

Patronage and low competency of members as causes of weak implementation of the functions of the village consultative body in realizing a self-governing community

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Abstract: Law Number 6 of 2014 concerning Villages mandates the Village Consultative Body (BPD) as a partner of the village government in empowering village communities to achieve self-governing communities. Referring to the Village Development Index (IDM) in Malang Regency, even though there are no villages classified as very underdeveloped or underdeveloped, there are still more than 61.6% (233 villages) classified as developing, while there are 33.1% (125 villages) classified as developed, and 5.3% (20 villages) are classified as independent. Departing from this phenomenon, this research aims to describe how the BPD functions are implemented in villages classified as developing in Malang Regency under the mandate of Law No. 6 of 2014. Using a qualitative approach, research data collection was carried out using depth-interview and focus group discussion (FGD) techniques. Data analysis uses the stages proposed by Cresswell. The research results indicate that the implementation of the functions and roles of BPD in the research object villages is less effective. Patronage and the low competence and capacity of the average BPD members, as a result of a less focused election process, minimal education, training, and technical guidance, and a very inadequate development budget, are the causes of the ineffective implementation of the roles and functions of BPD members. The ineffective function of the BPD breaks hopes for increased democratization and participation of village communities in efforts to achieve a self-governing community in Malang Regency.

Keywords: patronage; function; village consultative body; self-governing community; village government

1. Introduction

Based on the measurement of village status by the Ministry of Villages in the Village Development Index (IDM), there are five classifications of village status. The classification aims to identify the diversity of character of each village. Apart from that, this classification is also useful for sharpening the determination of the development status of village progress and recommendations for policy interventions deemed necessary based on the status of each village. The five statuses are (1) Very Disadvantaged Village; (2) Disadvantaged Village; (3) Developing Village; (4) Advanced Village; and (5) Independent Village. Referring to Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages, village development includes fulfilling four aspects, namely: (1) basic needs, (2) basic services, (3) environment, and (4) village community empowerment activities.

The score range for measuring village status in the IDM is from the lowest of 0.27 to the highest of 0.92. The classification status of each village is determined

with the following thresholds: (1) Very Disadvantaged Village: < 0.491 ; (2) Disadvantaged Villages: > 0.491 and < 0.599 ; (3) Developing Villages: > 0.599 and < 0.707 ; (4) Advanced Village: > 0.707 and < 0.815 ; (5) Independent Village: > 0.815 . For Malang Regency which consists of 378 villages, there are 233 developing villages; 125 developed villages; and 20 independent villages; and there are no villages classified as underdeveloped or very underdeveloped (Malang Regency Communication and Information Service, 2020).

Implicitly in Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages which was also adopted in its derivative regulations, namely Malang Regency Regional Regulation Number 2 of 2020 concerning Amendments to Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2016 concerning Villages, there are principles of recognition and subsidiarity. The principle of recognition is recognition and respect for village authority, because of the diversity that has been inherent in villages since before the formation of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Dakelan et al., 2016). Village authority exercised by the village government includes authority in village government affairs, namely the administration of village government, implementation of village development, and empowerment of village communities based on community initiatives, rights of origin, and village customs. The application of the recognition principle must also be accompanied by the principle of subsidiarity, namely the establishment of local scale authority and local decision-making for the benefit of village communities (Purnomo, 2016). The principle of subsidiarity is implicitly found in the Regional Regulations in articles 3 (a) and (b) which emphasize that the position of villages following the principle of decentralization gives villages the authority to manage their households. As a consequence of these two principles, villages gain autonomy. With Law No. 6 of 2014, villages have four domains and authorities: village government, village development, community development, and village community empowerment. These four domains are authorities based on village-scale localities which are regulated and managed by the Village through Village Regulations as a joint decision between the Village government and the BPD (Dakelan et al., 2016). Through this perspective, villages are then seen as self-governing communities, where villages are local government organizations and independent communities that manage themselves. Consequently, the village government is required to involve the community as a strategic element of village management and development to achieve increased community welfare.

Village government administrators referring to Article 1 paragraph (3) of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages are village heads who are assisted by village officials. Meanwhile, according to article 1 (4), it is stated that other institutions also carry out village government functions, namely the Village Consultative Body (BPD), whose members are representatives of the village population based on regional representation and are determined democratically. BPD based on Article 55 of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages has the function of discussing and agreeing on draft Village Regulations with the Village Head, accommodating and channelling the aspirations of the Village community, and supervising the performance of the Village Head. Thus, BPD is an important partner of the village government in empowering the community to develop villages within the framework of a self-governing community.

Observing the phenomenon in Malang Regency, there are still more than 60% of villages (233 villages out of 378 villages) that are classified as developing villages on the one hand, and referring to the normative function of BPD as regulated in article 55 of Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages on the other hand, this research aims to describe the implementation of BPD functions in villages in Malang district which are classified as developing villages. Therefore, in this study the research questions can be formulated as follows. First, what are the empirical conditions for the implementation of BPD functions in the research object villages in realizing a self-governing community? Second, what variables influence the implementation of BPD functions in realizing a self-governing community?

This research is important because it is related to the process of developing democratization in rural areas in line with the spirit contained in Law no. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages in developing villages as self-governing communities. In the Village Law, the BPD is placed as an agent of village democratization to bridge communication between village communities and the village government. Unfortunately, in the democratization process there is a gap between the normative as regulated in regulations on villages and the empirical conditions in rural communities. The democratization process is hampered by the strong patronage structure of rural communities. Therefore, according to researchers, the development of democracy in rural areas cannot simply adopt democratic concepts from outside the village—which tend to be liberal. The process of building democracy in rural areas should pay attention to and be based on the existing system, culture and structure of society so that it is compatible, so that it can be accepted by society.

What is new (novelty) from this research? Firstly, there has been a lot of research related to the implementation of BPD functions, but according to the researchers, this is the only research that specifically examines both the influence of patronage in the implementation of BPD functions and self-governing communities. Second, most research on the implementation of BPD functions was carried out in only one village. Meanwhile, this research was carried out throughout Malang Regency—which of course used a number of sample villages. Thus, this research has a higher weight of credibility and transferability.

2. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a naturalistic paradigm and an empirical perspective through field research. Primary data sources are in-depth interviews and focused group discussions (FGD) with BPD members from eight developing villages as the main informants. Of the eight villages, one village each was selected from two sub-districts determined purposively in the West, North, East, and South parts of Malang district. Other informants were leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), village heads, and officials at the Malang district government secretariat who were involved in village government affairs. Analysis and interpretation of data in this research refer to the six analysis steps proposed by Creswell (2010) as follows: a) Processing/preparing data for analysis; b) Reading all the data; c) Coding data based on themes and descriptions; d) sorting themes and descriptions; e) Connecting themes/descriptions; and f) Interpreting

themes/descriptions (pp. 276–284).

3. Results and discussion

This section may be divided by subheadings. It should provide a concise and precise description of the experimental results, their interpretation, as well as the experimental conclusions that can be drawn.

3.1. Profile of village consultative body members

Following the clause contained in Law Number 16 of 2014 Article 56 paragraph (1) and its derivative regulations, namely Malang Regency Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2016 Article 129 paragraph (1), BPD members are representatives of the village population based on regional representation which is filled in democratically, which according to Article 130 paragraph (2) of regional regulations is implemented through a direct election process or representative deliberation by guaranteeing women's representation. Meanwhile, the number of BPD members as stated in Article 130 paragraph (1) of this regional regulation is an odd number, at least five people and a maximum of nine people, taking into account the area, women, population, and financial capacity of the village. For BPD members, the educational level required by article 57 of Law No. 6 of 2016, the lowest must have completed junior high school or equivalent.

Regarding the process of recruiting BPD membership, its implementation in the field does not fully comply with existing regulations, and the process varies. As was found in villages in Tumpang sub-district, teams were formed at the village level. Next, this team appointed figures who were considered popular and had capacity from each hamlet. The phenomenon in Pakis, Turen, and Kalipare sub-districts is that BPD membership is recruited through direct elections at the hamlet level according to each hamlet's quota. Meanwhile, Sumberpucung and Lawang sub-districts use deliberation procedures at the hamlet level to select members according to their quota. In Kasembon sub-district and Karangploso sub-district, the process of recruiting BPD members is carried out by forming a team at the hamlet level, and then this team appoints figures who are deemed worthy.

However, whatever the mechanism used in recruiting BPD members, there is an almost uniform phenomenon regarding the selected candidates, namely that they are popular figures in their hamlet or village. Research conducted by Mahpudin (2023) also shows the phenomenon that selected BPD members have a kinship relationship with the village head. The level of education and abilities of these figures do not seem to be important considerations in selecting or appointing someone to be a member of the BPD. The impact of such a recruitment process in turn has an impact on the poor performance of BPD members in carrying out their functions as village-level legislators (Fahrudin and Trisnawiana, 2023; Umar, 2018).

The elected BPD members from all villages in Malang Regency are then simultaneously appointed by the Regent of Malang. After being appointed, referring to Article 141 paragraph (3) Regional Regulation No. 2 of 2020 point a, BPD members have the right to a. obtain capacity development through education and training, outreach, technical guidance, and field visits conducted within the country.

Apart from that, Article 141C also states that financing for capacity development as referred to in Article 141 paragraph (3) letter a, comes from the APBN, Provincial APBD, APBD, and Village APB. However, in reality, the fulfillment of these rights is very inadequate. This was acknowledged by an official at the Community and Village Empowerment Service (DPMD). The Secretary of the Malang Regency National Village Consultative Body Association (ABPEDNAS), even stated emphatically that technical guidance had indeed been provided to BPD members by the DPMD, but only one representative was taken per sub-district. The rest never happened again. The main reason is the existence of cost constraints, which, as stated by officials at DPMD in the Regional Revenue and Expenditure Budget, there is no special budget post for BPD.

3.2. Implementation of the functions of the village consultative body (BPD)

It is stated in Article 1 paragraph (4) of the Village Law, that BPD “is an institution that carries out government functions whose members are representatives of village residents based on regional representation and determined democratically”. Meanwhile, the government function carried out by the BPD is village deliberation, which is a deliberation between the BPD, the Village Government, and elements of society organized by the BPD to agree on strategic matters (Article 1 paragraph 5 of the Village Law). Different from previous regulations, Article 23 of the Village Law and Article 1, paragraph (2) of Government Regulation (PP) No. 43/2014 no longer positions BPD as the organizer of the village government. In previous regulations which also regulated village government, both those mentioned in Article 200 in Law No. 32/2004 as well as those mentioned in Article 11 in PP No. 72/2005, it is regulated that the BPD is the implementing element of village government. BPD as the executor of village government, referring to the Village Law, refers to the executor of the executive functions of village government. Implementing village government in this case means “managing and making decisions” about various matters relating to the village (Eko, 2015). This means, Eko further emphasized, that the crucial role of BPD based on the Village Law is as “an institution that carries out government functions but does not fully regulate and manage village government”.

Regarding the function of the BPD, apart from (i) discussing and giving approval to draft village regulations with the village head and (ii) articulating and aggregating the aspirations of the village community, Article 55 of the Village Law also adds the function of controlling the performance of the village head. This additional control function is not found in Law No. 32/2004, especially in Article 222, even though PP 72/2005 clearly states that the BPD also exercises control over village regulations and village head regulations. In short, according to Dakelan (2016), BPD has the task of providing approval for village government policies, supervising the running of village government, and accommodating the aspirations of residents. Apart from that, BPD is also the main pillar in maintaining the sustainability and welfare of village communities (Hidayat, 2023).

Thus, it is clear that the BPD is an important partner of the village government in developing an aspirational and participatory community to develop the village

within the framework of realizing a self-governing community. According to Appriya (2024), a partnership relationship in the form of cooperation, consultation and coordination between the BPD and the village government requires a certain appropriate communication style.

3.3. The function of discussing and agreeing on draft village regulations with the village head

In the research object villages, the village government in discussing village regulations, drafting and preparing budgets always includes the BPD. Most of the BPD's involvement in discussing draft regulations takes place in research object villages, generally starting at the hamlet level. Therefore, the involvement of the BPD in this process can actually be used to strongly aggregate citizen proposals down to the village level when the village government discusses the Village Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBDes) with the BPD. Unfortunately, the reality found in the field is that many BPDs in the research object villages have not been able to seize this opportunity. The BPD and its members tend to simply agree to the budget plan proposed by the village head.

In a number of villages, apart from those related to the draft budget, the village government also enforces village regulations regarding the environment, waste, cemeteries, tourist attraction levies, and village-owned enterprises (BUMDes). However, the number of draft village regulations initiated and prepared by the BPD is still very small, even though Article 62 of the Village Law and Article 83 paragraph (2) PP No. 43/2014 provides space for these activities. The practice that is often found is that the village government prepares a proposal, which is then discussed together with the BPD in a village meeting. New village regulations are determined by the village head after obtaining BPD approval.

Almost all BPDs in the research object villages also do not have the initiative to first discuss the draft of village regulations proposed by the village government internally at the BPD before providing input in village deliberations. As a result, even though there are representatives who are always present at the APBDes formulation session, the BPD has not provided many comments or criticized the contents of the APBDes, because apart from there being no prior coordination within the BPD internally, they also lack an understanding of the structure of the APBDes. This fact shows that, even though there is an opportunity to criticize the draft regulations proposed by the village head, the average ability and competence of BPD members are not yet adequate to critically understand and express opinions in discussing the substance of the planning and budgeting documents. The lack of ability and competence of BPD members is fully acknowledged by both the ABPEDNAS Secretary and officials at the Malang Regency DPMD.

Thus, it can be said that in general there are obstacles related to the implementation of the function of discussing and agreeing on draft village regulations with the village head in all research object villages. Internally, the obstacle is mainly the low knowledge and understanding of BPD members regarding the Village Law and its derivative regulations (Masyitah, 2019). Another obstacle that is no less important is that BPD members do not have the knowledge, ability and

experience in the legislative process in terms of drafting village regulations (Fahrudin and Trisnawiana, 2023). Whereas, according to Sunday (2023), to be able to make village regulations requires certain arts and skills which must be understood by both village officials and the community, especially BPD members. Meanwhile, externally, these obstacles are related to the context of traditional rural leadership in the form of a strong authoritarian culture of patronage which is at odds with democratic egalitarian values (Velsink, 1994), as well as paternalism which is influenced by feudal culture (Hasbullah et al., 2020).

In Tumpang sub-district, Kasembon sub-district, and Karangploso sub-district, the low quality of BPD members is because those selected are not people who have competence but are simply the result of being appointed as popular figures. Meanwhile, in Turen sub-district, Sumberpucung sub-district, Lawang sub-district, Kalipare sub-district, and Pakis sub-district, many residents are reluctant to nominate themselves or be nominated as members of the BPD, so those who fill the BPD membership are figures who appear to be modest. According to Edward III (1994) as well as Van Meter and Van Horn as quoted by Winarno (2002), the low quality of human resources results in ineffective policy implementation. Even more firmly, Purwanto (2015) stated that failure to implement policies is often caused by a lack of understanding by policy implementers of the policy.

3.4. The function of accommodating and channeling community aspirations

As an institution, the BPD in the villages of research object sub-districts claims to have carried out the function of collecting various problems complained by residents and absorbing the desires and needs of residents through interactions which are generally carried out by BPD members informally. Some residents also have the will to place their hopes in the BPD members who are their representatives, because they understand and think that the BPD is a body that has the function of articulating and aggregating the aspirations of residents at the village government level.

However, in Turen sub-district, Kalipare sub-district, Lawang sub-district, and Sumberpucung sub-district some BPDs claim to have conveyed the residents' complaints and aspirations to the village government, even though not in an official forum. However, information was also found that what the BPD was doing was simply collecting residents' complaints and aspirations or just discussing them internally at the BPD and not forwarding it to the village government, as was the case in Kasembon sub-district, Pakis sub-district, Tumpang sub-district, and Karangploso sub-district. Residents do not yet know the next steps and feel the concrete results of village government policies as a form of input by the BPD. This weakness (Hasyim, 2023) is due to the lack of BPD members visiting the community in the hamlets. This function of accommodating and channeling community aspirations is of course closely related to the communication variable between BPD members and village residents, which according to Edward III as quoted by Winarno (2003) includes the transmission dimension, consistent dimension, and clarity dimension of village governance management that is in line with the village laws.

This lack of response and follow-up from the BPD is one of the reasons why

residents in several villages in Kasembon sub-district, Pakis sub-district, Tumpang sub-district and Karangploso sub-district tend to prefer to contact village officials directly to convey their complaints and aspirations, or at least to the hamlet head because the hamlet head has a room in the village office where residents' complaints can be immediately channeled and discussed at the village government at any time. Masyitah's (2019) research in South Sulawesi indicates the same phenomenon that village residents are more likely to convey their aspirations to people who are considered close to the village head, with the hope that this person will convey them to the village head.

Channeling aspirations are still carried out individually, not yet institutionally, causing low community participation (Fahrudin and Trisnawiana, 2023). The weak role of BPD causes formal representation channels to become blocked. Villagers lost channels to express their complaints and aspirations to the BPD. The dysfunctional role of the BPD results in a closed, exclusive and elitist village government regime (Mahpudin, 2023).

These facts show that the BPD and its members lack what Widjayanti (2011) calls the ability to empower people. The abilities of empowerment actors are the abilities possessed by empowerment actors who are expected to empower the community. Perhaps this is what prompted residents to take the initiative to ask the BPD in these villages to place their members in shifts at the village office. This initiative aims to make it easier and faster for BPD members to interact with the village government and to speed up the delivery of residents' complaints and aspirations. Another aim is for the BPD to always be able to update information regarding developments in village government activities and have an attitude (disposition) to commit to carrying out its functions under existing policies (Edward III as quoted by Winarno (2003)).

3.5. Supervision function to the performance of the village head and village government

Field data shows that the function least understood by the average BPD member is the supervisory function. The majority of BPD members understand that the supervisory function is limited to supervising the implementation of physical programs or projects carried out by the village head. Supervision of this development is carried out by the BPD together with the village government. In villages throughout the research object sub-districts, it was found that BPD members lacked adequate knowledge and understanding regarding anything that required supervision and the procedures or mechanisms for monitoring it. Even though this supervisory function is the right of the BPD. Article 61 of the Village Law stipulates that the BPD has the right to obtain various information from the village government related to the administration of the village government. This is also confirmed in PP No. 43/2014, especially Article 51 paragraph (3), which states that the implementation of the BPD's supervisory function is mainly on the Village Head's Accountability Report (LKPJ).

The presence of the BPD version of Law No. 6 of 2014 has given hope for the sustainability of village democracy. BPD in this context is not an extension of the

village government, but rather a mouthpiece for the community as well as a communication bridge between the community and the village government. To create a democratic village government, which can guarantee the voice and sovereignty of village communities, it is necessary to have checks and balances in the implementation of government (Budiardjo, 2008).

BPD holds a strategic position in the implementation of village government, namely that BPD is a reservoir and distributor of community aspirations and is a bridge that connects what the community needs and the village government. In other words, the BPD is actually a working partner of the Village Head based on the principle of checks and balances in implementing village governance which requires a dialogue model (Gargarella, 2014). However, considering the feudal nature of leadership, where followers or villagers are very loyal to the leader (Antlov and Cederroth, 1994), this dialogue model is difficult to emerge. The system of checks and balances within the framework of monitoring the performance of the village head and village government is certainly difficult to implement.

What is no less important is that the BPD is a forum and tool for the community to supervise not only the policies made, but also monitor the implementation of village policies by the village government. BPD is the incarnation of the entire community and is the highest village institution. The community also supervises village funds through the BPD, the village government must provide an accountability report on the use of funds, and there must be a report on the implementation of village government provided to the regency government (Wongkar, 2023). This is demonstrated by the authority that the BPD has as the full holder and implementer of village community sovereignty in the form of village deliberations. However, the existence and performance of BPD in the research object villages are still surrounded by many problems that have the potential to backfire on the democratization process.

In Kasembon sub-district, Tumpang sub-district, Sumberpucung sub-district, and Kalipare sub-district, some village residents believe that the implementation of the supervisory function by the BPD on the performance of the village government is still weak, this is due to the lack of activity of the BPD chairman. It was even found that the BPD positioned itself as subordinate to the village head as a result of the very strong position of the village head, which Maurer (1994) even called the village head (pamong) as the village king. Therefore, it is not too wrong if there are residents who state that the implementation of the BPD's control function over the performance of the village head and village government is not working. Meanwhile, the practice of checks and balances requires an equal relationship between the BPD and the village head. In line with Maurer, the imbalance in the checks and balances system gave birth to what Gargarella (2020) calls the monarchical model.

Data obtained from several villages in Karangploso sub-district, Lawang sub-district, Pakis sub-district, and Turen sub-district show that the BPD's rights in supervision have not been fully implemented. In these villages, deliberations to discuss the LKPJ are indeed held every year, but it could be said that these deliberations are just a formality because the thoughts, responses, and critical attitudes of the BPD have not yet been demonstrated. It was also found that BPD members from several villages in Tumpang sub-district and Kasembon sub-district

did not understand that the BPD had the function of supervising the performance of village heads. What happened in these villages was simply a presentation of information on budget utilization which was simply read by the village secretary during a village development planning meeting.

The village government performance accountability report submitted by the village head to the BPD is rarely seriously discussed by the BPD. It was never found that BPD provided critical notes on the report. In fact, as is also the case with Masyitah's (2019) research findings, the village head's accountability report to the regent tends to be considered more important than the report to the BPD which is actually a representation of the village people. This was done because of the assumption that the report to the regent would have positive implications for approval for the disbursement of village funds the following year. However, what is more, worrying is that the attitude and behavior of village heads who are more oriented towards the regent show that the patronage system of relations between the village government and district government has not disappeared, which has more negative impacts in the form of low transparency, domination of power, corruption, interdependence between individuals and groups (Alam, 2022).

3.6. Village deliberation

Apart from BPD having three functions as stated above, BPD also has a crucial role in building village democratization and increasing village community participation in village governance. That role is village deliberation. Even though Article 54 (1) of the Village Law only states that a village meeting is a deliberative forum that is attended by the BPD, village government, and elements of the village community to discuss strategic matters in the administration of village government. However, in Village Ministerial Decree no. 16 of 2019 concerning Village Deliberations article 1 paragraph (7) emphasizes that village deliberations, or what are called by other names are held by the BPD.

Village deliberations, which are often referred to as village meetings or village meetings, are a forum for village deliberation, which holds supreme sovereignty above the position of village head (executive). In short, village deliberations are a place for village people to make decisions directly through deliberation mechanisms (Budiman, 2019). The importance of village deliberations following the mandate of the Village Law is that the recommendations of village deliberations serve as guidelines for the village government, BPD, and village institutions in formulating and establishing village government administration policies. This is the spirit of the Village Law, namely building democratization and participation of village residents to achieve village autonomy in the form of a self-governing community (Ayu et al., 2017).

The essence of deliberation emphasizes the subordination of power holders, both individuals and groups, to joint decisions that prioritize individual interests and obligations to the community (Mulder, 1994). Deliberation promotes the culture of harmony that characterizes Javanese society. This culture tends to avoid conflict and strives for consensus, mutual agreement, and cooperation. However, the essence of deliberation and the crucial role of village deliberation are not widely understood by BPD members. As stated by the ABPEDNAS Secretary, so far, the village

deliberations that have been held have been an initiative of the village government or village head, not by the BPD.

It is difficult to deny that the dominant culture in Javanese rural communities is harmony, not dialectics. In a culture of harmony, pressure tends to be directed at consensus, not conflict. For power holders everywhere, the use of deliberative platforms and a culture of harmony is indeed able to create solid and effective power. But on the other hand, this kind of tendency, by civil society, is seen as an unhealthy symptom in the framework of strengthening and consolidating democracy. For these civilians, a healthy rural democracy ensured significant opposition strength, both within and outside BPD institutions.

This is reflected in the phenomena found in BPD in the sub-districts of the object of study. BPD in Karangploso sub-district has never held a village deliberation, even though the head of BPD already has an understanding of village deliberations. BPD in Turen sub-district and Tumpang sub-district have never held village deliberations because they do not know that BPD has an important role in organizing village deliberations. BPD in Kasembon sub-district and Sumberpucung sub-district village deliberations are organized by the village head, and BPD is only invited, so its role in village deliberations is very low. Then BPD in Lawang sub-district and Kalipare sub-district held village deliberations even though in its implementation the village government and village head played a dominant role. Only BPD in the Pakis sub-district has initiated village deliberations even though the implementation has caused friction with the village government and village head.

The direction of the development of village democracy in the future towards a self-governing community is still influenced by two main factors (Cahyono, 2012), namely the typology of leadership, in this case, is the village head and the performance of democratic agents represented by BPD members. Indeed, there are also efforts to build democracy to increase the political responsiveness of residents, there is also a tendency to change the attitudes and discourses of new village heads in presenting themselves in a less hierarchical and more service-oriented way (Berenschot et al., 2021). But it is done through a system of clientelism (Morrill, 2023).

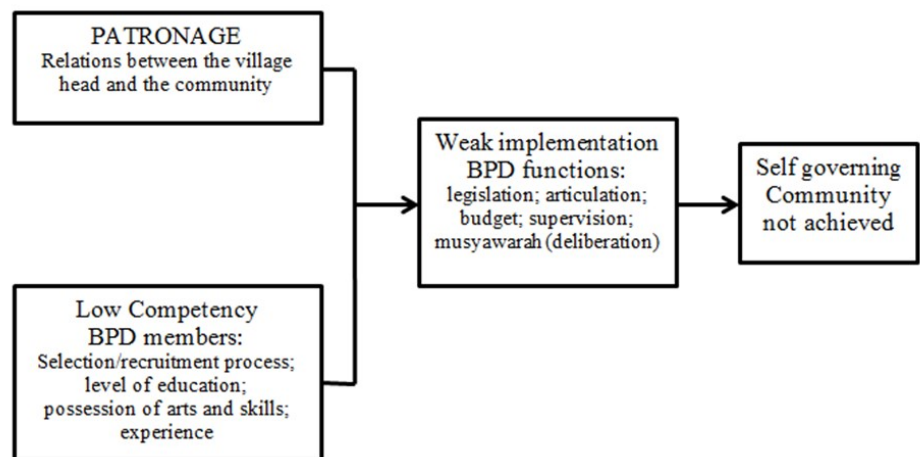


Figure 1. Real conditions for implementing the functions of the village consultative body.

However, many village heads who serve more than one term do not just build patronage in increasing support since the village head election process (Widyanti, 2022), but also build patronage networks in their daily activities (Aspinnal and As'ad, 2015; Cahyati and Lopo, 2019). These phenomena certainly increase the power and influence of the village head in confirming his subordination. The results of the research analysis on the implementation of BPD functions are simplified in **Figure 1**.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

In villages, the object of study of paternalistic culture in the political leadership of village government is still very strong. Power relations between village heads and their residents are structurally hierarchical; the position of the village head is ordinate and villagers as subordinate. In most villages the object of study of the village head is not just as a village civil servant, but even seen as the king of the village. The residents are just kawula, subordinates, who are the objects of power of gentle hints of the village head. Therefore, it is natural when BPD members as representatives of villagers feel reluctant and do not have a critical attitude and opposition to the village head. In addition, in general, as a result of the recruitment process that does not refer to the laws and regulations, it can be said that BPD members in the villages of the object of study lack knowledge, competence, and capacity to carry out functions and roles as mandated by Law No. 6 of 2014 concerning Villages and its derivative regulations.

The various information presented above shows the need for serious attention from policymakers, especially in Malang District, to encourage and facilitate BPD to continue to improve its competence and capacity. Strengthening competence and capacity accompanied by adequate financing is urgent to boost the views and beliefs of villagers that BPD is a democratic institution in the village, especially in its function as a channel for residents' aspirations, supervising the performance of the village government, and designing village development designs within the framework of achieving self-governing community.

To be able to carry out the functions mandated by the Village Law, BPD is required to have adequate capacity and competence. BPD members should increase understanding, in general of the substance of the Village Law, and specifically on village governance issues. Moreover, Malang Regency also already has a Regional Regulation of Malang Regency Number 2 of 2020 concerning Amendments to Regional Regulation Number 1 of 2016 concerning villages.

There is a need for special training and technical guidance for all BPD members related to two things. The first is internal, which is related to providing an understanding of the checks and balances system as a form of equal relations between village heads and BPD in carrying out the three main functions of BPD. The three functions are to discuss and agree on the draft village regulation with the village head, accommodating and channeling the aspirations of rural communities, and the function of supervising the performance of the village head. Second, it is external, which is related to providing an understanding of the ecology of village government which includes the macro democratic political system and government system and political structures and cultures that developed in rural areas from the

colonial era, the early independence era, the new order era, to the post-new order period. By understanding these two things, it is hoped that the capacity of BPD members as an important element of rural civil society will increase and have an impact on improving BPD's performance institutionally in building a self-governing community.

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