous community participation, (4) factors supporting collaboration, and (5) factors inhibiting collaboration.

The first theme relates to the actors and institutional structures involved in tourism management. The research findings indicate that several key actors exist: the Wasur National Park Office as the area manager; the Merauke Regency government; the local indigenous community; tourism businesses; and non-governmental organizations engaged in conservation. The institutional structure thus formed is multi-level governance, with management authority vested in the central government through the national park office; however, implementation involves local actors in various operational activities. This finding aligns with studies showing that conservation area management generally involves multiple actors with varying levels of authority. (Riyanti et al., 2025)

The second theme identified collaborative processes among stakeholders in tourism management. These processes included informal communication forums, program coordination, and partnerships in conservation and tourism activities. Interactions between actors tended to be consultative and had not yet fully reached the stage of consensus-based joint decision-making. Several identified collaborative activities included the development of community-based tourism packages, environmental education activities, and habitat conservation programs. This pattern reflects the evolving characteristics of collaborative governance, as identified in previous research on the early stages of collaboration in natural resource management. (MANGER, 2024)

The third theme relates to the forms of indigenous community participation in sustainable tourism management. The research results indicate that indigenous communities play a significant role in maintaining environmental sustainability through local wisdom practices and involvement in culture-based tourism activities. Community participation includes the provision of tourism services, homestay management, and involvement in community-based conservation activities. However, the level of participation remains limited and has not been fully integrated into the decision-making process. This finding is consistent with studies that highlight the importance of local communities in sustainable tourism, but also indicate limited access to decision-making processes.(Turčinović et al., 2025)

The fourth theme identifies supporting factors in the implementation of collaborative governance. The research results indicate that key supporting factors include the commitment of area managers to conservation principles, the existence of government programs supporting sustainable tourism, and collaborative networks with non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, the cultural values and local wisdom of indigenous communities also serve as social capital that strengthens collaborative practices at the local level. These findings align with research showing that successful collaboration is strongly influenced by trust, shared commitment, and institutional support. (Lewicka et al., 2023).

The fifth theme relates to inhibiting factors in the implementation of collaborative governance. The research results indicate that the main obstacles include limited human resource capacity, lack of coordination between institutions, and imbalances in decision-making power. Furthermore, limited infrastructure and regional accessibility also hinder tourism development. Another identified obstacle is the lack of a formal mechanism governing collaboration between actors, resulting in an ad hoc and unstructured collaborative process. These findings align with studies showing that the main challenges in collaborative governance are often related to institutional capacity and imbalances in power among stakeholders.(Yang & Li, 2023).

## Discussion

The research results indicate that collaborative governance in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park involves various actors with varying levels of participation and roles, and has not yet fully achieved the ideal form of collaboration. This finding directly addresses the research problem formulation related to actors, collaboration processes, and supporting and inhibiting factors that influence the implementation of collaborative governance. The involvement of multiple actors such as the government, indigenous communities, and non-governmental organizations reflects efforts to integrate interests in area management, although the ongoing collaborative process is still limited to the coordination and consultation stages.

## Summary Table of Collaborative Governance Research Results

Aspect	Key Findings	Field Conditions
Actor	Government, BBTN Wasur, indigenous communities, business actors, NGOs	Multi-actors involved but not yet equal
Collaboration Process	Coordination, consulting, limited partnership	Have not reached a common consensus

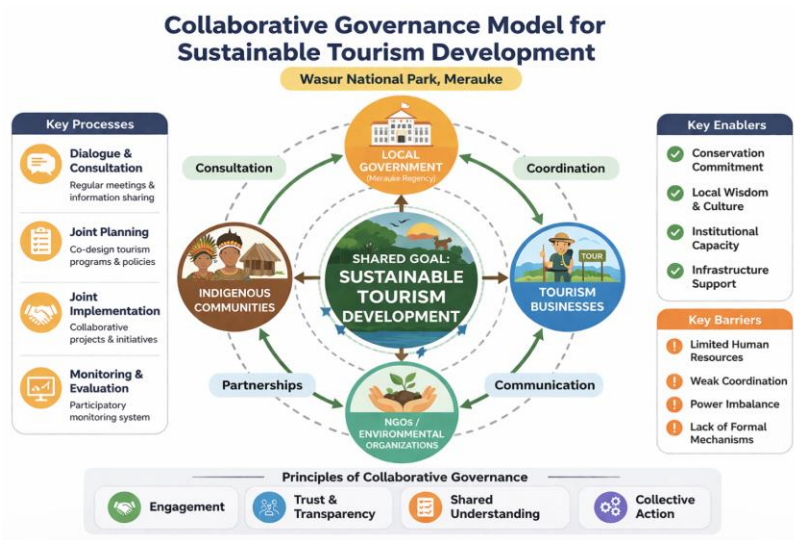
<b>Community Participation</b>	Involved in tourism and conservation	Not yet dominant in decision making
<b>Supporting Factors</b>	Conservation commitment, local wisdom, NGO support	Quite strong at the local level
<b>Inhibiting Factors</b>	Limited human resources, weak coordination, imbalance of power	Become a major obstacle
<b>Institutional</b>	There is no formal collaboration mechanism yet	Still ad hoc

Within the framework of Collaborative Governance Theory, this research's findings indicate that key dimensions such as trust-building, shared understanding, and face-to-face dialogue have not yet developed optimally. This is evident in the limited formal mechanisms for joint decision-making and the existence of power imbalances among actors. The study shows that the success of collaborative governance is greatly influenced by the quality of interactions between actors and the existence of institutions capable of facilitating inclusive deliberative processes.(Ansell et al., 2024)From the perspective of Sustainable Development Theory, these findings indicate that the balance between environmental, economic, and social aspects has not been fully achieved, especially in the aspect of empowering local communities. Stakeholder Theory also explains the differences in interests between actors that influence the dynamics of collaboration.(Shi et al., 2019)

Compared with previous studies, this research's findings align with the finding that local community participation and trust are key factors in collaborative governance. However, unlike more developed destinations, conditions in Wasur National Park indicate that limited capacity and infrastructure remain major barriers to strengthening collaboration. This also aligns with the finding that community participation is often symbolic and has not yet achieved full empowerment.(Newman et al., 2004).

Based on empirical findings and a collaborative governance framework, this study develops a conceptual model that illustrates the interactions between stakeholders in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park. This model highlights the roles of actors, the collaborative process, and the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence governance effectiveness, as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Collaborative Governance Model for Sustainable Tourism Development in Wasur National Park, Merauke



Source: Researcher's processed results (2026)

The figure illustrates a collaborative governance model in sustainable tourism development at Wasur National Park, centered on a shared goal of achieving sustainable tourism. The model involves four key stakeholders: local government, indigenous communities, tourism businesses, and environmental NGOs, who interact through collaborative processes such as consultation, coordination, communication, and partnerships. These interactions are supported by core activities including dialogue, joint planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

In addition, the model highlights key enablers such as conservation commitment, local wisdom, institutional capacity, and infrastructure support, as well as key barriers including limited human resources, weak coordination, power imbalances, and the absence of formal mechanisms. These processes are grounded in the core principles of collaborative governance, namely engagement, trust and transparency, shared understanding, and collective action, which collectively contribute to achieving effective and sustainable tourism governance.

The scientific contribution of this research lies in providing empirical evidence regarding the practice of *collaborative governance* in conservation areas in eastern Indonesia, which are still understudied. The findings indicate that socio-cultural factors, local wisdom, and geographic conditions play a significant role in shaping collaboration patterns between actors. Practically, this research confirms that strengthening institutional capacity, the role of indigenous communities, and formal collaboration mechanisms are crucial in supporting inclusive and sustainable tourism policies. Furthermore, supporting factors such as conservation commitment and partnership networks need to be strengthened, while barriers such as limited resources, weak coordination, and power imbalances require more strategic policy interventions.

This research also has broad implications for developing collaborative policies, particularly in the tourism and conservation sectors. The resulting model can serve as a reference for other regions with similar characteristics in addressing complex multi-actor and sustainability challenges. Thus, this research

contributes not only academically but also practically, promoting more adaptive, participatory, and sustainable tourism governance.

The limitations of this research include limited generalization due to the case study approach, limited access to informants, and the complexity of social dynamics that continue to develop, which is in line with the characteristics of qualitative research which emphasizes depth of analysis.

The implications of this research emphasize the need to strengthen collaborative governance through increasing actor capacity, improving coordination, and establishing more structured institutions. Furthermore, further research using a comparative or mixed methods approach is needed to broaden understanding of the effectiveness of collaborative governance in different contexts.

### **Conclusion**

This study shows that the implementation of collaborative governance in sustainable tourism development in Wasur National Park involves various key actors such as the government, area managers, indigenous communities, business actors, and non-governmental organizations, but has not yet been fully implemented optimally. The collaborative process is still dominated by coordination and consultation patterns, with community involvement not yet fully integrated into strategic decision-making. Key supporting factors include commitment to conservation, the existence of collaborative networks, and local wisdom values, while inhibiting factors include limited human resource capacity, weak institutional coordination, and power imbalances between actors. Thus, the implementation of collaborative governance in this area is still in the developmental stage and requires strengthening in institutional and participatory aspects.

Theoretically, this research contributes to enriching collaborative governance studies by presenting empirical evidence from the context of conservation areas in eastern Indonesia, which have unique social and geographical characteristics. Practically, the findings illustrate the importance of strengthening the capacity of local actors, improving communication between stakeholders, and establishing more formal and inclusive collaboration mechanisms to support sustainable tourism. Furthermore, this research also emphasizes that the integration of environmental, social, and economic aspects requires a collaborative approach that is adaptive to the local context.

The implications of this research point to the need to develop policies that are more responsive to local conditions, including strengthening the role of indigenous communities in tourism management and increasing support for infrastructure and institutional capacity. For future research, it is recommended to conduct comparative studies across conservation areas or use more diverse methodological approaches to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of collaborative governance in various contexts of sustainable tourism management.

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# Governing Transformation from the Periphery: The Role of Sustainable Governance in Shaping Local Economies under National Strategic Projects

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## Abstract

This study examines the role of sustainable governance in driving local economic transformation in Merauke Regency, Indonesia, within the context of National Strategic Projects (PSN). Using a qualitative case study approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, document analysis of regional policies, and field observations. The findings reveal that regional development is significantly influenced by the alignment between national policies and local governance practices. Policy harmonization with PSN has strengthened development direction, particularly in agriculture and food security sectors; however, challenges remain in institutional capacity, coordination, and equitable distribution of economic benefits. The study further shows that while PSN contributes to structural economic changes through the development of leading sectors, the transformation remains partial and uneven across regions and communities.

The integration of Governance Theory, Regional Development Theory, and Local Economic Development (LED) highlights that sustainable governance functions as a key mechanism for aligning national agendas with local needs within a multi-level governance framework. The findings emphasize the importance of adaptive policy strategies, institutional capacity, and cross-sectoral coordination in achieving inclusive and sustainable economic outcomes. Nevertheless, limitations related to the qualitative scope and localized context suggest the need for future research employing broader methodologies and incorporating social and environmental dimensions.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Governance; Local Economic Transformation; National Strategic Projects (PSN); Regional Development; Multi-level Governance

## Introduction

Regional development in border and peripheral areas, such as Merauke Regency, faces complex structural challenges, particularly related to limited institutional capacity, infrastructure disparities, and weak integration of long-term policies. Globally, the development paradigm has shifted from a growth-based approach to sustainable development, which emphasizes the integration of economic, social, and environmental dimensions as a single, systemic whole. (Andersson et al., 2022).

In its implementation, as a peripheral region, including in Indonesia, this paradigm shift has not been fully accompanied by adequate governance capacity. Decentralization policies, which are expected to accelerate regional development, often face obstacles in terms of inter-institutional coordination and consistent policy implementation. (Pambudi, 2025) This shows that regional development depends not only on the availability of resources, but also on the quality of governance that is able to effectively manage the interaction between national policies and local dynamics.

While the study results have emphasized the importance of sustainable development and strengthening local economies, there is still a significant gap between policy design and implementation at the regional

level, especially in the context of peripheral areas. (Ekasari & Judijanto, 2025) Many development programs, including those within the National Strategic Project (PSN) framework, are still sectoral in nature and have not yet fully achieved inclusive and sustainable economic transformation. (Kurniawan Ariadi & Dadang Solihin, 2026) On the one hand, the National Strategic Project (PSN) provides strategic benefits in the form of accelerated infrastructure development, increased regional connectivity, and strengthening leading economic sectors such as agriculture and food security.

Various challenges, such as limited regional institutional capacity, unequal distribution of development benefits, and the dominance of top-down approaches that fail to consider local contexts, often result in uneven development impacts and inability to fully drive sustainable economic transformation. This leads to weak coordination between actors and a lack of policy harmonization between the central and regional governments, which often hinders the effective implementation of the National Strategic Projects (PSN). (Taqwim, 2026).

Regulatoryly, the implementation of PSN in Indonesia is supported by Presidential Regulation Number 3 of 2016 which is then updated through Presidential Regulation Number 109 of 2020, which emphasizes the importance of accelerating development through cross-sector and cross-regional integration, the implementation of these regulations still faces challenges in policy synchronization, division of authority, and multi-level governance coordination capacity. In this context, crucial questions arise regarding how development governance can function not only as an administrative mechanism, but also as a strategic instrument capable of effectively bridging the national agenda and local needs, particularly in driving regional economic transformation in peripheral areas.

Conceptually, the integration of Governance Theory, Regional Development Theory, Sustainable Development Theory, and Local Economic Development (LED) Theory. Governance Theory emphasizes that policy effectiveness is determined by the quality of institutions and interactions between actors in a multi-level governance system. (Abas, 2023) Regional Development Theory highlights the importance of spatial and institutional linkages in driving regional economic growth. (Medeiros, 2022) The LED approach emphasizes strengthening local potential-based sectors as the driving force of economic transformation. (Kurikka et al., 2023) The integration of these theories provides a foundation for understanding that sustainable governance functions not only as a normative framework, but also as an operational mechanism that determines how national policies, such as the National Strategic Plan, are adapted and implemented at the local level to produce effective economic transformation.

Based on this framework, this study aims to analyze the role of sustainable governance in shaping the dynamics of regional development in peripheral areas, and how this influences local economic transformation in the context of the National Strategic Projects (PSN) implementation in Merauke Regency. Specifically, this study answers the following questions: (1) what is the quality of sustainable governance in the implementation of regional development programs; (2) how local economic transformation is formed as a result of policy interventions; and (3) how the interaction between national policies and local capacity influences economic development outcomes.

The main contribution of this research lies in its attempt to reposition the concept of sustainable governance in the context of peripheral regions as a mechanism to bridge the tension between the national development agenda and local realities. Unlike previous studies that tend to view the relationship between governance and economic development in a linear manner, this research shows that local economic transformation is non-linear and is strongly influenced by the interaction between national policies, regional institutional capacity, and local socio-economic conditions. This study provides a new perspective in the regional development literature by emphasizing the importance of a more adaptive, contextual, and governance-based approach in understanding development dynamics in peripheral regions.

## Literature review

### Sustainable Governance

Sustainable governance refers to the capacity of institutions and policy mechanisms to maintain consistency, sustainability, and mitigate the impacts of development in the long term. (Haghighi & Takian, 2024) This concept positions governance as a key factor in ensuring that public policies are not only administratively effective but also oriented towards sustainability across sectors and time. Development success is measured not only by short-term output but also by the governance system's ability to maintain policy stability and adaptability.

In the context of regional development, the quality of sustainable governance significantly determines the effectiveness of coordination between actors and the ability of institutions to integrate national and local policies. Strong governance enables synergy between the central and regional governments, while ensuring that implemented policies remain responsive to local needs. This close relationship also plays a role in minimizing conflicts of interest and increasing accountability, enabling development to proceed in an inclusive and sustainable manner.

### Regional Development Theory.

Regional development theory emphasizes the importance of spatial interaction, institutional capacity, and sector integration in promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth. This approach views development as a dynamic process influenced by regional structure, inter-regional connectivity, and policies that effectively optimize local potential. (Lu, 2024). The success of development depends not only on the available resources, but also on how the region is connected and managed strategically.

This theory highlights the importance of policy interventions that can reduce development disparities and accelerate economic transformation. Outlying regions often face limitations in access, infrastructure, and institutional capacity, requiring more targeted and adaptive policy support. Regional development must be designed in an integrated manner to create equitable growth and increase regional economic competitiveness in a sustainable manner.

### Local Economic Development (LED) Theory

The LED approach emphasizes that local economic transformation occurs through strengthening leading sectors based on local resources. The theory's primary focus is on increasing productivity, creating added value, and increasing community income through community-based economic development. (Jahid, 2022) In the context of regional development, LED is an important instrument in ensuring that economic growth is inclusive and sustainable.

Several previous studies have shown that the quality of governance has a significant impact on the success of local economic development. Policy effectiveness is largely determined by inter-agency coordination and the implementation capacity of local governments. (Widjaja & Dhanudibroto, 2025), as well as the integration of public policy and the participation of local actors. A region-based approach has also proven effective in optimizing local potential as a driver of economic growth. In the context of developing countries, institutional weaknesses remain a major obstacle to driving inclusive economic transformation. (Suhardi & Panjaitan, 2025).

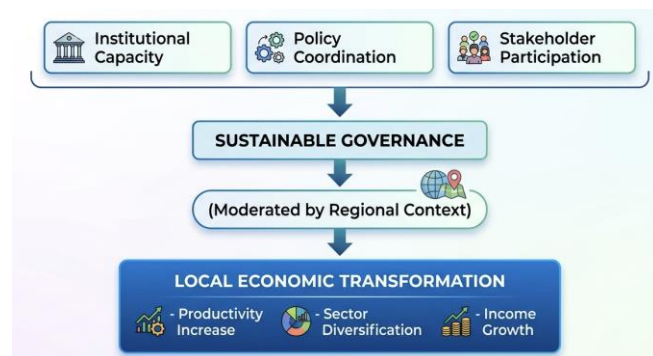
The research gap lies in the relationship between sustainable governance and integrated local economic transformation, which generally tends to separate the analysis of governance and economic development

without looking at the causal relationship between the two. The limitations of studies in peripheral areas of Indonesia have led to a lack of contextual understanding of the dynamics of regional development. (Enala et al., 2025), by integrating sustainable governance and local economic transformation within a comprehensive analytical framework, distinguishing it from previous studies by positioning governance as a determinant factor that directly influences changes in local economic structure. This approach aligns with research that emphasizes the link between public policy and economic outcomes in regional development. (Wang & Yang, 2025).

### Conceptual Framework of the Research

Based on theoretical synthesis, this study builds a conceptual framework that positions sustainable governance as a key factor in driving local economic transformation. Effective governance is expected to improve coordination, strengthen policy implementation, and create conditions that support the development of local economic sectors, and serve as a basis for analysis in explaining the relationship between policies, institutions, and local economic dynamics in the context of regional development.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Sustainable Governance and Local Economic Transformation



The conceptual framework positions sustainable governance as a central mechanism linking national policy agendas with local economic outcomes through policy harmonization, institutional capacity, and multi-level coordination. It highlights that effective governance enhances policy implementation, strengthens actor coordination, and supports local economic development. However, uneven impacts may arise due to differences in local capacity, resource access, and implementation dynamics. Local economic transformation is reflected in structural changes, including increased productivity, sectoral diversification, and income growth, forming the basis for analyzing the relationship between governance and development outcomes.

### Research methods

This research uses a qualitative case study approach to deeply understand the dynamics of regional development policy implementation in the real context of Merauke Regency. The case study approach was chosen because it can explore complex phenomena involving interactions between institutions, actors, and

policies within a specific regional context. This method allows researchers to capture the processes, meanings, and interpretations of actors regarding sustainable governance practices and their impact on local economic transformation in a contextual and holistic manner.(Muiderman et al., 2022).

The data sources for this research consist of primary data obtained through in-depth interviews with key informants, including local government officials (Bappeda and related agencies), the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRP), and stakeholders directly involved in the development and implementation of the National Strategic Project (PSN), with 10 key informants. Secondary data comes from policy documents, government reports, and academic literature. This combination of data is used to increase the depth of analysis and validity through source triangulation, as well as to understand the policy framework and implementation comprehensively.

Data collection techniques were conducted through three main methods: in-depth interviews, documentation, and limited observation. Interviews were conducted semi-structured to provide flexibility in gathering information while maintaining focus on the research issue. The interview instrument was developed based on predetermined indicators of sustainable governance and local economic transformation concepts. Documentation was used to review the content of policies, programs, and reports on regional development implementation, while observations were conducted to understand empirical conditions in the field, particularly related to local economic activities. This multi-method approach aims to increase data credibility and provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomena studied.(Ependi et al., 2023).

The unit of analysis of this research is implementation.sustainable governance and its impact on local economic transformation in Merauke Regency. The research subjects included local government officials, local economic actors (farmers and MSMEs), and stakeholders such as academics, community leaders, and the private sector, selected through purposive sampling. Data analysis usedthematic analysiswith an interactive model including data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions(Braun & Clarke, 2023)The process begins with transcription, followed by coding to identify key themes, and then presented in narrative or matrix form. Validity is maintained through triangulation and*member checking*, thus producing an in-depth analysis of the dynamics and relationships between phenomena.

## **Finding and Discussion**

### **Policy Consistency and Harmonization with National Strategic Projects (PSN).**

The research results show that regional development in Merauke Regency has undergone significant adjustments in response to the implementation of the National Strategic Projects (PSN), particularly in the agriculture and food security sectors. Analysis of regional policy documents and interviews with informants indicate that the local government is actively harmonizing policies to avoid conflicts with national programs. This adjustment is evident in the integration of PSN priorities into the Medium-Term Development Plan (RPJMD) and the work programs of regional apparatus organizations (OPD). This condition indicates that the direction of regional policy is no longer solely based on local needs, but is also influenced by the strategic national development agenda.

### **Institutional Capacity and Multi-Level Governance Coordination in the Implementation of National Strategic Projects (PSN).**

The implementation of the National Strategic Project (PSN) has encouraged the formation of new coordination patterns between the central and regional governments, characterized by multi-level governance. The central government's involvement in strategic projects has increased the intensity of coordination between institutions, but also presents challenges in policy synchronization and the division of authority. Informants from regional governments stated that regional policies must be adjusted to avoid

conflicts with central policies. Consequently, in practice, there is a tendency to adjust local policy direction to follow national priorities. This demonstrates that the PSN has a direct influence on the capacity and work patterns of regional institutions.

### **Implementation of Leading Sector-Based Programs within the National Strategic Project Framework and Their Impact on the Regional Economy.**

The impacts demonstrate that the National Strategic Project (PSN) contributes to focusing regional economic development on leading sectors, particularly agriculture and food commodities. Integrated programs within the PSN provide support in the form of infrastructure development, provision of production facilities, and increased market access (Ririhena et al., 2024). The initial visible impact is increased economic activity in nationally prioritized sectors. Program implementation still faces challenges in terms of benefit distribution and local capacity readiness, resulting in less than optimal and equitable economic impact.

### **Changes in Local Economic Structure as an Impact of PSN Intervention.**

The National Strategic Projects (PSN) interventions demonstrate changes in local economic structures, which are beginning to shift in line with the direction of the PSN interventions. Previously traditional economic activities are evolving toward more structured production patterns integrated with national programs. However, these changes remain partial and concentrated in specific regions or groups directly involved in the PSN program. Other regions not focused on the program continue to rely on the primary sector with relatively low productivity levels.

### **The Impact of National Strategic Projects on Community Income and Economic Inequality.**

In general, National Strategic Projects (PSN) have had an impact on increasing community incomes, particularly for groups directly involved in development programs. This increase is evident in the agricultural sector and leading commodities, which receive support in the form of infrastructure, production access, and market opportunities from national programs. The distribution of these economic benefits is not yet equitable, resulting in persistent disparities between community groups. Several informants stated that the sustainability of income increases depends heavily on program consistency and the ability of local governments to adapt local policies to the needs and characteristics of local communities.

On the other hand, interview results also revealed concerns among local communities that they could be left behind in the development process. This is due to limited capacity, skills, and readiness to access opportunities generated by the National Strategic Projects (PSN). Several informants revealed that job opportunities and economic benefits are enjoyed more by workers from outside the region, who are considered more competently prepared. This situation highlights challenges to development inclusivity, where without appropriate policy intervention, the PSN has the potential to widen the gap between local communities and migrants.

### **Integration of Regional Policy and Direction of Economic Development within the National Strategic Project Framework.**

The research findings indicate that the existence of National Strategic Projects (PSN) has driven a shift in the direction of local government policy toward a development model more integrated with the national agenda. Local governments are required to ensure that their policies do not conflict with national programs, but rather support and strengthen the implementation of National Strategic Projects (PSN) at the local level. This is reflected in the adjustment of development priorities, the alignment of sectoral programs, and

increased coordination between development actors. National Strategic Projects (PSN) serve not only as development programs but also as instruments that shape the direction of regional policy and influence the dynamics of local economic development.

Interviews revealed that local communities expect greater commitment to program implementation, particularly in prioritizing employment opportunities for local residents. Informants emphasized that the policy needs to be supported by clear regulations and concrete actions on the ground, not just normative commitments. Communities also highlighted the importance of transparent information regarding the promises and benefits of the National Strategic Projects (PSN) program, which must be communicated clearly, openly, and understandably to avoid misunderstandings or feelings of disadvantage during the development process.

The following table presents a synthesis of research results that integrates empirical findings regarding the implementation of the National Strategic Project (PSN) in Merauke Regency with the dynamics of regional governance and local economic transformation. This presentation groups the research results into several key variables that reflect key aspects of sustainable governance and local economic transformation, while also identifying implementation challenges and relevant policy implications. Through this approach, the table serves not only as a summary of findings but also as an analytical tool that demonstrates the relationship between national policies, regional institutional capacity, and their impact on local economic development.

**Table of Research Findings, Challenges, and Policy Implications**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Research Findings</b>	<b>Implementation Challenges</b>	<b>Policy Implications</b>
<b>Policy Consistency and Harmonization with National Strategic Projects</b>	Regional policies are aligned with the National Strategic Projects (PSN), particularly in the agriculture and food security sectors, and are integrated into the RPJMD and OPD programs.	Dependence on central policies, potential neglect of local needs, and inconsistencies between regional planning documents.	Regional governments need to strengthen adaptive policy synchronization to remain aligned with the national agenda without ignoring local characteristics.
<b>Institutional Capacity and Coordination of Multi-Level Governance</b>	PSN encourages coordination across levels of government, but has not been fully effective in implementation on the ground.	Limited human resource capacity, weak coordination between OPDs, and overlapping authority between central and regional governments.	Strengthening institutional capacity, improving human resource competency, and creating a more integrated cross-sector coordination system are required.

<b>Implementation of Leading Sector-Based Programs</b>	The focus of development on leading sectors has increased with the support of infrastructure and market access, but the benefits have not been evenly distributed.	Limited market access, uneven distribution of aid, and low readiness of local actors in managing the program.	Policies need to encourage downstreaming, equal access to programs, and increased capacity of local economic actors.
<b>Changes in Local Economic Structure</b>	There has been a shift towards the priority sectors of the National Strategic Projects (PSN), but the transformation is still partial and concentrated in certain areas.	Regional disparities, limited economic diversification, and the continued high dominance of the primary sector.	Local governments need to encourage economic diversification and expand development interventions to underserved areas.
<b>Impact on Income and Economic Inequality</b>	Income increased for certain groups involved in PSN, but the distribution was not yet even.	Disparities between community groups, limited access to programs, and dependence on policy sustainability.	Inclusive policies are needed to distribute benefits equitably, empower vulnerable groups, and strengthen community-based economies.
<b>Integration of Regional Policy with National Development Direction</b>	PSN encourages changes in the direction of regional policies to align with national programs.	The risk of top-down policy dominance, reduced regional flexibility, and potential incompatibility with local needs.	Local governments need to develop adaptive planning that is able to integrate national priorities and local needs in a balanced manner.

The results of this study confirm that the implementation of sustainable governance in Merauke Regency has a strong relationship with the direction of local economic development, particularly in the context of National Strategic Project (PSN) interventions. The findings indicate that the quality of governance characterized by policy consistency, institutional capacity, and coordination between actors is a key factor in determining the effectiveness of development programs and their impact on local economic transformation. This directly answers the research problem formulation that the relationship between sustainable governance and local economic transformation is interdependent, where governance that is adaptive to national policies can accelerate changes in regional economic structures. In line with research stating that the success of regional development is greatly influenced by the ability of institutions to manage policies sustainably and responsive to external dynamics.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings reinforce the relevance of integrating Governance Theory, Regional Development Theory, and Local Economic Development (LED) in explaining the dynamics of regional development. Sustainable governance, reflected in the harmonization of regional policies with National Strategic Plans (PSN), demonstrates that institutional quality plays a role not only in implementing policies but also as a mediator between the national agenda and local needs. From a governance perspective, this reflects multi-level governance practices, where interactions between the

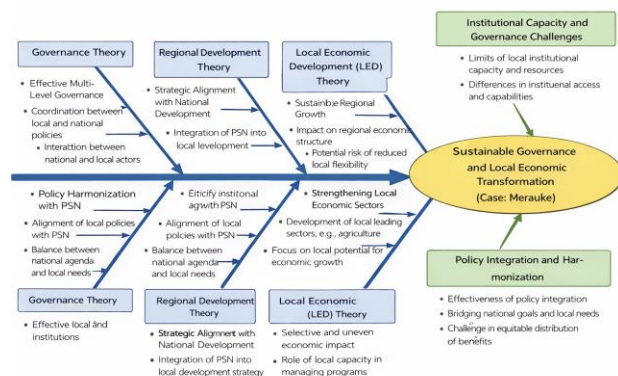
central and regional governments are a determining factor in policy success. From a regional development perspective, the integration of PSN into regional policies demonstrates a shift from locally driven development to more nationally coordinated development, which can accelerate economic growth but potentially reduce regional flexibility in determining priorities.

In terms of local economic transformation, research findings indicate that National Strategic Projects (PSN) interventions can drive structural economic change by strengthening leading sectors, particularly agriculture and food commodities. This aligns with the Local Economic Development approach, which emphasizes the importance of developing sectors based on local potential as a driver of economic growth. (Suhardi & Panjaitan, 2025) Transformation remains partial and uneven, demonstrating that the success of economic development is determined not only by the existence of programs but also by local capacity to manage and optimize them. This situation reinforces the argument that regional development requires an approach that is not simply top-down but also takes into account the local context more deeply.

When compared with previous studies, these findings are in line with research that emphasizes the importance of integration between national and local policies in promoting regional development (OECD, 2020; <https://doi.org/10.1787/97f39a3-en>), differing from several studies that assume that national interventions will automatically produce equitable economic impacts. In the Merauke context, findings indicate that the impact of the National Strategic Project (PSN) remains selective and dependent on the level of involvement of local actors and the readiness of regional institutions. This aligns with recent research showing that inequality in the distribution of development benefits often arises from differences in institutional capacity and access to resources. (Malla & Pathranarakul, 2022).

The scientific contribution of this research lies in strengthening the concept that sustainable governance functions not only as a normative framework for development but also as an operational mechanism that determines the effectiveness of policy implementation in the context of multi-level governance. The relationship between governance and local economic transformation is not linear, but is influenced by the interaction between national policies, regional institutional capacity, and local socio-economic conditions. This new perspective in the study of regional development, particularly in the context of border regions, which often receive less attention in the academic literature.

The results of the synthesis of research findings that link the implementation of the National Strategic Project (PSN), the challenges faced, and the policy implications for regional economic development in Merauke Regency, can be seen in the following figure:



The figure shows that the success of sustainable governance and local economic transformation in Merauke Regency is the result of a complex interaction between the quality of governance, the integration of national policies through National Strategic Projects (PSN), the capacity of regional institutions, and local economic dynamics. Imbalances in any one element, such as weak coordination, limited local capacity, or a lack of

policy harmonization, can impact overall development effectiveness. Regional development needs to be designed in an integrative and adaptive manner to sustainably bridge national interests and local needs.

This study has limitations, particularly the qualitative approach, which limits the generalizability of the findings; the limited data and informants that affect the depth of analysis; and the dominant focus on governance and economic aspects, which therefore does not fully encompass the social and environmental dimensions. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of strengthening institutional capacity, improving cross-actor coordination, and developing effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to support more adaptive policy implementation. This also opens up space for further research to examine the long-term impacts of National Strategic Projects (PSN) and the integration of socio-environmental aspects into sustainable regional development (Sachs et al., 2021;<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-021-00963-9>).

## Conclusion

The research results show that the success of regional development is largely determined by the ability of local governments to adaptively integrate national policies with local needs. The main findings indicate that (1) harmonization of regional policies with National Strategic Projects (PSN) is an important factor in maintaining development consistency, (2) institutional capacity and multi-level governance coordination determine the effectiveness of program implementation, (3) PSN interventions are able to encourage economic transformation based on leading sectors, although still partial, and (4) the resulting economic impacts are not evenly distributed, so there are still gaps between community groups. Thus, the relationship between sustainable governance and local economic transformation is dynamic and influenced by the interaction between national policies, local capacity, and regional socio-economic conditions.

Theoretically, this study strengthens the integration between Governance Theory, Regional Development Theory, and Local Economic Development (LED) by showing that sustainable governance not only functions as a normative framework, but also as an operational mechanism in bridging national and local interests in the context of multi-level governance which emphasizes that local economic transformation does not occur linearly, but is influenced by the quality of governance and the readiness of regional institutions in managing national policy interventions. Practically, this finding provides implications that local governments need to develop more adaptive policy strategies, strengthen institutional capacity, improve cross-sector coordination, and ensure equitable distribution of development benefits so that national programs such as the National Strategic Program (PSN) can provide sustainable and inclusive economic impacts.

The limitations of this study include a qualitative approach that limits the generalizability of the findings, limited data and the number of informants, and a focus that is still limited to governance and economic aspects. Further research is recommended to develop a mixed methods approach, expand the scope of the research area, and integrate social and environmental variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term impact of PSN on regional development.

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# **Public Trust, Risk Perception, and Legitimacy in Shaping Community Perceptions of National Strategic Projects: Evidence from Merauke, Indonesia**

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## **Abstract**

National Strategic Projects (PSN) serve as a key instrument for accelerating economic development and regional equity in Indonesia; However, their implementation often generates diverse public perceptions, particularly in peripheral regions such as Merauke Regency. This study aims to examine the influence of trust, risk perception, and legitimacy on public perception of PSN. Employing a quantitative explanatory approach, data were collected through structured questionnaires using a Likert scale and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS. The findings reveal that trust and legitimacy have positive and significant effects on public perception, while risk perception has a negative and significant effect. These results indicate that public acceptance of PSN is not solely determined by technical and economic considerations but is strongly influenced by social and psychological factors. The study contributes to the literature by integrating Trust Theory, Risk Perception Theory, and Legitimacy Theory into a unified empirical framework, offering a more comprehensive understanding of public responses to large-scale development policies. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of enhancing transparency, managing perceived risks, and strengthening social legitimacy to improve the effectiveness of policy implementation.

**Keywords:** Public Trust, Risk Perception, Legitimacy, Public Perception, National Strategic Projects

## **Introduction**

Development through National Strategic Projects (PSN) is one of the government's main instruments in driving economic growth, equitable development, and improving connectivity between regions in Indonesia. This policy is formally regulated through various regulations, including Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 3 of 2016, which was later updated through Presidential Regulation Number 58 of 2017 and Presidential Regulation Number 109 of 2020, which emphasizes the government's commitment to accelerating strategic infrastructure development as a driver of national economic transformation. In a global context, large-scale infrastructure projects are seen as development catalysts capable of increasing economic competitiveness and public welfare.(Oshilalu, 2024)The existence of the National Strategic Project (PSN) not only functions as an instrument of economic growth, but also as a strategic effort to reduce disparities between regions and strengthen national integration, especially in remote and border areas such as Merauke Regency.

Various studies show that large-scale infrastructure projects often face community resistance, especially when it comes to social, economic and environmental impacts.(Zheng, 2026)In the Indonesian context, the implementation of National Strategic Projects (PSN) in various regions, including Merauke Regency, demonstrates differences in public perception influenced by various factors, such as levels of trust in the government, perceptions of risk, and the legitimacy of the policies taken. This indicates that development success is determined not only by technical and economic aspects, but also by the level of social acceptance of the policies.

While research on the impacts of infrastructure development has progressed rapidly, there are still gaps in understanding how public perceptions are formed, particularly in peripheral areas.(Zheng, 2026)Most previous research has focused on the economic aspects and efficiency of projects, while social dimensions such as public trust, risk perception, and legitimacy have not received much integrative study. Yet, these three factors play a crucial role in determining the sustainability and success of public policy implementation. Therefore, a more comprehensive approach is needed to explain how the interaction between these factors shapes public perceptions of National Strategic Projects (PSN).

Theoretically, this study integrates three main approaches: Trust Theory, Risk Perception Theory, and Legitimacy Theory. Trust Theory emphasizes the importance of public trust in government institutions in shaping attitudes toward public policy.(Ghasemshirazi et al., 2023)Risk Perception Theory explains that perceptions of risk, both objective and subjective, influence the community's response to development projects.(Zeng et al., 2023)Legitimacy Theory highlights the importance of social acceptance of policies based on values of justice, transparency, and conformity to the public interest.(Akhter et al., 2023)The integration of these three theories provides a more comprehensive analytical framework for understanding the dynamics of public perception of PSN.

**Research purpose**to analyze the influence of trust, risk perception, and legitimacy on public perception of the National Strategic Project in Merauke Regency. Specifically, this study seeks to answer how each of these variables contributes to shaping public perception, as well as the extent to which the relationship between these variables can be explained through a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

**Research novelty**lies in the integration of three theoretical approaches—trust, risk perception, and legitimacy—into a single empirical model that is tested simultaneously in the context of Indonesia's peripheral regions. Unlike previous studies that tend to examine variables partially, this study offers a multidimensional approach that can explain public perceptions more comprehensively. Furthermore, the focus on Merauke Regency as a border region provides an important contextual contribution to the public policy literature, particularly regarding the implementation of national strategic projects in regions with unique social and geographic characteristics. The findings of this study are expected to provide theoretical contributions as well as practical implications for the formulation of more inclusive, adaptive, and sustainable policies.

## Literature review

### Literature Review

Trust Theory explains that public trust in the government or project implementers is reflected through reputation, consistency in fulfilling promises, and responsiveness to needs. (Pandey, 2023)Citizens' aspirations and aspirations are key factors in public policy studies that determine the level of public acceptance of government programs. From this perspective, trust is understood as public confidence in the government's competence, integrity, and good intentions in implementing policies.(Ahmad, 2025)A high level of trust will encourage the public to be more receptive to development policies, including National Strategic Projects (PSN), because they are perceived as providing tangible and sustainable benefits. Conversely, a low level of trust can trigger social resistance, increase public skepticism, and undermine policy legitimacy. Therefore, trust is a crucial variable in explaining how the public forms perceptions of large-scale development policies.

**Risk Perception Theory**explains that individuals not only assess risk based on objective facts, but also based on subjective perceptions influenced by experience, information, and social context. (Almansour et al., 2023)In the context of National Strategic Projects (PSN), risk perception can encompass concerns about

environmental impacts, social conflict, and economic uncertainty. High risk perceptions tend to lower public acceptance of development projects, thus becoming a barrier to policy implementation.

**Legitimacy Theory** emphasizes that the success of a policy is very dependent on the level of social acceptance of the policy by the community (Adeoye, 2024)(Suchman, 1995). Legitimacy is formed through public perceptions of fairness, transparency, and accountability in the decision-making process. In the context of National Strategic Projects (PSN), legitimacy is important because projects perceived as unfair or non-transparent tend to be rejected by the public. Therefore, legitimacy serves as a bridge between government policy and public acceptance.

Several previous studies have shown that trust, risk perception, and legitimacy are interrelated factors in shaping public perceptions of public policy. Empirical studies show that trust can increase policy legitimacy, while high risk perceptions can simultaneously decrease both trust and legitimacy. However, most studies have examined these variables separately, thus failing to provide a comprehensive picture of the interactions between them within a single conceptual model.

Based on these studies, this research integrates these three theories into a single conceptual framework that aims to explain how trust, risk perception, and legitimacy simultaneously influence public perceptions of National Strategic Projects. This approach is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding and fill the gap in the literature regarding public perceptions of development policies.

**Conceptual synthesis** Based on the theoretical discussion, these theories can explain trust, risk perception, and legitimacy as the main determinants in shaping public perceptions of National Strategic Projects. Trust acts as a driving factor that increases public acceptance, while risk perception functions as an inhibiting factor that can reduce support for the project. On the other hand, legitimacy acts as a balancing factor that determines the extent to which a policy is considered legitimate and socially acceptable. The integration of these three variables in one conceptual model provides a strong foundation for empirical testing in this study, as well as a foundation for analysis in the subsequent research methods section.

## **Research methods**

This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design that aims to test the causal relationships between variables in the formulated conceptual model. This approach was chosen because it can provide an empirical explanation of the influence of the independent variables, namely trust, risk perception, and legitimacy, on the dependent variable, namely public perception of the National Strategic Project (PSN). Explanatory research in a quantitative context allows for systematic and measurable hypothesis testing through inferential statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; ).

**Data source** The data used in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires distributed to residents in Merauke Regency who were knowledgeable about or affected by the implementation of the National Strategic Project (PSN). Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from official government documents, policy reports, and scientific literature relevant to the research topic. The combination of primary and secondary data aims to increase the validity and depth of analysis in the study (Saunders et al., 2019; ).

**Data collection technique** The main instrument in this study was a structured questionnaire compiled using a Likert scale of 1–5, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The research instrument was developed based on variable indicators established in the conceptual framework, namely trust, risk perception, legitimacy, and public perception of the National Strategic Plan (PSN). Furthermore, documentation was used as a supporting technique to collect data related to the policy and implementation of the National Strategic Plan (PSN) in Merauke Regency. The use of questionnaires as the main instrument

was considered effective in quantitatively measuring respondents' perceptions and attitudes (Hair et al., 2019; ).

This study established inclusion criteria for residents of Merauke Regency who were at least 17 years old, had knowledge or experience related to the National Strategic Project, and were able to complete the questionnaire independently. Exclusion criteria included respondents with incomplete or inconsistent answers to maintain data validity. The unit of analysis was the individual community. The population included communities affected by or familiar with the National Strategic Project (PSN). The sample was selected purposively, with a minimum of 100 respondents as required for SEM analysis to ensure representative results. (Ramadani et al., 2025).

The data analysis technique in this study used a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. This approach was chosen because it can analyze complex relationships between latent variables simultaneously, especially in conditions of a relatively limited sample size. Furthermore, SEM-PLS has the advantage of accommodating non-normally distributed data and producing more flexible and robust parameter estimates.(Sholihin & Ratmono, 2021).

The analysis process is carried out through two main stages: measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation (inner model). In the outer model stage, testing is conducted to ensure the quality of the research instrument through convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability tests. Furthermore, in the inner model stage, the analysis focuses on examining the relationships between variables by examining the path coefficient, R-square value, and the significance level of the proposed hypothesis. This stage aims to ensure that the model used is not only valid in terms of measurement but also capable of explaining the causal relationships between variables empirically.

Based on the conceptual framework that has been developed, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Trust has a positive effect on public perception of PSN  
H2: Risk Perception has a negative effect on public perception of PSN  
H3: Legitimacy has a positive effect on public perception of PSN

## Results and Discussion

### Measurement Model Evaluation

Measurement model evaluation was conducted to ensure that the constructs used in this study met validity and reliability criteria. Convergent validity was measured using loading factor values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). An indicator is considered valid if it has a loading factor value above 0.70 and an AVE value above 0.50.

**Table 1. Convergent Validity (Loading Factor and AVE)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Loading</b>	<b>AVE</b>
<b>Trust</b>	TR1	0.81	0.64
	TR2	0.84	
	TR3	0.79	
<b>Risk Perception</b>	RP1	0.85	0.68
	RP2	0.87	
	RP3	0.82	
<b>Legitimacy</b>	LG1	0.80	0.62
	LG2	0.83	

	LG3	0.78	
<b>Public Perception</b>	PM1	0.86	0.66
	PM2	0.88	
	PM3	0.84	

Based on Table 1, all indicators have loading factor values above 0.70, and the AVE value for each construct is above 0.50. This indicates that all indicators have met the convergent validity criteria and are able to adequately represent the constructs being measured.

More specifically, the relatively high loading factor values for each indicator indicate that each item makes a strong contribution to explaining the measured latent variable. Furthermore, AVE values exceeding the minimum limit indicate that the latent variable is able to explain more than 50% of the indicator's variance.(Prasetyo, 2025), so that the constructs used in this study have a good level of convergence and are worthy of further analysis in a structural model.

Next, reliability testing was conducted to ensure the internal consistency of each construct used in the study. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, with a value above 0.70 as the criterion.

**Table 2. Reliability Test**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>
<b>Trust</b>	0.82	0.88
<b>Risk Perception</b>	0.85	0.90
<b>Legitimacy</b>	0.80	0.87
<b>Public Perception</b>	0.86	0.89

Based on Table 2, all variables have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, so it can be concluded that all constructs in this study have a good level of reliability.

Furthermore, the Composite Reliability value, which is higher than Cronbach's Alpha, indicates that the construct has strong internal consistency in explaining the latent variables. This indicates that the research instrument used is capable of producing stable and consistent data, thus increasing confidence in the results of the analysis conducted in the next stage.

Discriminant validity was further tested using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) approach to ensure that each construct had clear differences from each other.

**Table 3. Discriminant Validity (HTMT)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Trust</b>	<b>Risk Perception</b>	<b>Legitimacy</b>
<b>Risk Perception</b>	0.55	-	-
<b>Legitimacy</b>	0.60	0.50	-
<b>Perception</b>	0.70	0.65	0.68

The results in Table 3 show that all HTMT values are below the threshold of 0.90, so it can be concluded that the model has met the discriminant validity criteria.

Overall, the three test results—convergent validity, reliability, and discriminant validity—indicate that the measurement model in this study not only meets statistical standards but also forms a solid empirical foundation for testing structural relationships between variables. High consistency in factor loadings and reliability indicates that the constructs of trust, risk perception, and legitimacy have strong conceptual clarity, while low HTMT values confirm that each construct can stand independently without overlapping meanings. Theoretically, this strengthens the assumption in behavioral and public policy approaches that public perception is built by distinct but complementary dimensions, namely trust in institutions, risk assessments, and policy legitimacy. These findings are also in line with the development of SEM-based studies that emphasize the importance of measurement model quality as a primary prerequisite for producing valid and reliable estimates of structural relationships, thus providing a strong foundation for interpreting the results in subsequent analysis stages.

### Structural Model Evaluation

Structural model evaluation—the inner model—is conducted to test the model's ability to explain the relationships between latent variables and to test research hypotheses. One of the main indicators in assessing the quality of a structural model is the coefficient of determination (R-square), which indicates how much the independent variables are able to explain the dependent variable.

**Table 4. R-Square Value**

Dependent Variable	R-Square
Public Perception	0.67

Based on Table 4, the R-square value of 0.67 indicates that the variables trust, risk perception, and legitimacy are able to explain 67% of the variation in public perception of National Strategic Projects (PSN). This value indicates that the model has a strong level of explanation, so it can be categorized as a good model in explaining the phenomenon studied. This indicates that a multidimensional approach that integrates aspects of trust, risk, and legitimacy makes a significant contribution to understanding public perceptions of development policies.

Next, hypothesis testing was conducted to determine the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The test results are presented in the following table.

**Table 5. Hypothesis Test Results (Path Coefficient)**

Hypothesis	Connection	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	T-Statistic	P-Value
H1	Trust→Perception	0.42	5.87	0.000
H2	Risk Perception→Perception	-0.31	4.96	0.000
H3	Legitimacy→Perception	0.36	5.12	0.000

Based on Table 5, the trust variable has a positive and significant influence on public perception of National Social Security ( $\beta = 0.42$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This finding strengthens the argument in Trust Theory that public trust is a key determinant in shaping attitudes toward government policies. In this context, people with a high level of trust in the government tend to view National Social Security as a beneficial and acceptable policy. This is in line with research by (Zmerli & Van der Meer, 2017) which shows that trust in public institutions contributes significantly to policy legitimacy. (Almaaitah et al., 2025). In addition, transparency of information and consistency of policy are also important factors in building public trust. (Jackson, 2023).

On the other hand, the risk perception variable showed a negative and significant influence on public perception ( $\beta = -0.31$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that the higher the risk perception, the lower the level of public

acceptance of PSN. This finding is consistent with Risk Perception Theory, which states that risk perception is subjective and influenced by social factors, experience, and information received by individuals. (Rufat et al., 2025) In the context of the National Strategic Project (PSN) in Merauke, concerns about environmental impacts, land conflicts, and economic uncertainty are the main factors shaping negative public perceptions. These findings align with research by Siegrist and Árvai (2020), which shows that high risk perceptions can reduce support for large-scale development projects.

Furthermore, the legitimacy variable was shown to have a positive and significant influence on public perception ( $\beta = 0.36$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that the level of public acceptance of PSN is greatly influenced by the extent to which the project is perceived as legitimate and in line with the public interest. From the perspective of Legitimacy Theory, legitimacy is formed through the alignment of government policies with prevailing social values and norms. (Arif & Dutta, 2024) These findings indicate that fairness, transparency, and community participation are key factors in building project legitimacy. A study by Zhang et al. (2021) also showed that community involvement in the decision-making process can increase legitimacy and support for public policies. (Akhter et al., 2023).

Overall, the structural model results indicate that public perception of National Strategic Projects (PSN) is shaped by the interaction between trust, perceived risk, and legitimacy. A high R-square value indicates that the model has good predictive ability in explaining the phenomena studied. This integrative approach aligns with recent research trends emphasizing the importance of using multidimensional models in analyzing public perception of development policies.

### Research Findings and Implications

This study summarizes key findings by integrating empirical results and policy implications into a comprehensive framework. The following table presents the relationship between key variables—trust, risk perception, and legitimacy—and public perceptions of National Strategic Projects (PSN), while also highlighting the practical relevance of each finding in supporting the effective implementation of development policies.

**Table 6. Research Findings and Implications**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Research Findings</b>	<b>Implications</b>
<b>Trust</b>	Public trust in the government has a positive and significant impact on public perception of the National Strategic Project (PSN). The higher the level of trust, the more positive the public's perception of the project.	The government needs to increase transparency, policy consistency, and effective public communication to build and maintain public trust.
<b>Risk Perception</b>	Risk perception has a significant negative impact on public perception. High concerns about environmental impacts, land conflicts, and economic uncertainty reduce public acceptance.	A clear risk mitigation strategy and transparent, data-driven information delivery are needed to reduce public concerns.
<b>Legitimacy</b>	Legitimacy has a positive and significant impact on public perception. The public tends to accept National Strategic Projects (PSN) if they are perceived as fair, transparent, and in the public interest.	The government needs to increase community participation, accountability, and fairness in project implementation to strengthen social legitimacy.

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<b>Public Perception of PSN</b>	Public perception is in the moderate to positive category, influenced simultaneously by trust, risk perception, and legitimacy.	The policy approach must be integrative, taking into account social aspects, not just the technical and economic aspects of development.
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The main contribution of this study lies in the integration of these three variables into a single conceptual model, empirically tested in the context of a peripheral region such as Merauke Regency. Unlike previous studies that tended to examine variables separately, this study demonstrates that the interaction between trust, risk perception, and legitimacy is a key factor in shaping public perceptions. These findings offer practical implications for governments in designing development policies that are more responsive to community needs, particularly through increased transparency, risk management, and public involvement in decision-making processes (OECD, 2021; <https://www.oecd.org/gov/trust/>).

The results of this study also indicate that risk perception remains a major challenge in increasing public acceptance of National Strategic Projects (PSN). Therefore, more effective communication strategies and participatory approaches are needed to reduce public concerns and increase trust in the government. Furthermore, further research is recommended to integrate qualitative approaches to delve deeper into the social dynamics that influence public perceptions, as well as expand the scope of the research area to increase the generalizability of the findings. (Tambaip et al., 2023).

## Conclusion

### Conclusion

This study demonstrates that public perception of National Strategic Projects (PSN) in Merauke Regency is significantly shaped by trust, risk perception, and legitimacy. Trust and legitimacy were found to have positive and significant effects, indicating that higher levels of confidence in government institutions and stronger perceptions of fairness and transparency contributed to more favorable public evaluations of PSN. In contrast, risk perception exerts a negative influence, suggesting that concerns related to environmental, social, and economic impacts can undermine public acceptance. Collectively, these variables explain a substantial proportion of variance in public perception, highlighting the importance of integrating social and psychological dimensions into the assessment of large-scale development policies.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by integrating Trust Theory, Risk Perception Theory, and Legitimacy Theory into a unified empirical model within the context of public policy in a peripheral region. This integrative approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of how different yet interrelated constructs jointly influence societal responses to government initiatives. Practically, the findings emphasize the need for policymakers to strengthen institutional trust through transparency and consistency, address perceived risks through effective communication and mitigation strategies, and enhance legitimacy by promoting inclusiveness, fairness, and public participation in decision-making processes.

Future research is encouraged to expand the analytical scope by incorporating additional variables such as cultural context, media influence, and direct community engagement, as well as adopting mixed-method approaches to capture deeper socio-cultural dynamics. Extending the study to other regions with diverse characteristics would also improve the generalizability of findings and provide broader insights into public perception of national development programs.

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# The Impact of Leadership and Organizational Culture on Public Sector Performance: Evidence from the Department of Food Crops, Merauke Regency

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## Abstract

This study examines the impact of leadership and organizational culture on public sector performance in regional governments, focusing on the Department of Food Crops in Merauke Regency, Indonesia. Grounded in Transformational Leadership Theory, Organizational Culture Theory, and Public Performance Management, this research adopts a quantitative explanatory design to investigate causal relationships among variables. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to public sector employees, complemented by interviews and institutional documentation. Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression to assess both partial and simultaneous effects.

The results reveal that leadership significantly and positively influences public sector performance, while organizational culture also demonstrates a strong positive effect on performance outcomes. Furthermore, leadership is found to play a critical role in shaping organizational culture, indicating an indirect pathway through which leadership enhances performance. Simultaneously, leadership and organizational culture explain a substantial proportion of variance in public sector performance, highlighting their strategic importance in public administration.

The novelty of this study lies in integrating leadership and organizational culture within a unified empirical model in the context of regional government institutions in Eastern Indonesia, a setting that remains underexplored in existing literature. This study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the multidimensional relationship between leadership, culture, and performance, and practically by offering insights for policymakers to strengthen leadership capacity and foster adaptive organizational cultures to improve public sector effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture, Public Sector Performance, Regional Government, Public Administration

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi terhadap kinerja sektor publik pada pemerintah daerah, dengan fokus pada Dinas Tanaman Pangan Kabupaten Merauke, Indonesia. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada *Transformational Leadership Theory*, *Organizational Culture Theory*, dan *Public Performance Management*, dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif melalui desain explanatory untuk menguji hubungan kausal antar variabel. Data primer dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terstruktur yang disebarakan kepada pegawai sektor publik, serta didukung oleh wawancara

dan dokumentasi organisasi. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan regresi linier berganda untuk menguji pengaruh parsial dan simultan.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja sektor publik, sementara budaya organisasi juga memberikan pengaruh positif yang kuat terhadap kinerja. Selain itu, kepemimpinan terbukti berperan penting dalam membentuk budaya organisasi, yang menunjukkan adanya jalur tidak langsung dalam meningkatkan kinerja. Secara simultan, kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi mampu menjelaskan proporsi yang signifikan dari variasi kinerja sektor publik, sehingga menegaskan pentingnya kedua variabel tersebut dalam konteks administrasi publik.

Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada integrasi antara kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi dalam satu model empiris yang terpadu dalam konteks pemerintah daerah di Indonesia bagian timur, yang masih jarang diteliti dalam literatur sebelumnya. Kontribusi teoretis dengan memperkuat hubungan multidimensional antara kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja, serta kontribusi praktis bagi pembuat kebijakan dalam meningkatkan kapasitas kepemimpinan dan membangun budaya organisasi yang adaptif guna meningkatkan efektivitas sektor publik.

**Kata Kunci:** Kepemimpinan Transformasional, Budaya Organisasi, Kinerja Sektor Publik, Pemerintah Daerah, Administrasi Publik

## PENDAHULUAN

Kinerja sektor publik merupakan indikator krusial dalam menilai efektivitas penyelenggaraan pemerintahan, terutama pada level pemerintah daerah yang berinteraksi langsung dengan masyarakat. Dalam era desentralisasi dan otonomi daerah, pemerintah dituntut untuk menghadirkan pelayanan publik yang tidak hanya efisien, tetapi juga akuntabel dan responsif terhadap kebutuhan masyarakat (Sudirjo et al., 2023). Namun demikian, berbagai tantangan masih mengemuka, seperti rendahnya produktivitas aparatur, terbatasnya inovasi pelayanan, serta lemahnya sistem akuntabilitas organisasi. Kondisi ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kinerja sektor publik tidak semata-mata ditentukan oleh regulasi formal, melainkan juga sangat dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal organisasi, terutama kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi (Tambaip et al., 2023).

Sejumlah penelitian terdahulu menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan memiliki peran signifikan dalam meningkatkan kinerja organisasi melalui peningkatan motivasi, komitmen, dan keterlibatan pegawai. Pendekatan kepemimpinan transformasional, misalnya, terbukti mampu mendorong perubahan organisasi dan meningkatkan efektivitas kinerja melalui visi yang inspiratif dan komunikasi yang efektif. Di sisi lain, budaya organisasi juga diidentifikasi sebagai faktor penting yang membentuk perilaku kerja dan mempengaruhi kinerja organisasi. Budaya organisasi yang kuat dan adaptif mampu meningkatkan koordinasi, memperkuat nilai kerja, serta mendorong inovasi dalam pelayanan publik (Depari & Sinambela, 2025). Dalam konteks organisasi sektor publik yang cenderung birokratis, budaya hierarchy seringkali mendominasi sehingga menghambat fleksibilitas dan inovasi.

Meskipun hubungan antara kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja telah banyak diteliti, terdapat **research gap** yang masih perlu dikaji lebih lanjut. Sebagian besar penelitian sebelumnya cenderung menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi secara terpisah terhadap kinerja, tanpa mengintegrasikan kedua variabel tersebut dalam satu model konseptual yang komprehensif. Selain itu, studi yang secara khusus mengkaji peran kepemimpinan dalam membentuk budaya organisasi sebagai

mekanisme yang mempengaruhi kinerja sektor publik masih relatif terbatas, terutama dalam konteks pemerintah daerah di wilayah Indonesia bagian timur yang memiliki karakteristik organisasi dan tantangan yang berbeda (Nabila, 2025). Oleh karena itu, diperlukan penelitian yang mampu mengisi kesenjangan tersebut dengan pendekatan yang lebih integratif dan kontekstual.

Urgensi penelitian ini semakin kuat mengingat pentingnya peningkatan kinerja sektor publik dalam mendukung pembangunan daerah, khususnya pada sektor strategis seperti ketahanan pangan (Nurtjahjo et al., 2025). Dinas Tanaman Pangan Kabupaten Merauke sebagai salah satu instansi pemerintah daerah memiliki peran vital dalam mendukung produktivitas pertanian dan ketahanan pangan lokal (Lauwinata et al., 2024). Namun, berbagai indikasi menunjukkan bahwa masih terdapat kendala dalam efektivitas kerja, koordinasi antar unit, serta inovasi dalam pelaksanaan program. Kondisi ini menegaskan perlunya kajian empiris yang mendalam untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor internal organisasi yang mempengaruhi kinerja, khususnya kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi.

**Kebaruan penelitian** terletak pada mengintegrasikan kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi dalam satu model analisis yang komprehensif untuk menjelaskan kinerja sektor publik. Penelitian ini juga menempatkan budaya organisasi sebagai variabel yang dipengaruhi oleh kepemimpinan sekaligus sebagai faktor yang mempengaruhi kinerja, sehingga memberikan perspektif yang lebih holistik dalam memahami dinamika organisasi sektor publik. Konteks penelitian yang berfokus pada pemerintah daerah di Kabupaten Merauke juga menjadi nilai tambah, mengingat masih terbatasnya kajian empiris di wilayah tersebut.

**Tujuan penelitian** ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi terhadap kinerja sektor publik, baik secara parsial maupun simultan, serta mengkaji peran kepemimpinan dalam membentuk budaya organisasi. Penelitian ini diharapkan tidak hanya memberikan kontribusi teoritis dalam pengembangan ilmu administrasi publik, tetapi juga memberikan implikasi praktis bagi pemerintah daerah dalam merumuskan strategi peningkatan kinerja organisasi yang lebih efektif, adaptif, dan berkelanjutan.

## **TINJAUAN PUSTAKA**

Kepemimpinan merupakan salah satu faktor kunci yang menentukan keberhasilan organisasi, terutama dalam sektor publik yang menghadapi kompleksitas tuntutan pelayanan masyarakat. Dalam konteks ini, pendekatan kepemimpinan transformasional menjadi salah satu teori yang paling relevan untuk menjelaskan bagaimana pemimpin mampu meningkatkan kinerja organisasi. Kepemimpinan transformasional menekankan kemampuan pemimpin dalam menginspirasi, memotivasi, serta mendorong perubahan positif dalam organisasi melalui visi yang jelas dan komunikasi yang efektif (Sahid et al., 2023). Dimensi utama dalam kepemimpinan transformasional meliputi pengaruh ideal (*idealized influence*), motivasi inspirasional (*inspirational motivation*), stimulasi intelektual (*intellectual stimulation*), dan perhatian individual (*individualized consideration*). Keempat dimensi ini berperan dalam meningkatkan komitmen pegawai, memperkuat loyalitas organisasi, serta mendorong peningkatan kinerja individu dan kolektif (Wijayanti, 2024).

Dalam organisasi sektor publik, kepemimpinan transformasional memiliki peran strategis dalam menghadapi tantangan birokrasi yang cenderung kaku dan hierarkis (Tambaip et al., 2025). Pemimpin yang mampu mengadopsi gaya transformasional dapat menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang lebih dinamis dan inovatif, sehingga mampu meningkatkan efektivitas dan efisiensi pelayanan publik. Kepemimpinan yang berorientasi pada perubahan juga mampu mengurangi resistensi terhadap inovasi dan mendorong adaptasi organisasi terhadap perkembangan lingkungan eksternal. Oleh karena itu, kepemimpinan transformasional tidak hanya berpengaruh langsung terhadap kinerja organisasi, tetapi juga berperan dalam membentuk budaya organisasi yang mendukung pencapaian tujuan organisasi.

Budaya organisasi merupakan elemen penting yang membentuk karakter dan perilaku anggota organisasi. Teori budaya organisasi menjelaskan bahwa budaya terdiri dari tiga lapisan utama, yaitu artefak, nilai, dan asumsi dasar yang secara bersama-sama membentuk pola pikir dan tindakan anggota organisasi (Tadesse Bogale & Debela, 2024). Artefak mencakup simbol, struktur, dan praktik yang dapat diamati secara langsung, sedangkan nilai mencerminkan prinsip dan standar yang dianut oleh organisasi. Asumsi dasar merupakan keyakinan yang tidak disadari namun sangat mempengaruhi perilaku individu dalam organisasi. Dalam sektor publik, budaya organisasi memiliki peran penting dalam menentukan kualitas pelayanan, disiplin kerja, serta integritas aparatur pemerintah.

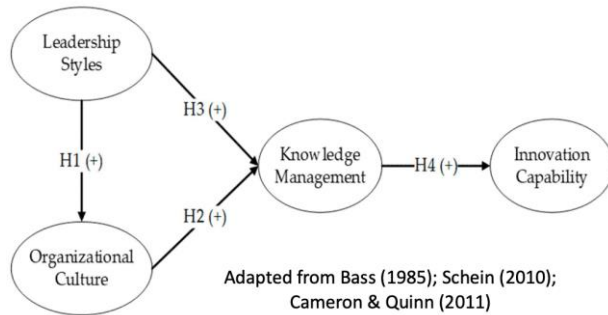
Selain itu, pendekatan Competing Values Framework memberikan perspektif yang lebih komprehensif dalam memahami variasi budaya organisasi. Kerangka ini mengelompokkan budaya organisasi ke dalam empat tipe utama, yaitu clan, adhocracy, market, dan hierarchy. Budaya clan menekankan hubungan interpersonal yang kuat dan kerja sama tim, sedangkan adhocracy berfokus pada inovasi dan fleksibilitas. Budaya market berorientasi pada pencapaian hasil dan kompetisi, sementara budaya hierarchy menekankan struktur, aturan, dan kontrol (Bozkus, 2023). Dalam organisasi pemerintah daerah, budaya hierarchy cenderung dominan karena adanya sistem birokrasi yang ketat, namun kombinasi dengan budaya clan dan adhocracy diperlukan untuk meningkatkan inovasi dan kualitas pelayanan publik.

Kinerja sektor publik merupakan hasil dari interaksi berbagai faktor yang mempengaruhi efektivitas organisasi dalam mencapai tujuan yang telah ditetapkan. Konsep Public Performance Management menekankan bahwa kinerja sektor publik harus diukur berdasarkan efektivitas, efisiensi, dan akuntabilitas. Efektivitas berkaitan dengan tingkat pencapaian tujuan organisasi, efisiensi mengacu pada penggunaan sumber daya secara optimal, sedangkan akuntabilitas berkaitan dengan pertanggungjawaban organisasi terhadap publik. Dalam konteks pemerintah daerah, kinerja tidak hanya dilihat dari output, tetapi juga dari outcome yang dirasakan oleh masyarakat sebagai penerima layanan.

Hubungan antara kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja sektor publik bersifat kompleks dan saling mempengaruhi. Kepemimpinan memiliki peran penting dalam membentuk dan mengarahkan budaya organisasi melalui nilai-nilai yang ditanamkan serta kebijakan yang diterapkan. Budaya organisasi yang kuat dan positif akan mendukung peningkatan kinerja organisasi dengan menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang kondusif dan produktif. Sebaliknya, budaya organisasi yang lemah dapat menghambat pencapaian tujuan organisasi meskipun didukung oleh kepemimpinan yang baik (Arabeche et al., 2022). Oleh karena itu, integrasi antara kepemimpinan transformasional dan budaya organisasi menjadi faktor kunci dalam meningkatkan kinerja sektor publik.

Berdasarkan kajian teoritis tersebut, dapat disimpulkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional memiliki pengaruh langsung terhadap kinerja sektor publik serta pengaruh tidak langsung melalui budaya organisasi sebagai variabel intervening. Budaya organisasi juga memiliki pengaruh langsung terhadap kinerja organisasi, sehingga kedua variabel ini menjadi determinan utama dalam peningkatan kinerja sektor publik. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini mengembangkan model konseptual yang menghubungkan kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja sektor publik dalam konteks pemerintah daerah, khususnya pada Dinas Tanaman Pangan Kabupaten Merauke, seperti dalam image berikut:

Gambar 1. Kerangka Konseptual Studi



Model konseptual pada Gambar 1 menggambarkan hubungan antara kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja sektor publik dalam konteks pemerintah daerah. Kepemimpinan diposisikan sebagai variabel utama yang tidak hanya berpengaruh langsung terhadap kinerja sektor publik, tetapi juga berperan dalam membentuk budaya organisasi sebagai variabel intervening. Budaya organisasi selanjutnya berfungsi sebagai faktor yang memperkuat atau memediasi pengaruh kepemimpinan terhadap kinerja organisasi (Tampaip et al., 2024). Hubungan antar variabel tersebut menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kinerja sektor publik tidak dapat dilepaskan dari sinergi antara kualitas kepemimpinan dan kekuatan budaya organisasi. Oleh karena itu, model ini menjadi dasar dalam pengujian hipotesis penelitian yang telah dirumuskan, serta memberikan kerangka analitis untuk memahami dinamika internal organisasi dalam upaya meningkatkan efektivitas, efisiensi, dan akuntabilitas kinerja sektor publik.

## Metode Penelitian

Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain explanatory research untuk menguji hubungan kausal antara kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja sektor publik (Nurlaela et al., 2025). Pendekatan ini dipilih karena memungkinkan pengujian hipotesis secara empiris melalui analisis statistik serta memberikan pemahaman objektif terhadap hubungan antar variabel dalam konteks organisasi sektor publik.

Penelitian ini dirancang untuk menjawab pertanyaan utama mengenai bagaimana pengaruh kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi terhadap kinerja sektor publik, serta bagaimana peran kepemimpinan dalam membentuk budaya organisasi. Berdasarkan kerangka konseptual yang telah dikembangkan, hipotesis penelitian dirumuskan sebagai berikut:

H1: Kepemimpinan berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja sektor publik.

H2: Budaya organisasi berpengaruh positif terhadap kinerja sektor publik.

H3: Kepemimpinan berpengaruh positif terhadap budaya organisasi.

H4: Kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi secara simultan berpengaruh terhadap kinerja sektor publik.

Sumber data dalam penelitian ini terdiri dari data primer dan data sekunder. Data primer diperoleh melalui penyebaran kuesioner kepada pegawai Dinas Tanaman Pangan Kabupaten Merauke, sedangkan data sekunder diperoleh dari dokumen organisasi, laporan kinerja, serta literatur ilmiah yang relevan. Populasi dalam penelitian ini mencakup seluruh pegawai pada Dinas Tanaman Pangan Kabupaten Merauke dan rekanan dari dinas yang dihitung menggunakan rumus Slovin untuk memastikan tingkat representativitas data dengan tingkat kesalahan (margin of error) sebesar 5%. Rumus Slovin dinyatakan sebagai berikut:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

di mana  $n$  adalah jumlah sampel,  $N$  adalah jumlah populasi, dan  $e$  adalah tingkat kesalahan yang ditetapkan (0,05) ditetapkan **67 orang**. Berdasarkan jumlah populasi tersebut, penentuan sampel dilakukan menggunakan teknik **proportional random sampling** untuk memastikan bahwa setiap bagian atau unit kerja dalam organisasi terwakili secara proporsional. Teknik ini dipilih guna meningkatkan representativitas data dan mengurangi potensi bias dalam proses pengambilan sampel.

Pengumpulan data dilakukan menggunakan kuesioner berbasis skala Likert lima poin yang mengukur variabel kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja sektor publik. Instrumen penelitian dikembangkan berdasarkan indikator teoritis yang relevan dan telah diuji melalui uji validitas dan reliabilitas. Seluruh konstruk memenuhi kriteria reliabilitas dengan nilai Cronbach's Alpha di atas 0,70.

Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan regresi linier berganda untuk menguji pengaruh parsial dan simultan antar variabel. Sebelum analisis utama, dilakukan uji asumsi klasik yang meliputi normalitas, multikolinearitas, dan heteroskedastisitas untuk memastikan kelayakan model. Pengujian hipotesis dilakukan menggunakan uji t untuk pengaruh parsial dan uji F untuk pengaruh simultan, dengan tingkat signifikansi 5% ( $p < 0,05$ ). Selain itu, koefisien determinasi ( $R^2$ ) digunakan untuk mengukur kemampuan model dalam menjelaskan variasi kinerja sektor publik.

Model regresi dalam penelitian ini dirumuskan sebagai berikut:

$$Y = \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

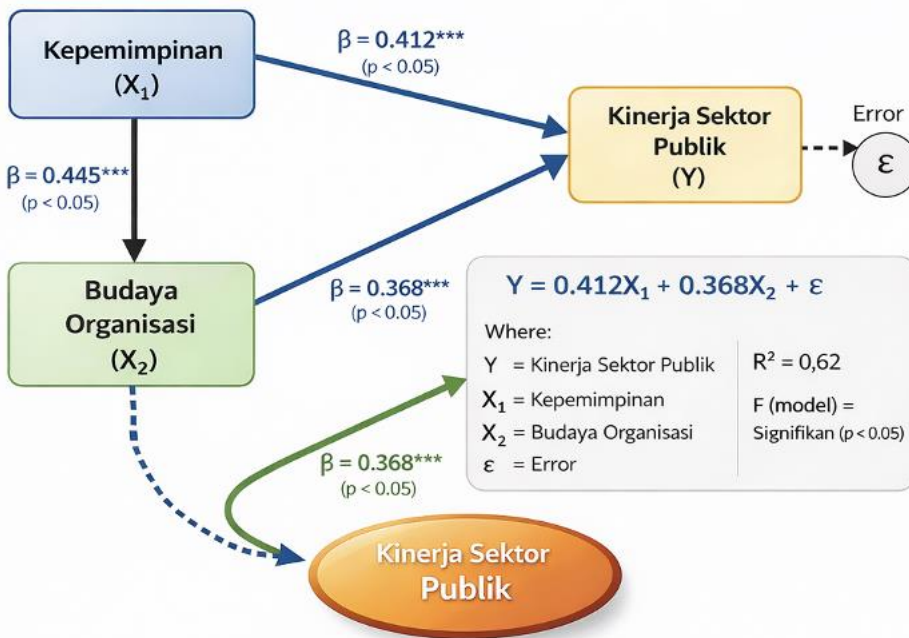
di mana  $Y$  adalah kinerja sektor publik,  $X_1$  adalah kepemimpinan,  $X_2$  adalah budaya organisasi, dan  $\varepsilon$  adalah error term. Model ini digunakan untuk mengidentifikasi kontribusi masing-masing variabel independen terhadap peningkatan kinerja sektor publik dalam konteks pemerintah daerah.

## Results and Discussion

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa secara deskriptif, variabel kepemimpinan memiliki nilai rata-rata sebesar 4,12 (SD = 0,56), yang mengindikasikan bahwa praktik kepemimpinan dalam organisasi berada pada kategori tinggi. Budaya organisasi juga menunjukkan nilai rata-rata yang tinggi (mean = 4,05; SD = 0,61), mencerminkan adanya sistem nilai dan norma yang relatif kuat dalam organisasi. Sementara itu, kinerja sektor publik memiliki nilai rata-rata sebesar 3,98 (SD = 0,59), yang menunjukkan bahwa tingkat kinerja organisasi berada pada kategori cukup tinggi. Selain itu, seluruh konstruk penelitian memenuhi kriteria validitas dan reliabilitas dengan nilai Cronbach's Alpha di atas 0,70, sehingga instrumen dinyatakan layak untuk analisis lebih lanjut.

Hasil analisis regresi linier berganda menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja sektor publik ( $\beta = 0,412$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ), serta budaya organisasi juga berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja sektor publik ( $\beta = 0,368$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). Selain itu, kepemimpinan terbukti memiliki pengaruh signifikan terhadap budaya organisasi ( $\beta = 0,445$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). Nilai koefisien determinasi ( $R^2 = 0,62$ ) menunjukkan bahwa 62% variasi kinerja sektor publik dapat dijelaskan oleh kedua variabel tersebut.

Temuan ini dapat digambarkan sebagai berikut mengindikasikan bahwa model penelitian memiliki daya jelaskan yang kuat dalam konteks organisasi sektor publik.



**Gambar 1.** Model Penelitian Akhir

**Keterangan:** Angka pada gambar menunjukkan koefisien jalur standar, dengan tingkat signifikansi  $p < 0,05$

Model akhir menunjukkan bahwa **kepemimpinan** ( $X_1$ ) dan **budaya organisasi** ( $X_2$ ) memiliki **pengaruh positif** dan **signifikan** terhadap kinerja sektor publik, (Y), dengan koefisien masing-masing sebesar 0,412 dan 0,368. Selain itu, kepemimpinan secara signifikan memengaruhi **budaya organisasi** ( $\beta = 0,445$ ). Model ini menjelaskan 62% variansi dalam kinerja sektor publik ( $R^2 = 0,62$ ), menunjukkan kekuatan penjelasan yang substansial.

Interpretasi hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan berperan sebagai faktor utama yang tidak hanya mempengaruhi kinerja secara langsung, tetapi juga melalui pembentukan budaya organisasi sebagai mekanisme penguat. Kepemimpinan yang efektif mampu menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang mendorong motivasi, keterlibatan, dan inovasi pegawai, yang pada akhirnya berdampak pada peningkatan kinerja organisasi. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa peran kepemimpinan dalam sektor publik tidak terbatas pada fungsi administratif, tetapi juga sebagai agen perubahan yang membentuk nilai dan perilaku organisasi.

Temuan ini sejalan dengan Transformational Leadership Theory yang menekankan bahwa pemimpin transformasional mampu meningkatkan kinerja melalui inspirasi, visi, dan stimulasi intelektual. Selain itu, hasil penelitian ini juga mendukung Organizational Culture Theory yang menyatakan bahwa budaya organisasi berperan sebagai sistem nilai yang membentuk perilaku anggota organisasi. Budaya organisasi yang kuat dan adaptif terbukti mampu memperkuat efektivitas organisasi sektor publik. Dalam konteks ini, Competing Values Framework (CVF) memberikan pemahaman bahwa keseimbangan antara budaya hierarchy, clan, dan adhocracy dapat meningkatkan performa organisasi secara optimal.

Jika dibandingkan dengan penelitian terdahulu, hasil penelitian ini konsisten dengan berbagai studi yang menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan memiliki pengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja organisasi publik

melalui peningkatan motivasi dan komitmen pegawai (Hamidah & Awalya, 2025). Selain itu, budaya organisasi juga terbukti sebagai faktor penting dalam meningkatkan efektivitas organisasi. Namun, beberapa penelitian sebelumnya menunjukkan bahwa budaya organisasi tidak selalu berpengaruh signifikan dalam konteks birokrasi yang kaku, sehingga diperlukan peran kepemimpinan yang kuat untuk mendorong perubahan. Hal ini memperkuat temuan penelitian ini bahwa kepemimpinan memiliki peran strategis dalam membentuk budaya organisasi yang lebih adaptif dan berorientasi pada kinerja.

**Research gap penelitian** ini mengisi kekosongan dalam literatur yang selama ini cenderung mengkaji kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi secara terpisah dalam mempengaruhi kinerja sektor publik. Sebagian besar penelitian sebelumnya lebih berfokus pada hubungan langsung antara kepemimpinan dan kinerja, atau budaya organisasi dan kinerja, tanpa mengintegrasikan keduanya dalam satu model konseptual yang komprehensif, khususnya dalam konteks pemerintah daerah di wilayah berkembang seperti Indonesia bagian timur. Selain itu, studi empiris yang mengkaji peran kepemimpinan dalam membentuk budaya organisasi sebagai mekanisme tidak langsung terhadap kinerja masih relatif terbatas (Deswan, 2025). Dengan demikian, penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi dengan menghadirkan model integratif yang menjelaskan hubungan langsung dan tidak langsung antara kepemimpinan, budaya organisasi, dan kinerja sektor publik dalam konteks lokal yang spesifik.

**Implikasi teoretis** dari penelitian ini adalah penguatan integrasi antara teori kepemimpinan transformasional dan budaya organisasi dalam menjelaskan kinerja sektor publik. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa hubungan antar variabel bersifat multidimensional, di mana kepemimpinan tidak hanya berpengaruh langsung terhadap kinerja, tetapi juga melalui pembentukan budaya organisasi sebagai variabel penguat. Hal ini memberikan kontribusi pada pengembangan teori administrasi publik dengan pendekatan yang lebih holistik dalam memahami faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kinerja organisasi.

**Implikasi praktis** menunjukkan bahwa pemerintah daerah perlu mengembangkan kepemimpinan yang bersifat transformasional serta membangun budaya organisasi yang adaptif, inovatif, dan berorientasi pada kinerja. Program pelatihan kepemimpinan, penguatan nilai-nilai organisasi, serta sistem evaluasi kinerja berbasis hasil dapat menjadi strategi yang efektif dalam meningkatkan kinerja sektor publik. Selain itu, organisasi perlu menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang mendorong kolaborasi dan inovasi untuk mengatasi keterbatasan birokrasi yang cenderung kaku.

## **Kesimpulan**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi terhadap kinerja sektor publik pada Dinas Tanaman Pangan Kabupaten Merauke. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja sektor publik, demikian pula budaya organisasi yang terbukti berkontribusi secara signifikan dalam meningkatkan efektivitas, efisiensi, dan akuntabilitas organisasi. Selain itu, kepemimpinan juga terbukti berpengaruh terhadap pembentukan budaya organisasi, yang menunjukkan adanya hubungan yang saling terkait antara kedua variabel tersebut. Secara simultan, kepemimpinan dan budaya organisasi mampu menjelaskan sebagian besar variasi kinerja sektor publik, sehingga menjadi faktor utama dalam peningkatan kinerja organisasi pemerintah daerah.

Temuan utama penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa kepemimpinan yang efektif, khususnya yang bersifat transformasional, mampu mendorong terciptanya budaya organisasi yang positif dan adaptif, yang pada akhirnya meningkatkan kinerja sektor publik. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan kinerja

organisasi tidak hanya bergantung pada sistem formal, tetapi juga pada kualitas kepemimpinan dan nilai-nilai budaya yang berkembang dalam organisasi.

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, disarankan agar pemerintah daerah memperkuat kapasitas kepemimpinan melalui pelatihan dan pengembangan kompetensi yang berorientasi pada kepemimpinan transformasional. Selain itu, perlu dilakukan penguatan budaya organisasi yang mendukung inovasi, kolaborasi, dan orientasi kinerja guna meningkatkan kualitas pelayanan publik secara berkelanjutan.

Namun demikian, penelitian ini memiliki keterbatasan, antara lain penggunaan pendekatan kuantitatif yang belum mampu menggali secara mendalam aspek sosial dan budaya organisasi, serta keterbatasan lokasi penelitian yang hanya berfokus pada satu instansi pemerintah daerah. Oleh karena itu, penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk menggunakan pendekatan mixed methods serta memperluas objek penelitian agar memperoleh hasil yang lebih komprehensif dan generalisasi yang lebih luas.

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