

Policy Network Structure and Environmental Context: Performance of the Implementation of the Captured Fishermen Poverty Alleviation Policy in Jeneponto

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Abstract

Poverty alleviation is one of the government's priority issues targeting various regions, especially the 3T (frontier and outermost) areas. In the context of South Sulawesi Province, Jeneponto Regency will be the region with a high percentage of poor people in 2024, with coastal areas being the area with the largest percentage. This condition indicates that fishermen, as the main livelihood of the Jeneponto coastal community, have not been able to improve their economic welfare. This is partly due to the lack of alternative economic sources, so that environmental conditions have a significant influence on fishermen's economic activities. This study aims to analyze the policy network implementation of poverty alleviation for capture fishermen in Jeneponto Regency using the Policy Network theory proposed by Normann (2017), which contains four aspects: Network Environment, Actor Interests and Resources, Network Structure, and Network Change. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design that focuses only on policy implementation in Jeneponto Regency. The results of the study indicate that the highly dynamic environmental conditions are not accompanied by an appropriate government response, which is indicated by the programs and assistance provided to fishermen that still do not focus on environmental aspects or other business alternatives. Furthermore, the assistance provided does not emphasize the adaptability or safety of fishermen in unstable environmental conditions. Regarding the network structure, it is still dominated by the government, thus limiting the role of the community or other actors. This situation also indicates a lack of collaborative resource sharing among relevant actors, necessitating further collaboration and coordination regarding the implementation of poverty alleviation policies for fishing communities.

Keywords: *Policy Network, Poverty, Fishing Communities.*

Introduction

Poverty alleviation is a complex public issue involving various actors. The complexity of poverty is increasingly evident in policy networks involving various actors at different levels of government and non-governmental actors. Furthermore, poverty alleviation efforts must also consider geographic aspects and the socio-environmental conditions of the community. This is particularly true for poverty alleviation efforts in coastal communities whose primary livelihood is fishing. External factors that cannot be fully controlled also need to be a crucial aspect of the policy network. Climate change, marine environmental degradation, extreme weather, and even damage to marine ecosystems can disrupt the income and productivity of coastal communities, particularly fishers who rely on their catch for their livelihood. This makes fishers a highly vulnerable group to environmental change due to their dependence on fluctuating marine resources (Allison et al., 2009). Therefore, environmental factors are also a crucial aspect that must be considered in policy networks (Normann, 2017).

Poverty alleviation, as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sets several target milestones. First, eradicating extreme poverty. Second, reducing poverty by 50%. Third, implementing a social protection system. Fourth, equal rights to technology, basic services, and economic resources. Fifth, building resilience to environmental, social, and economic disasters. Specifically, regarding extreme poverty eradication, Indonesia has demonstrated positive achievements, demonstrated by

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lowering the extreme poverty line, which refers to the percentage of the population living on less than \$2.15/day.

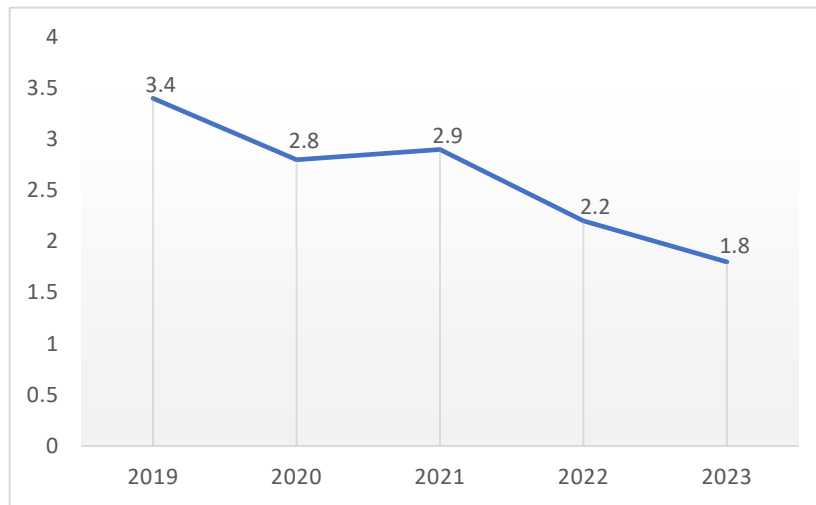


Figure 1. Percentage of Population Income Less than \$2.15/day

Source: World Bank (2023)

However, these achievements do not reflect the progress made in eradicating extreme poverty in Indonesia. Compared to the achievements of neighboring countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia still lags behind several neighboring countries, such as Vietnam, which only touches the extreme poverty line at 1% of its population, and Malaysia and Thailand, which achieved 0% extreme poverty in 2021 (World Bank, 2023). Therefore, poverty alleviation has become a national strategic issue that has been jointly agreed upon, considering its impact on development.

South Sulawesi Province is targeting two main goals: reducing poverty and narrowing the poverty disparity between rural and urban areas. Over the past five years, the percentage of the poor in South Sulawesi Province has shown a fairly fluctuating trend. This is indicated by an increase in the percentage of the poor in two consecutive years, namely in 2022 (8.66%) and 2023 (8.7%). On the other hand, a decrease in the percentage of the poor occurred in the previous two years and in the last year, namely in 2024, with a percentage of the poor at 7.77%. This percentage is lower than the national poverty percentage of 8.57%. However, it is still far from the target of the national poverty percentage in 2026, which is targeted to be below 5%. Meanwhile, the poverty disparity between rural and urban areas also contributes to the increase in the poverty rate in South Sulawesi Province. Based on residential area, in the 2022-2023 period, the number of urban poor people increased by 2.9 thousand people, while in rural areas it increased by 8.5 thousand people (BPS South Sulawesi Province, 2023).

Table 1. Poor Population in 3T Areas in South Sulawesi (%)

Regency/City	Poor Population in 3T Areas in South Sulawesi (%)			
	2021	2022	2023	2024
Kepulauan Selayar	12,45	12,24	12,27	10,79
Jeneponto	14,28	13,73	13,06	11,82
Pangkajene dan Kepulauan	14,28	13,92	13,40	12,41
Toraja Utara	11,99	11,65	12,12	10,73

Source: Central Statistics Agency of South Sulawesi Province (2024)

Overall, the trend in the percentage of poor people in South Sulawesi Province, particularly in the 3T (Underdeveloped, Frontier, and Outermost) regions, places Jeneponto Regency as one of the regions with the highest poverty rate at 11.82%. This figure far exceeds the average poverty rate for South Sulawesi Province (7.77%) and the national average (8.57%). Furthermore, compared to other 3T regions, Jeneponto Regency is the 3T region with the lowest poverty reduction rate for the 2023-2024 period, reaching only 1.24%. Poverty alleviation in Jeneponto Regency refers to provincial policies

as a general guideline in developing regional programs. The regional government maintains a vertical link between provincial and district policies in terms of program objectives, targets, and approaches. The Jeneponto Regency Government needs to align its policies with the provincial development vision, while also securing technical and budgetary support from the provincial government to implement strategic programs.

Poverty in Jeneponto Regency is more prevalent among people living in coastal areas. This is reflected, among other things, in the number of social assistance recipients, which indicates the number of underprivileged communities in the region. The following is a breakdown of social assistance recipients in each sub-district in Jeneponto Regency.

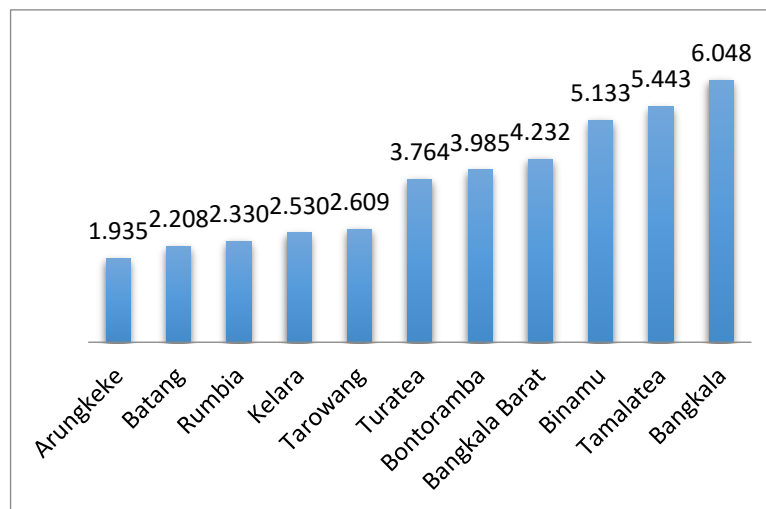


Figure 2. Social Assistance Recipients in Jeneponto Regency 2023

Source: Central Statistics Agency of Jeneponto Regency (2023)

The data above shows that the number of people receiving social assistance in Jeneponto Regency in 2024 was 40,217. The Social Services Agency stated that the criteria for receiving this assistance are those categorized as poor or pre-prosperous. Therefore, the data above shows that the three (3) sub-districts with the largest numbers of poor people are Binamu, Tamalatea, and Bangkala.

These three sub-districts are coastal areas of Jeneponto, where the majority of residents are fishermen, particularly fishing. Of the 11 sub-districts in Jeneponto Regency, seven are coastal areas, where fishing is the primary source of income for the local population. Binamu, Bangkala, and Tamalatea sub-districts have the largest number of marine fishing households in Jeneponto Regency. However, they also have the largest number of poor people in these areas. This shows that coastal areas where the majority of the population are fishermen are still in the category of poor/pre-prosperous communities.

The reality of poverty experienced by coastal communities in Jeneponto, particularly fishers, is caused by various factors. These factors include not only economic and social factors but also environmental factors, which are increasingly uncertain. Environmental factors such as increasingly extreme climate change also have a serious impact on the marine resources sector, impacting fishing activities, particularly those engaged in fishing, for whom the sea is their primary work space. The 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report stated that climate change is causing rising sea temperatures, shifting ocean currents, and increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, which will directly impact fishing activities and disrupt catch productivity (IPCC, 2019). These conditions undoubtedly have a direct impact on the well-being of coastal communities, particularly fishers, due to decreased productivity caused by reduced catches due to dynamic environmental conditions.

Coastal communities, especially fishers, are among the poorest groups most vulnerable to environmental changes and conditions. This is due to the lack of adaptability of fishers, including limited access to adaptive resources such as technology and information on environmental conditions. In developing countries like Indonesia, small-scale fishers often lack adequate adaptive capacity, resulting

in various changes, including seasonal environmental changes, extreme weather, high waves, storms, and so on, that significantly impact their catch. If this situation persists for a long time, coupled with a lack of adaptability on the part of fishermen, it will further reduce productivity, lead to income instability, and ultimately increase the risk of persistent poverty.

Furthermore, BRIN (2022) research also confirms that uncertain environmental conditions such as climate change, extreme weather, and damage to marine ecosystems like coral reefs and mangroves will directly impact small-scale fishing communities. A significant decline in catches will lead to a decline in income, ultimately increasing the vulnerability of small-scale fishers to structural poverty. Therefore, poverty alleviation policies are needed that also consider environmental aspects, so that fishing communities can escape the cycle of poverty caused by environmental factors.

In addressing certain issues, including poverty alleviation among fishermen, external factors such as the environment influence policy networks. External factors are aspects that cannot be controlled by actors, but they can be managed if actors within the policy network can coordinate effectively. Policy networks that are able to address environmental aspects will be able to implement policies appropriately and effectively (Normann, 2017).

Based on the above description, poverty alleviation for fishing fishermen cannot be achieved without ignoring environmental aspects, which significantly impact their livelihoods. The Fisheries Task Force (TKPK), the Fisheries Service, the private sector, and NGOs each have their own roles in poverty alleviation for fishing fishermen, by paying attention to the environmental aspects of the network that are influenced by and influence actors in the policy network. If actors are unable to adapt to environmental aspects, the policy network will not be able to fully implement policies. Because fishermen are highly dependent on environmental conditions, they are highly vulnerable to falling below the poverty line, as this directly impacts their productivity and income. Therefore, appropriate strategies and steps are needed to implement poverty alleviation policies for fishing fishermen, who are highly dependent on environmental conditions. Therefore, the main focus of this study is how environmental aspects influence the implementation of poverty alleviation policies for fishing fishermen in Jeneponto Regency.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach, focusing on analyzing the policy network for implementing policies to eradicate poverty among fishermen. The research design used is a case study. In the analysis process, the researcher utilized the policy network theory proposed by Normann (2017) by focusing on network analysis and policy structures in the policy network system that is built in the process of implementing policies to eradicate poverty among fishing fishermen.

Data collection was conducted through observations and interviews with several informants, including Deputy Regent of Jeneponto Regency (Chairman of the Jeneponto Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team), Head of the Capture Fisheries Division of Jeneponto Regency, Fisheries Extension Officers, Village Government, and Capture Fishermen in Jeneponto Regency. In addition, the researcher also collected various documents, including research results and other relevant documents, to enrich the analysis. The collected data were then analyzed using data analysis techniques proposed by Creswell (2018): Organizing and Preparing Data, Reading Through All Data, Coding the Data, and Interpreting the Meaning of Themes/Descriptions

Results and Discussion

The marine fisheries sector in Jeneponto Regency plays a strategic role in the regional economic structure. The majority of coastal residents depend on fishing for their livelihoods, so fluctuations in catch significantly impact community well-being. This high dependence on natural conditions and low livelihood diversification make fishers a vulnerable group to poverty. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2024), the poverty rate in coastal areas of Jeneponto remains relatively high compared to non-coastal areas, indicating that sectoral policy interventions have not been fully effective in improving fishers' welfare.

To address this, the local government has adopted various collaborative strategies involving cross-agency collaboration, which are then coordinated through the Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team (TKPK), comprising various relevant government stakeholders, as stipulated in Jeneponto Regency Regulation Number 16 of 2018 concerning Poverty Alleviation. The TKPK serves as a coordinating forum between regional agencies, the private sector, and the community in developing and

implementing poverty alleviation policies. This collaboration is crucial because the problem of poverty among fishermen is multidimensional—spanning economic, social, environmental, and institutional aspects—and therefore cannot be resolved by a single sector or agency.

Furthermore, the government's commitment to coastal communities is also demonstrated through various national programs such as the Fishermen's Card, Fishermen's Insurance, and Fisheries Infrastructure Assistance. These programs are the result of collaboration between the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (KKP), the provincial government, and the district/city governments. In Jeneponto, the program's implementation involves the Fisheries Service, fishermen's groups, and fisheries extension workers. These efforts are expected to strengthen social protection and increase fishermen's productivity, thereby gradually reducing poverty levels in coastal areas.

Thus, poverty alleviation among fishermen is not only part of the economic agenda, but also part of a sustainable development strategy that aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) point 1 on poverty eradication and point 14 on marine ecosystems. The government's approach emphasizes the importance of multi-actor collaboration within a policy network, where the government, the private sector, and local communities work together to create convergent and targeted interventions. Conceptually, this aligns with policy network theory (Normann, 2017), which emphasizes the importance of synergy between actors in creating effective policies amidst the complexity of the coastal social and economic environment.

Network Environment

The network environment is defined as elements outside the interactions between actors within a policy network that directly influence the outcomes of the policy. In the context of implementing policies to alleviate poverty among fishermen, actors have formulated and implemented measures to alleviate poverty. However, the environment is also a crucial factor in determining the outcome of these policies. This is because fishermen's livelihoods are at sea, which is closely related to dynamic environmental factors such as changes in weather, climate, sea wave conditions, and so on. This dynamic environment is certainly a factor that directly impacts the economy of fishermen. Therefore, this condition indicates that the physical and ecological environment is an integral part of the implementation of policies to alleviate poverty among fishermen in Jeneponto Regency.

Fluctuating or unpredictable weather conditions are certainly a factor that directly impacts the economic activities of fishermen. This is especially true during the west monsoon season, when high waves with prolonged intensity pose a challenge. Fishermen are often unable to go to sea for days or even weeks, resulting in a significant or drastic decline in income. This also directly impacts the achievement of the government's poverty alleviation program for fishermen, as these conditions limit fishermen's production activities, ultimately hampering the sustainability of their household economy. Therefore, it is clear that environmental factors are not merely a background or influencing factor but also a determining factor in the successful implementation of poverty alleviation policies for fishermen. This is as expressed by informant M (fisherman):

"Since April, I haven't gone to sea because of the strong winds. This has certainly had a significant impact on my income." (September 18, 2025)

In the context of fishing communities in Jeneponto Regency, various actors are involved in the network implementing poverty alleviation policies. These actors undertake efforts such as providing fishing gear, training, and education to diversify businesses, demonstrating efforts to build coordination among actors. However, this coordination is often not accompanied by an ecological understanding of how to adapt fishermen's needs to the environmental conditions in Jeneponto Regency. This can be seen in the following figure.

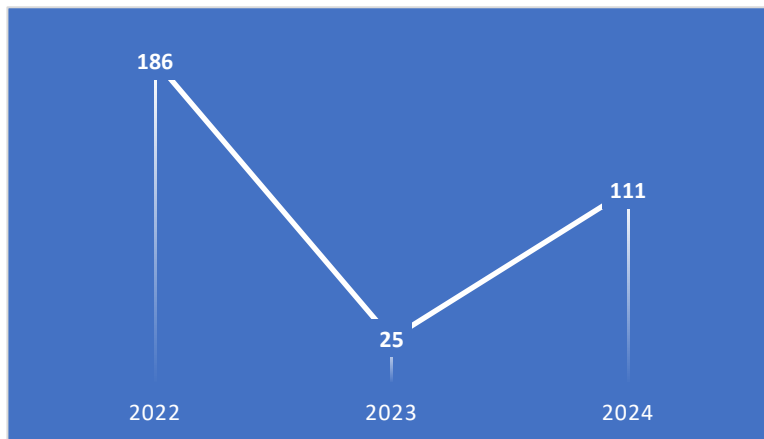


Figure 3. Fishermen's Assistance in Jeneponto Regency 2022-2024

Source: Jeneponto Regency Fisheries Service 2024

The figure above shows that assistance to fishermen in the past three years has relied solely on transfer funds from the State Budget (APBN) through the General Allocation Fund (DAU) and the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) for maritime affairs and fisheries, particularly in the empowerment of fishermen. These funds are then disbursed to the government, specifically the relevant regional government agencies (OPD), for allocation according to their respective regulations. Furthermore, the Special Allocation Fund has been the dominant source of funds in the past three years, and its funding amount is certainly not fixed. This indicates a worrying situation if poverty alleviation for fishermen in Jeneponto Regency relies solely on the DAU and DAK funds from the APBN, as the amounts and types are predetermined and not always based on the needs and environmental conditions in Jeneponto Regency.

Unpredictable environmental conditions, sometimes even severe or even extreme, impact not only the economy of coastal communities and fishermen but also the safety of fishermen who engage in activities at sea during adverse weather conditions in order to maintain their catch. In recent years, it has been known that several accidents at sea have occurred involving fishermen, some of whom were rescued, but others have died. This clearly indicates that safety equipment for fishermen is still inadequate, resulting in a high risk of drowning and other injuries. This situation aligns with the explanation of informant M (fisherman):

"Safety is still not good enough, because safety equipment assistance has not reached many fishermen and is not evenly distributed. So we sometimes have to be brave enough to go out to sea despite the many risks." (September 18, 2025)

This explanation suggests that the assistance provided by actors within the poverty alleviation policy implementation network has not sufficiently addressed ecological aspects, which can directly impact the sustainability of fishers' livelihoods and their families' economies.

Safety is certainly crucial, as it addresses not only the economic sustainability of fishers' households but also occupational safety for fishermen, which is also the government's responsibility to ensure adequate safety equipment. However, safety has not been a primary focus in assistance provided to fishers in the 2022-2024 period. The assistance provided focuses solely on infrastructure to support increased productivity, such as fishing gear, nets, trawls, boats, fish traps, gillnets, and engines. However, assistance such as safety equipment for fishermen remains a primary concern.

Safety equipment assistance was only provided in 2022, in the form of 965 life jackets distributed across seven sub-districts: Arungkeke, Bangkala, West Bangkala, Batang, Binamu, Tamalatea, and Tarowang. However, this is still considered inadequate, as the life jackets have been in poor condition for the past two years, and no other safety equipment has been provided. This was further explained by informant AS (a fisherman):

"Assistance so far has come from the central government, and the last safety equipment was in 2022. Many fishermen are afraid to go to sea because of the weather, but safety equipment is inadequate, including employment insurance for us." (September 18, 2025)

Frequent bad weather in the Jeneponto waters makes fishermen wary of going to sea. This is also influenced by the lack of safety equipment for fishermen to avoid and reduce the risk of work accidents that could occur in their activities. This was also expressed by informant I (Head of Capture Fisheries, Jeneponto Regency Fisheries Service):

"Safety equipment is also important, especially since Jeneponto frequently experiences bad weather and several fishing accidents." (September 18, 2025)

The above information indicates that assistance in the form of safety equipment is still inadequate. This situation directly impacts fishermen's productivity, ultimately reducing their catch and their livelihoods. Furthermore, the several occupational accidents involving fishermen have raised concerns among other fishermen about engaging in fishing activities.

The Jeneponto Regency Government certainly needs to pay attention to the above conditions in an effort to build better coordination with other actors at the same and different levels, such as the Central Government. The Jeneponto Regency Government, through the Fisheries Service, needs to be more proactive in developing plans and providing aspirations related to fishermen's needs, which need to be adjusted to the ecological conditions in the Jeneponto Regency area. This is so that the safety, productivity, and economy of fishermen and coastal households can be improved through adaptive systems and policy designs implemented by various actors within the network, with the aim of alleviating poverty among fishermen in Jeneponto Regency.

Network Structure

The structure of a policy network is the pattern of relationships between actors formed during the policy implementation process. In the context of the policy to alleviate poverty among fishers in Jeneponto Regency, the network structure shows how the actors involved interact, share information, coordinate actions, and exchange resources. According to Marsh and Rhodes (1992), network structure encompasses three main dimensions:

1. Network density, which refers to the strength of the ties between actors within the network.
2. Centrality, which refers to the extent to which an actor serves as the center of coordination and decision-making.
3. Coherence, which refers to the harmony and stability of interactions between actors in achieving policy objectives.

The results of this study indicate that the policy network for alleviating poverty among fishers in Jeneponto has a semi-hierarchical and fragmented structure, dominated by local government actors, while community and non-governmental actors remain peripheral.

Policy network density is measured by the frequency and intensity of interactions between actors during program implementation. Based on observations and interviews, interaction between actors in Jeneponto tended to be high during the data collection and aid distribution phase, but decreased significantly after the program was implemented. As explained by I (Head of the Capture Fisheries Division of the Jeneponto Fisheries Service):

"In the initial phase, we often met with villages and fishing groups, but after aid was distributed, communication became less frequent. Sometimes we only learned about problems from reports from fishermen themselves." (September 18, 2025)

This phenomenon indicates that the relationships between actors in the poverty alleviation policy network for fishers in Jeneponto Regency are episodic, meaning interactions occur temporarily, are time-bound, and do not occur consistently. These relationships tend to increase during administrative moments, such as recipient data collection, program coordination meetings, or aid distribution. However, they decrease drastically when the program maintenance, monitoring, and evaluation phases begin.

These relationships between actors appear as "coordination spikes" that are only active when there are activities or instructions from the central or regional government. Once the activities are completed, the network becomes inactive again, and there is no ongoing communication forum. Marsh and Smith (2000) refer to this pattern as a transactional network, a network formed out of immediate technical needs, rather than a long-term commitment to policy collaboration.

Table 2. Frequency of Interactions Between Actors in Policy Networks

Actor	Fisheries Service	Village Government	TKPK	KUB/Pokdakan	Extension Workers	NGOs/Private Sectors
Fisheries Service	-	Tall	Medium	Tall	Tall	Low
Village Government	Tall	-	Low	Tall	Medium	Low
TKPK	Medium	Low	-	Low	Low	Low
KUB/Pokdakan	Medium	Low	Low	-	Tall	Medium
Extension Workers	Tall	Medium	Low	Tall	-	Low
NGOs/Private Sectors	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Low	-

Source: Researcher's work (2025)

The table above shows that the most intensive interactions occur between the Fisheries Service, Village Governments, and Fishermen's Groups (KUB/Pokdakan). However, these relationships are operational, not strategic. Meanwhile, actors such as the Fisheries Task Force (TKPK) and local NGOs have low levels of interaction, meaning their contribution to policy coordination is limited. This demonstrates low network density, as most relationships only occur during specific program implementation.

Meanwhile, within policy networks, actors with central positions typically control the flow of information and coordination between other actors. The most central actor in the policy network for poverty alleviation for fishermen in Jeneponto is the Jeneponto Regency Fisheries Service. The Fisheries Service's centrality stems from its formal authority in decision-making and program distribution, its primary liaison between the central government and fishing communities, and its control of recipient data and access to resources. Fisheries extension workers also occupy a semi-central position as bridging actors, bridging communication between the government and the community. Meanwhile, the TKPK, which institutionally has a coordinating function, has minimal influence because it is not directly involved in aid distribution. This structure reflects a "bureaucratic-centralized network" pattern (Normann, 2017), where the flow of information and decisions still depend on central and regional government actors. The weakness of this model is the low participation of community actors in policy decision-making, as expressed by BI (Chairman of the Bahtera Maqfirah Community Empowerment Group):

"We weren't involved in planning meetings, we were only informed during data collection and aid distribution." (September 19, 2025)

The phenomenon where fishermen's groups have social legitimacy but lack institutional power is a concrete illustration of the imbalance in power structures within the policy network. Social legitimacy means that fishermen's groups are recognized by the surrounding community as moral leaders, community representatives, and legitimate beneficiaries of public policies. However, this recognition does not automatically grant them formal authority to influence policy direction, set program priorities, or determine resource allocation.

These differing orientations have implications for policy fragmentation. In some cases, program implementation overlaps with other empowerment activities, leading to budget duplication and confusion among beneficiaries. This underscores the weak network coherence due to vertical coordination lacking data integration and cross-sectoral planning.

Overall, the network structure of the policy for poverty alleviation among fishers in Jeneponto Regency exhibits several characteristics. First, high centralization lies with the local government. The Fisheries Service serves as the primary node, but this dominance reduces the autonomy of local actors. Network density is low. Inter-actor relationships occur more frequently during program implementation than during evaluation. Third, communication remains vertical. Information flows are dominated by top-

down communication, while feedback mechanisms are not yet institutionalized. Fourth, policy coherence is weak. Differences in perceptions and objectives between actors lead to overlapping policies and low synergy. Fifth, social relationships compensate for weaknesses in formal structures.

The success of some programs in Jeneponto is largely supported by informal relationships and trust between local actors, rather than formal institutional design.

This finding aligns with Klijn & Koppenjan (2016), who stated that in the context of developing countries, policy networks tend to be semi-hierarchical, where power remains concentrated in the bureaucracy, while collaboration remains pragmatic. Therefore, a transformation of the policy network structure toward an "adaptive collaborative governance" model is needed, where each actor has equal space in decision-making, and two-way communication is systematically built through cross-sector coordination forums. Coherence in policy networks refers to the degree of alignment between actors in understanding and implementing the same policy. Each actor has a different perception of the program's objectives. The Fisheries Service views the program as increasing fish catch productivity. The Village Government views it as a welfare program. The Fishermen's Group views the program's objective as more about direct economic assistance. These differing perceptions indicate a lack of alignment of objectives between actors.

Conclusion

The policy network factor is one of the determining factors in the successful implementation of poverty alleviation policies for fishing communities in Jeneponto Regency. Uncertain environmental conditions, especially the lack of alternative economic activities for coastal communities, are among the obstacles to successful implementation of poverty alleviation policies. This situation undoubtedly impacts the welfare of coastal communities, particularly fishermen whose livelihoods depend on the marine environment.

As for the network structure aspect still demonstrates the strong dominance of local government actors, particularly the Jeneponto Regency Fisheries Office, as the primary node controlling the flow of information, resources, and decision-making processes. Meanwhile, community actors such as KUB/Pokdakan and individual fishers continue to act as field implementers with limited access to institutional and financial resources. Furthermore, the density of relationships between actors in policy networks exhibits an episodic pattern, where the intensity of interactions increases during an activity or program and then decreases thereafter. Policy networks lack ongoing communication mechanisms that allow for regular learning and feedback between actors.

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