Capacity development of human resource in local government to improve public service quality

Moh. Said *

* University of Brawijaya, Malang, East Java, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Capacity development of human resource in relation to the government apparatus’ professionalism is an important aspect to consider when it comes to human resource development within the government. This is because it has a close relationship with their function as public servants. The higher the apparatus’ capacity is, the better they serve the public. However, the fact remains that the apparatus’ capacity has not yet met the required standard. This is mainly influenced by the apparatus’ low working ethos and their negative perspectives and attitudes that, in turn, prevent them from working effectively. To overcome this problem, it is suggested that the government restructures the institution through promoting a change in the working culture and behavior, reforming the institution’s departments based on the actual needs, endorsing efficiency, improving the public service to improve society at large, and increasing the apparatus’ professionalism.

1. Background

Decentralization policy, written in the Local Government Law number 32 year 2004, has given local authorities more power to govern their cities/regencies. It is stated in Law number 32 year 2004 article 1 paragraph 5, “Regional autonomy means that a region has all the rights, authorities, and responsibilities to manage and organize its own government’s and public affairs in accordance with the Law”. The article implies that local governments need to have adequate capacities to establish a good public service. Thus, local governments need to be supported by qualified government apparatus. For that reason, capacity development of the government apparatus has become the top priority for local governments to achieve an excellent and optimal public service. In order to improve their workers’ capacity, local governments are required to take concrete movements.

Capacity development is an approach which today is widely used in community development. Not only is that capacity related to individual skills and capabilities, but also is linked to the ability of an organization to effectively reach its goals and survive in a long period of time. UNDP defines capacity as an ability to solve problems possessed by an individual, organization, institution, and society to individually or collectively carry out their functions, solve problems, set and achieve objectives (UNDP, 2006). In addition to that, Morgan (in Millen, 2006:14) states that capacity is an ability, skill, understanding, attitude, value, connection, behavior, motivation, resource, and many other conditions that enable every individual, organization, network/sector, and a larger system to perform their functions and reach the development goals which have been periodically determined. Furthermore, Milen (2001:142) sees capacity development as a special task while the special task is tightly related to specific factors in a specific system or organization within a specific time. Based on the definition, society development is a process that takes place inside the society itself (endogenous process). Hence, “capacity development can be simply regarded as a process in which people, organizations, and society altogether publish, strengthen, create, adapt, and cultivate their abilities over time”.

In public organizations, the increase in the capacity development of the human resource is crucial because it plays the role as the basic requirement to build an organization. Besides, the government apparatus capacity development is closely connected to public service process. The higher the government apparatus capacity is, the better the public service will be. On the other hand, the lower the government apparatus capacity is, the worse the public service is going to be. As for the government which acts as an agent to provide public service, the challenge lies in the demands that workers need to be competent in what they do and prioritize the customers’ satisfaction. One method that has been implemented by the government is a bureaucracy reform. The objective of this reform is the establishment of an excellent public service (fast, precise, low-cost, transparent, and
accountable), and the improvement of the bureaucracy performance. Nevertheless, the development of the state apparatus which is carried out through this kind of bureaucracy reform program is still partial and has not touched the core issue of the state apparatus’ capacity development. The fact that bureaucracy reform has not operated the way it is expected by the society is the central problem in realizing good governance and the improvement of the government performance (Adie, 2014: 178-186). Some special cases can be an example of the low quality public service conducted by the government.

Many of the ongoing problems in the bureaucracy influence the overall bureaucracy capacity. This is mainly caused by: (1) a bulky and inefficient structure of organization; (2) an overlap among main duties, function, and authority of the local government; (3) the poor working relation within the local government, including the implementation of the regional autonomy; (4) the disproportional organization of local governments’ working units which does not reflect the regions’ characteristics and cannot answer the actual needs; (5) the loose application of competence standard for high level officers who are responsible for structural and functional positions; (6) the low level of discipline and working ethics; (7) a non-objective career system which is not entirely based on working achievement; (8) the ineffective remuneration system which cannot yet help the staff to live a decent life; (9) the civil servants recruitment (CPNS) system which is not yet based on the educational qualifications needed; (10) the low quality of the government apparatus in general; (11) the ineffective education and trainings that have not been favorable to the government’s performance.

Facing the above problems, capacity development which includes system, employee (individuals), and organization (entity) needs to implement to accelerate the bureaucracy reform (Milen, 2014:17). Capacity development refers to the process where individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, and society develop their skills, either individually or collectively, to conduct their functions, solve problems, and independently achieve their own goals.

2. Theoretical Studies
2.1. Local government

The existence of local government is important in order to realize a government which is democratic and is capable of fulfilling the needs of its citizens who reside far from the center of power. It is mentioned in Law number 32 year 2004 on Local Government, that “Local governance is the establishment of state administration affairs conducted by the local government and the regional house of representatives based on the autonomy principals and the duty to provide assistance in accordance with the autonomy principals within the system and the principal of the Unitary State Republic of Indonesia as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution of the State Republic of Indonesia. Local Government is governor, regent, mayor, and the local state apparatus as the elements within local government”.

The formation of autonomy regions through decentralization basically creates efficiency and innovation within the government, meaning that decentralization can ensure the unity of the nation (Raman,2014 : 17-30). Autonomy region as a form of “decentralization” is essentially applied to comply with the needs of the whole nation. It is an effort to realize the objective of the establishment of the government, which is to create a better and prosperous society by delegating the tasks to the head of the region (Dwidjowijoto, 2000:41). In line with decentralization, regions must be given the rights to organize and manage its own household.

2.2. Capacity Development

Capacity is the ability of an individual, organization, or system to run its functions efficiently, effectively and continuously. However, in this respect, the capacity must be closely connected to the main duties and functions which are already set by the organization or system. Capacity should constantly renew itself. Thus, capacity development is an ongoing improvement process of an individual, organization, or institution that takes place more than once. It is an internal process that can only be activated and accelerated by foreign aids, for example donor. Capacity development is a way to set conditions or qualities, whether it is an individual’s or institution’s, to meet the requirements. Similarly, Moeljarto (2001) considers that capacity development is an effort to set conditions and qualities of the human resources, supportive means and system, and new commitment. Capacity development is a broad concept concerning the improvement of human resource and many other management issues and tendencies, such as strategic management, knowledge management, and information management (Milen, 2004:17).

Morgan in Soeprapto (2003) says that capacity is ability, skill, comprehension, attitude, value, relation, behavior, motivation, resource, and other conditions that enable an individual, organization, network/sector, and a wider system to carry out their functions and reach the pre-determined development targets from time to time (Morgan in Soeprapto; 2003:10). Hence, capacity building becomes a means to improve one’s performance and develop the expertise and skills needed by the government, society, and individual to increase the performance’s efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness. Capacity development can be done through education and training, regulation and institutional reform, financial, technology, and scientific assistances. (Agus,2011). Capacity development as an attempt to improve working performance is highly needed by the government’s agents and administrators, both personally and collectively. Because capacity development is an ongoing process that must be conducted more than once, it must be perceived in corresponds to the actual needs and demands.

Capacity development cannot be separated from a work’s type, focus, and dimensions. Table 1 shows the dimensions and focus of capacity building according to Grindle (1997: 9). Based on the table above, there are three dimensions of capacity development, (1) Human resource development, (2) Organizational strengthening, and (3) Institutional reform. The human resource development dimension focuses on the supply of professional and technical personnel. Competent human resources can be achieved through education and training, setting decent amount of salaries, proper working environment, and a good recruitment system. Related to organizational strengthening dimension, the core attentions are the management systems to improve performance o specific tasks and functions, and the management of microstructures. These include activities such as arranging a good incentives system, employing the existing personnel, giving examples through a good leadership, building an effective communication, and improving managerial structures. The third dimension, institutional reform, pays most of its attention to the institutions and systems in general, and to the impacts of macrostructures. In this context, there has to be a change in the rules of the game for economic and political regimes, a change in the policies and legal rules, and reform on the institutional system that can push the development of market
and civil society (Grindle, 1997). Furthermore, capacity development is an attempt to construct some kind of strategic plans to increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and the responsiveness of the performance of the government. Efficiency here relates to the use of time and resources needed to obtain specific outcomes; effectiveness means the appropriate measures between the attempts and goals reached; while responsiveness is a way to synchronize the needs and ability to get to the goals.

Table 1: Dimensions and focus of capacity building initiatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Types of Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human resource</td>
<td>Supply of professional and</td>
<td>Training, salaries, conditions of work,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development</td>
<td>technical personnel</td>
<td>recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>Management Systems to</td>
<td>Incentives systems, utilization of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strengthening</td>
<td>improve performance of</td>
<td>personnel, leadership, organizational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>specific tasks and</td>
<td>culture, communication,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>functions; microstructures</td>
<td>managerial structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Reform</td>
<td>Institutions and</td>
<td>Rules of the game for economic and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>systems; macrostructures</td>
<td>political regimes, policy and legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>change, constitutional reform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Grindle, 1997; 9

Taking the explanation back to the context of capacity development in local government, we need to turn the central attention to the government apparatus (human resource). This is because human resource is an important factor in running an organization. Human resource should not be defined based on what they do, but on what they produce (Marthins and Jackson, 2002:4). This statement supports the idea that capacity building in local government apparatus is crucial for it is the determinant factor in the success of public service.

2.3. The government apparatus

The low quality of public service has always been on spotlight because it is the image of the government at large; the lower the quality and the bigger the dissatisfaction shown by public means the more negative the image of the government is. Not only is that government apparatus development needed to accomplish the organization’s objectives, but also is it crucial to improve troubled or deficient departments (Ajib, 2013:8-9). Similarly, Millen (2004: 22) utters, “In capacity building, the education levels are highly considered, while the skills and knowledge will be suited to the current job requirements. Thus, a specific position needs somebody with corresponding skills and competence”. Again, this statement implies that improving the employee’s performance can be carried out through trainings and workshops.

2.4. Public service

The 1945 constitution explicates that the state has the obligation to fulfill the citizen’s basic necessities and that it is responsible for its people’s welfare. Public service is one of the ways to comply with the obligation and its quality determines the effectiveness of the government’s system. In the Preamble (preamble) of the 1945 constitution, the state’s duty to improve the people’s welfare and intelligence is also emphasized (Surjadi, 2009: 7). Public service, according to Sinambela in Posolong (2010: 128), means whatever activities done by the government to satisfy the needs, which are not necessarily physical, of a community. Furthermore, Monir in Pasolong (2010: 128) also explains that public service is self-fulfillment activities through the hands of others. Still related to the definition of public service, Kurniawan (Posolong, 2010:128) states it is an activity to serve the interests of a group of people or society that corresponds to the existing laws and regulations. Meanwhile, the State Apparatus Empowerment Minister (Pasolong, 2010: 128) defines that public service is all kinds of service, material or immaterial, to fulfill the needs of the community. Based on the above definitions, we can conclude that public service is an activity done by the government as public service administrators to serve the needs and interests of a group of people living in the community according to the legitimate laws and regulations.

2.4.1. Public service quality

Most experts define quality in a short phrase. W. E. Deming, for instance, says that it is a continuous improvement. Joseph M. Juraj defines it as fit for use. Philip Crosby expresses the term as conformity to the prerequisites. J. W. Cortado also claims it in a short phrase, calling it as the moment of truth, meaning that
quality is created during the realization. Kaoru Ishikawa describes it in a full sentence, saying that quality is a product which is mostly economical, useful, and satisfying customers (Sinambela, 2007: 43). Tjiptono in Pasolong (2010: 132) explains it more broadly, it is: (a) conformity to the prerequisites/demands, (b) fitness to use, (c) ongoing improvement or perfection, (d) freedom from damage, (e) initial and constant fulfillment of customer’s needs, (f) excellent performance right from the start, and (g) something to please customers.

Kasmir in Pasolong (2010:133) utters that a good service is the ability to comply with the standardized service that satisfies customers. In addition to this, Osborne, Gebler, and Bloom (Pasolong, 2010:133) narrate the characteristics of an excellent service as non-procedural, decentralized and well distributed, and customer oriented. Service quality is one of the determinant factors in running both the government and private organizations. A good quality service that answers the needs of the customers is a key to customer’s satisfaction. According to Sinambela et. al. in Pasolong (2010:133), a superb service is reflected on the: transparency, accountability, conditions, participative, equality and balance in rights and obligations. To sum up, service quality is the community’s satisfaction for public service which resembles the community’s expectations.

2.4.2. Service quality indicators

Based on the report by Zeithaml-Pasuraman-Berry (Pasolong, 2010:135), the valid quality of a service experienced by customers can be measured through five dimensions; they are: (1) Tangibles: service quality on its physical forms such as office buildings, computerized administration, waiting room, information booth; (2) Reliability: ability and competency to provide a reliable service; (3) Responsiveness: competency to help and provide a service in a quick and accurate manner and responsive to the customer’s needs; (4) Assurance: the ability and cordiality of the apparatus in gaining the customer’s trust, and (5) Empathy: firm yet attentive manner.

2.4.3. Public service principals

As stated in State Apparatus Empowerment Ministerial (MENPAN) decree number 81 year 1993, the public service principals are as following: (1) Simple. The regulation and implementation of the service procedure should be (a) easy, fluid, rapid, precise, brief. (b) Understandable and applicable by the community. (2) Clear and definite. There should be clarity and certainty in: service procedures, technical and administrative service requirements, authoritative and responsible unit/officers, and fees/tariff and payment details, service completion schedule. (3) Transparent. All the service procedures, technical and administrative service requirements, authoritative and responsible unit/officers, fees/tariff and payment details, service completion schedule, and other things related to the service process should be announced openly so that the information will be well understood by the public. (4) Efficient. Service requirements are only limited to the affairs that are directly related to the service targets by paying attention to the conformity between prerequisites and service produce. (5) Economical. The service fee/tariff must be properly stipulated and should consider: products or service’s value, community’s conditions and economic capability, the existing laws and regulations. (6) Fair and equally distributed. Public service must reach communities in remote areas and must be distributed evenly and equally to all layers of society. (7) Punctual. Public service must be accomplished in line with the schedule.

Additionally, service principals according to Apparatus Empowerment Ministerial decree (KEPMENPAN) number 63 year 2003 are: (1) Simplicity. Public service procedures must be brief, understandable, and applicable; (2) Clarity. There must be clarity on public service technical and administrative prerequisites, the departments/officers that deal with communities’ complaints, problems, and disputes, and the details on fees and payment procedures; (3) Punctuality. The completion of a public service process must be punctual; (4) Accuracy. Public service products must be eligible, precise, and legitimate; (5) Security. Public service process and products must be secure and have legal conviction; (6) Responsibility. The chief public service officer must responsible for the overall establishment of the service and the settlement of public’s complaints/problems. (7) The availability of the facilities and infrastructures. There should be adequate and supportive working equipment, including the communication and information technology devices; (8) Accessibility. Public service area and location should be easily accessed by the community and should be accessible through the means of communication and information technology; (9) Discipline, courtesy, and cordiality. Public service apparatus must demonstrate positive manners that reflect discipline, courtesy, and cordiality; (10) Comfort. The public service area must be well ordered, tidy, equipped with a comfortable and clean waiting room, completed with adequate parking lot, toilets, praying room, etc.

3. Discussion

The capacity development of government apparatus aims at increasing government’s performance in building a highly professional and capable state apparatus who are dealing with policy making and public service areas. Since capacity is an ability possessed by an individual, an organization, or a system in carrying out their functions effectively and efficiently, it is very important in achieving the common purpose in a country’s development. Kausar in the State Administration Institution (2007:2) describes that, in many countries, one of the main factors that influence the success of regional autonomy is a region’s adequate capacity or ability in all relevant aspects. Only then a region will be able to serve its public well and raise its competing potential. Furthermore, Bryant and White (1984) suggest that the apparatus should develop their motivation and capacity to improve the quality of the public service. The activities for the development of the government apparatus cover “capacity, equity, empowerment and sustainability”. Soeparto in Ismail (2009) emphasizes the importance of capacity building as an attempt to create a dynamic complexity within the body of the local government so that the good governance will eventually reflect on the public service.

The problem with public bureaucracy lies in the apparatus, because they are the machine that runs the establishment of public service and determines its success. Hence, it is crucial to improve the quality and capacity of the state apparatus so that the quality of the regional governance, development, and public service can also be improved, and at last the national objectives can be achieved.

State civil servants are now demanded to maximize their potential capacity and directly apply their potentials on their main duties and functions which should be responsive to customers’ internal and external expectations, needs, and necessities. To measure the capacity possessed by a personnel, Soeparto (2010:29) suggests that the capacity development of the government apparatus must focus on: (1) skills and expertise, (2) insights and knowledge, (3) talent and potential, (4) personality.
and job motivation, and (5) moral and working ethos. The researcher, therefore, would like to use the mentioned five indicators to assess the capacity of the government apparatus or the state civil servants (PNS). Then, to examine the quality of public service, the researcher will use service quality dimensions as promoted by Zeithaml-Pasuraman-Berry (Pasalong, 2010:135) which include reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible.

The capacity of the government apparatus, which can be evaluated through the personnel’s knowledge, skills, behaviors, and working ethics, exceedingly defines the capacity of the government’s bureaucracy. The more qualified the government apparatus is, the better the quality of the public service delivered to the stakeholders. For that reason, local government has to undergo systematical efforts to increase the apparatus’ competence and knowledge. This can be done through formal education or private trainings.

Human resource’s skills development must become the local government’s priority, since a first rate human resource will push the performance of the organization to the maximum. For this purpose, effective and concrete steps to improve the skills of the apparatus must be made so that civil servants would no longer be regarded as unprofessional and work solely for serving the boss instead of the people. Many local governments have attempted in improving the skills of the staff by organizing technical and functional trainings, or simply by restructurizing and posting “the right man on the right place”. Nevertheless, personnel’s capacity and quality are not only determined by the knowledge and skills they use in completing their tasks. Some empirical evidence has shown that a personnel’s success is determined by their behaviors and working ethics (Martinez et al. 2010). In addition to this, the chief of the organization plays a very important role in creating a favorable working climate and giving positive examples to the staff so that they respect ethical values in working.

Therefore, a highly skilled and competent government apparatus will support local government to conduct an optimal and excellent public service.

4. Conclusion

The connection between apparatus capacity with the quality of public service resides in the capability of the government apparatus in establishing public service. The higher the capacity of the apparatus is, the better the quality of the public service will be. On the contrary, the lower the capacity of the apparatus is, the worse the service is going to be. In general, the low capacity of the apparatus is influenced by ineffective communication of the organization, inadequate working conditions, and the low achievement of the job. Thus, the overall development of the apparatus capacity will improve the establishment of public service. In this respect, the development of the capacity development of human resource in local government can be measured through some capacity development indicators such as the apparatus knowledge, skills, behaviors, and working ethics. These components can be achieved via formal education which can be taken by the staff while working in the government, or by organizing technical and functional trainings to the staff.

The final purpose of the capacity development of the apparatus is the community’s satisfaction for the public service. This can only be achieved if there is a change in the apparatus’ attitudes and behaviors that will eventually show professionalism, responsiveness to community’s needs and interests, simple and concise procedures, and effective bureaucracy. In conclusion, concrete and serious attempts to improve and develop the apparatus capacity to increase public service need to take place.

References


Keputusan Menpan no. 81 tahun 2014 tentang Penyelenggaraan Pelayanan Publik.

Keputusan Menpan No. 63 tahun 2003 tentang Kebijakan Pengawasan Nasional.


menjadi CPNS. *Jurnal Kebijakan dan Manajemen PNS*, 7(2), pp 8-9


