

Research Article

## **Evaluating the Effectiveness of Sister Province Cooperation: A Case Study in Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do**

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**Abstract:** Paradiplomacy has become an important phenomenon in international relations, especially for local governments. This study discusses the cooperation between the Yogyakarta Special Region Government and the Gangwon-do Government, South Korea, as an example of paradiplomacy in Indonesia. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method, with data collection through interviews, archival documents, and secondary sources. The results of the study show that cooperation between the Yogyakarta Special Region Government and the Gangwon-do Government has begun since 2008, with the signing of a LoI and followed by the signing of a MoU in 2009. This cooperation covers tourism, science and technology, education, agriculture, culture, and sports. However, the results of the study also show that the effectiveness of this cooperation still needs to be improved, especially in terms of coordination, strategy, and reporting systems. Therefore, this study recommends that local governments need to enhance their capabilities and capacities in managing international cooperation, as well as strengthen coordination and communication with the central government and international partners. This study also identified several gaps that need to be addressed, such as the lack of data and information on the implementation of cooperation, the lack of analysis on the impact of cooperation on local communities and economies, and the lack of evaluation of the effectiveness of cooperation. Therefore, this study recommends several future studies, such as analyzing the impact of cooperation on local communities and economies, proving cooperation's effectiveness, and analyzing cooperation's role and contribution in improving local governments' ability and capacity.

**Keywords:** Local Government Collaboration, Paradiplomacy, Policy Evaluation, Sister Province Cooperation, Yogyakarta - Gangwon-do.



## 1. Introduction

Although they still play an important role, states no longer monopolize today's international system. Other actors have emerged as global actors in recent decades, such as international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), multinational corporations, and others. Cities, provinces, and states are also among the new global actors. Local governments not only play a role in the national urban system but also the international system. Many local governments have taken advantage of global relations and achieved their interests. Local government is the closest government to the community, so the community will directly feel policy practices. It is also challenging for the central government to adjust its policies towards local governments [1] [2].

Global contacts or diplomatic activities conducted by sub-state entities with foreign partners are called paradiplomacy. The acceleration of the global economy, characterized by the mobility of capital, technology, and communication, blurs the barriers between domestic and foreign affairs. It has led to changes in the distribution of responsibilities between the central and local governments [3]. The term paradiplomacy was first introduced by Duchacek and Soldatos in 1990. They defined parallel diplomacy or paradiplomacy as external contacts, activities, relationships, and behaviors carried out by local governments with international actors, such as foreign local governments and international institutions. They argue that paradiplomacy activities can adjust, go hand in hand, or even contradict the foreign policy of the central government. Duchacek also uses the term protodiplomacy to describe local governments that use paradiplomacy in order to gain support for independence or secession [4].

Paradiplomacy in Indonesia is regulated by the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 25 of 2020 concerning Procedures for Local Government Cooperation with Local Governments Abroad and Local Government Cooperation with Institutions Abroad. The regulation contains the requirements for foreign cooperation, forms of foreign cooperation, and the stages of foreign cooperation, as well as the contents of the Cooperation Study, LoI, Cooperation Plan, Draft of Cooperation Manuscript, signing of Cooperation Manuscript, implementation of cooperation, and Report of the Regional Head regarding the implementation of foreign cooperation [5]. Meanwhile, the areas of cooperation that can be carried out are regulated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Regulation Number 09/A/KP/XII/2006/01. In the regulation, it is written that the fields of foreign cooperation are divided into two, which are economic and socio-cultural. The economic cooperation covers tourism, investment, employment, population, mining, transportation, trade, fisheries, marine, science and technology, forestry, environment, and agriculture. Socio-cultural cooperation covers health, arts, education, sports, and gender [6].

The Special Region of Yogyakarta is Indonesia's region with several paradiplomacy activities. The oldest foreign cooperation of the Local Government of Yogyakarta was established in 1985 with Kyoto Prefecture, Japan. The cooperation was formed due to the individual closeness between the then-Governor of Yogyakarta, Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX, and the Governor of Kyoto, Hayashida Yukio [7]. The Local Government of Yogyakarta currently has six sister province relationships and five technical cooperations. The six sister province relationships include Kyoto Prefecture, Japan; Gyeongsangbuk-do, South Korea; Gangwon-do, South Korea; Shanghai, China; Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan; and Victoria, Australia. Some of the technical cooperation are the East Asia Tourism Organization Forum, East Asia Local and Regional Congress, Australia Indonesia Center, Saemaul Globalization, and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Technical cooperation is a short-term cooperation, generally a follow-up cooperation from the Central Government or the implementation of cooperation with sister province partners [8]. The cooperative relationships that Yogyakarta has established are mostly foreign offers that the Local Government of Yogyakarta accepts.

One of the foreign partnerships formed by the Yogyakarta Special Region Government is a sister province relationship with Gangwon-do, South Korea. Based on the vision and mission of the Governor of Yogyakarta, the main focus of the Local Government of Yogyakarta is to develop the cultural sector and preserve cultural heritage [9]. The development of the cultural sector is expected to attract tourists to visit Yogyakarta. It is also expected to increase the community's economy through the MSME sector [10]. The culture, tourism, and creative economy sectors are the main areas that can be cooperated with by the Local Government of Yogyakarta. Some of the efforts of the Yogyakarta Special Region Government in developing these sectors include promotion through websites and social media, as well as establishing several sister province partnerships and technical partnerships such as the East Asia Tourism Organization Forum (EATOF) [11]. The Government of Gangwon-do

also has several main policies in conducting foreign cooperation, which include expanding infrastructure for the globalization of the provincial government, fostering the world's human resources, instilling a sense of pride in the people of Gangwon-do abroad, and encouraging globalization in Gangwon-do. Some of the efforts made by the Government of Gangwon-do in implementing these policies, such as holding educational programs for overseas students, building Gangwon-do showrooms abroad, holding workshops for overseas parties, and offering sister province cooperation with overseas local governments, such as with the Local Government of Yogyakarta [12]. The effectiveness of cooperation established by local governments needs to be assessed to see the extent to which foreign cooperation benefits the community and to determine the next step of cooperation.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Indicators of Effectiveness of Cooperation Implementation**

Knowing the effectiveness of foreign cooperation is important. By identifying the effectiveness of cooperation, an institution can determine whether the cooperation has achieved its goals. Institutions can also use the results of the effectiveness analysis as material to determine the next steps of cooperation by looking at the factors that encourage and discourage the achievement of cooperation. Effectiveness is evaluated by comparing or measuring with a standard of success or achievement. Collaboration is generally effective if it can run with specific functions or solve problems that are the purpose of forming the collaboration. According to Arild Underdal, effectiveness is measured by dependent and independent variables. The dependent variables are output, outcome, and impact. Meanwhile, the independent variables are problem malignancy and problem-solving capacity [13].

Oran Young conveyed another opinion. He argues that there are seven variables of a collaboration's effectiveness [14]:

- (1) Transparency
- (2) Intellectual order
- (3) Transformation rules
- (4) Robustness
- (5) Capacity of governments
- (6) Interdependence
- (7) Power distribution

Meanwhile, the effectiveness of the sister province relationship between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and the Government of Gangwon-do can be seen using Hans Buis' success factors of local government cooperation. The factors include:

- (1) Open discussion
- (2) Analysis of the problem
- (3) Agreement upon strategy
- (4) Clear objectives and results
- (5) Steps in implementation
- (6) Regular contact
- (7) Reporting and report back
- (8) Review of progress
- (9) Monitoring and evaluating

Buis argues that the fundamental thing that makes these factors work is knowing and understanding each other's conditions and obstacles, and a strong commitment between the two parties [15].

### **2.2. Sister Province Cooperation of Yogyakarta Government**

Several articles have discussed the sister province cooperation by the Local Government of Yogyakarta. Cinta discussed the implementation of cooperation between the governments of Yogyakarta and Kyoto Prefecture in her article [16]. The author found that several programs in the cultural sector were successfully implemented, such as sending art missions to Kyoto, providing scholarships, collaborating on the best products of both regions, and exhibiting children's paintings. The author also concludes that Yogyakarta has succeeded in implementing five forms of paradiplomacy efforts conceptualized by Kuznetsov, which are forming a special department to

manage foreign cooperation affairs, conducting official visits, participating in cooperation activities, forming regional working groups, and participating in international agendas [16].

In another article, Hasymi et al specifically discussed the Yogyakarta Government's cooperation program with Gyeongsangbuk-do by analyzing the implications of the Saemaul Undong Program implemented through the mushroom cultivation program [17]. The program is expected to improve the economy and develop human resources in Nanggulan Village. The success of this program has made Nanggulan Village a model village that has implications for the realization of a resilient city because it continues to develop its city resilience. [17].

### **2.3. Analysis of the Effectiveness of Cooperation Implementation**

Several articles also have discussed the effectiveness of foreign cooperation implemented by local governments. Ginanjar et al. discussed the effectiveness of sister province cooperation between West Java Province and Chongqing, China [15]. In the article, the effectiveness of cooperation between the two regions is also measured based on Hans Buis' success factors of cooperation. The authors find that the cooperation has shown positive achievements before the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. They also add that both parties need an agreement to overcome the impacts of unpredictable conditions such as the pandemic [15].

In another article, Puspitasarie et al discussed the effectiveness of the ITAC program, which is the execution of sister province cooperation between Central Java Province, Indonesia, and Queensland, Australia [18]. The authors also use Hans Buis' factors of successful cooperation in analyzing the effectiveness of cooperation between the two. The article mentions that the sister province cooperation between the local governments of Central Java and Queensland still cannot be said to be effective. The author considers that the implementation of the cooperation did not involve the role of the community, and the benefits are only obtained by one party. The cooperation has also not fulfilled four success factors: clear purpose and result, regular contact, agreement upon strategy, and monitoring and evaluation [18].

Unlike those articles, this article will specifically discuss the effectiveness of sister province cooperation between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and the Government of Gangwon-do based on data collected through archives and interviews.

## **3. Methodology**

The research method used in this article is descriptive qualitative, where the data that has been collected needs to be analyzed to get answers to the research questions. This method utilizes qualitative data, which is then described descriptively. This type of method is used to analyze a phenomenon that occurs.

There are three stages in applying this method [19]:

- First, the data collection stage is carried out to collect data related to the research object.
- Second is data presentation, the data obtained is descriptively described in the article.
- Third, data analysis, this stage uses the data that has been presented to find answers to the research questions.

The qualitative data used in this article is obtained through primary data sources, such as interviews and archival documents at the research location, as well as secondary data sources, which are books, journals, and other articles. The interview was conducted by asking several questions related to the implementation of cooperation between Yogyakarta and Gangwon to Novia Ekawati Tama, as one of the staff responsible for the Foreign Cooperation Section of the Local Government of Yogyakarta in 2020-2024. This article also uses documents related to the foreign cooperation between Yogyakarta and Gangwon from the archives of the Foreign Cooperation Section of the Local Government of Yogyakarta. The secondary data is obtained through books, articles, and journals related to the phenomenon of paradiplomacy, the policies of paradiplomacy in Indonesia, and the implementation of Yogyakarta's foreign cooperation. The data that has been collected will be analyzed using theory to obtain research results.

## **4. Finding and Discussion**

### **4.1. The Initiation of Cooperation Agreement**

The Special Region of Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do are provinces that have many potentials. The similarity of these potentials also made them agree to cooperate. Both regions are regions that have

many cultural heritages. Most cultural sites in Yogyakarta are relics of previous kingdoms. On the other hand, Gangwon-do is also home to several temples in South Korea, comprising approximately 15 temples [20]. Both regions are also home to some of the best universities in the country, such as Gadjah Mada University, the second-best university in Indonesia, and Kangwon National University, the 24<sup>th</sup>-best university in South Korea in 2024 [21] [22]. Both also have potential in sports, especially in soccer. In addition to these potentials, both are members of EATOF, whose members are provinces that agreed to work together to develop their regional tourism sectors [23].

The sister province relationship between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and the Government of Gangwon-do began with the invitation of the delegation of Yogyakarta by the Government of Gangwon-do to the Mutual Exchange of Delegation Program in June 2003. The program was an implementation of the East Asia Tour Operator Forum (EATOF) technical cooperation. Both parties agreed to sign a Letter of Intent (LoI) in August 2008. The agreement was followed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed a year later [8]. The MoU contains agreements on cooperation in various fields, including tourism, science and technology, education, agriculture, culture, and sports. In September 2009, both parties agreed to a Friendly Ties Cooperation Agreement. The agreement contains several agreements related to the objectives and implementation system of the cooperation that will be implemented [24].

Based on the Sister Province Cooperation Matrix data issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2021, the cooperation between the Government of Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do is declared inactive [25]. Tama added that this is because there is no extension of the agreed MoU. In the MoU, the two provinces agreed to conduct a 5-year evaluation of the MoU that has been made, which is then considered regarding its feasibility to be extended for the next 5 years. Although their cooperation is no longer formally written, they still have a good relationship, especially since both are still active members of EATOF and participate in EATOF activities. The Gangwon-do Government still often invites representatives of the Local Government of Yogyakarta to attend several activities organized by the Gangwon-do Government.

#### **4.2. The Implementation of Cooperation Programs**

In July 2010, the Local Government of Yogyakarta participated in the Korean Language and Cultural Programs for Local Government Officials and University Students of Sisterhood Governments in Gangwon-do by sending two participants. In 2011, the Government of Gangwon-do again invited the Local Government of Yogyakarta to participate in the 2011 Gangwon Provincial Program for Local Government Officials of Sisterhood Governments at Yonsei University, Gangwon-do. The program was held for 20 days and again in 2012, 2014, and 2016. The government of Gangwon-do had offered to cooperate in agriculture in 2013, with an offer to bring seeds of new genetically modified varieties to Yogyakarta. The seeds were rice, corn, beans, and others. The seeds were to be tested for cultivation in the rainy season as new fast-growing varieties. In response to the offer, the Local Government of Yogyakarta stated that permission was needed from the Agricultural Quarantine Center and the Biosafety Commission to import the seeds [8].

In November 2014, the Local Government of Yogyakarta held a meeting regarding cooperation programs between Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do in the fields of agriculture, health, culture, and the International Urban Training Center (IUTC), which was attended by several heads of related agencies, such as the Department of Public Works Housing and Energy Mineral Resources, Department of Culture, Department of Tourism, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Industry, Trade, Cooperatives, and SMEs [26]. Then, in December of the same year, the Local Government of Yogyakarta invited Gangwon-do delegates to a Joint Working Group Meeting to revitalize sister province cooperation between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and the Government of Gangwon-do [27]. The Government of Gangwon-do invited the Local Government of Yogyakarta to send five people as delegates to the Local Economic Activation Training on agricultural production held in April 2016. In response to the invitation, the Local Government of Yogyakarta sent a delegation of the Department of Agriculture of Yogyakarta to participate in the program implementation [28].

The Government of Gangwon-do invited the Local Government of Yogyakarta to the G-1 Pyeongchang Olympic Festival, held from February 9 to 19, 2017, in Gangneung City. The Department of Tourism of Yogyakarta and the Arts Team from the Department of Culture of Yogyakarta attended the invitation [29]. In July 2017, the Government of Gangwon-do invited the Local Government of Yogyakarta to participate in the 16th Gangneung International Junior Art

Festival in Gangneung City, Gangwon-do [30]. The Local Government of Yogyakarta, attended the Standing Committee Meeting in August 2017. The activity is one of the implementations of EATOF technical cooperation, which was also attended by representatives from several other provinces, such as Cebu, Philippines; Gangwon, South Korea; Sarawak, Malaysia; Quang Ninh, Vietnam; Tottori, Japan; and Siem Reap, Cambodia [31].

In February 2018, the Local Government of Yogyakarta sent a delegation and the Arts Team of Yogyakarta to attend the opening ceremony of the Pyeongchang 2018 Olympic Winter Games in Gangwon Province in February 2018 for 4 days. The Arts Team of Yogyakarta also performed the Hayuningrat Dance, which tells the story of the relationship between Merapi, Mataram, and the South Sea, with the main characters of the King of Mataram and Kanjeng Ratu Kidul. The dance was performed as a form of realization of Yogyakarta's cultural mission in Gangwon-do, South Korea [32]. In 2022, the Government of Gangwon-do invited the Local Government of Yogyakarta to participate in a U-12 friendly Football Competition in Chuncheon, Gangwon-do. In response to the invitation, the Local Government of Yogyakarta sent Team Astara to represent Indonesia in the competition. The competition was held on June 7-12, 2022, and was also attended by representatives from South Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, Colombia, and Mongolia [33].

### **4.3. The Effectiveness of Cooperation Implementation**

In this section, the effectiveness of sister province cooperation between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and the Government of Gangwon-do will be analyzed using Hans Buis' success factors of local government cooperation. The factors will be described based on the implementation of cooperation between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and the Government of Gangwon-do in implementing the agreed Articles of the Friendship Cooperation Agreement, in which Article 1 discusses the Purpose and Scope of Cooperation; Article 2 on Financing and Personnel; Article 3 on Technical Arrangements; Article 4 on Joint Working Groups; Article 5 on Intellectual Property Rights; Article 6 on Settlement of Differences; Article 7 on Amendments; and Article 8 on Enactment, Validity, and Termination [24].

In general, the success factors of Hans Buis have all been written in the cooperation agreement between the Government of Yogyakarta and Gangwon. The agreement related to coordination between parties is written in Article 4. The article states that the Joint Working Group formed by the two parties is tasked with planning and providing input in the cooperation implementation. The article also states that the Joint Working Group will meet once a year, alternating between Yogyakarta and Gangwon. In Article 6, both parties agree to resolve differences that arise through consultation and negotiation. Article 7 also states that if either party wants to change or improve the cooperation, the party can submit an amendment to the agreement in writing [24].

In the interview, Tama mentioned that the two parties could not meet once a year. It did not have a harmful impact at the beginning of the cooperation because, at that time, the two parties still communicated frequently regarding the implementation of the cooperation. However, after the MoU ended, communication between the two began to decrease. A change in the person in charge of cooperation between Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do also drove this. Another reason is a lot of policy changes from the Central Government related to technical foreign cooperation of local governments. Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 25/2020 was issued to replace the policies of Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 3/2008 and Minister of Home Affairs Regulation No. 74/2012. These policy changes created more complex procedures for the Yogyakarta Government to undertake. These problems were not communicated to the Gangwon government, so the MoU could not be sustained. Although communication between the two has been severely decreased, the Government of Gangwon-do still contacts the Local Government of Yogyakarta several times to attend some activities. For example, in 2022, the Government of Gangwon-do invited representatives of the Government of Yogyakarta to participate in a U-12 Friendly Football Match.

Another success factor in the cooperation agreement between the Local Government of Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do is the strategy and steps based on the agreement of both parties. In Article 4, it is stated that at the beginning of the cooperation, both parties agreed to create a Joint Working Group. The group is specifically tasked with implementing activities under the Friendship Cooperation Agreement. The Joint Working Group is planned to consist of agencies from both local governments. Article 3 also states that the execution of the cooperation will be carried out through technical arrangements made by the parties [24].

Tama said that at the beginning of the cooperation, both parties agreed to be involved in

implementing cooperation based on the agreed fields by forming a Joint Working Group. Both also agreed to conduct potential mapping and improve human resources through training and exchange of human resources. In its implementation, the Joint Working Group was not formed and operated, so the implementation of cooperation could not run optimally. At the beginning of the cooperation, the Plan of Action, such as training and potential mapping, could run well. However, in some invitations, the Local Government of Yogyakarta could not come due to limited funds. After the Plan of Action is agreed upon, the local government needs to make a Cooperation Agreement with the local apparatus as a technical guide for cooperation. In this case, the Local Government of Yogyakarta did not make such an agreement, so the technicality of cooperation is not clear and detailed.

The next factor is a clear goal. It has been stated in Article 1 states that cooperation is carried out to enhance and develop effective and mutually beneficial cooperation in the fields of tourism, science and technology, education, agriculture, culture, and sports [24]. Based on several documents related to the programs that have been implemented, only a few cooperation programs could be carried out sustainably at the beginning of the agreement, which afterward still did not continue due to lack of communication. Most of the activities were also initiated by the Gangwon-do Government, so there is an imbalance in receiving benefits from the cooperation implementation.

The next factor is a regular reporting system. When implementing cooperation, a reporting system is needed to see the progress and as evaluation material for the parties. The reporting system for cooperation between Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do is written in Article 4, which states that if the Joint Working Group cannot hold a meeting once a year, then both parties are obliged to exchange reports related to the implementation of cooperation. In addition to planning and providing recommendations for the implementation of cooperation, the Joint Working Group also has the task of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of cooperation [24].

Based on archival documents, there are several reports on several programs and activities implementation. However, Tama added that the reporting done by the Local Government of Yogyakarta only reports to the Ministry of Home Affairs and was not submitted to the Gangwon-do Government. Vice versa, the Gangwon-do Government also did not routinely report the process or results of cooperation to the Yogyakarta Government. In practice, the parties involved in the cooperation implementation did not conduct monitoring and evaluation of cooperation. These problems were also a result of the lack of communication between the two parties.

## 5. Conclusion

Analysis of the effectiveness of sister province cooperation between the Government of Yogyakarta and Gangwon-do shows that it has not fulfilled Hans Buis' success factors of local government cooperation. The implementation of cooperation between the two did not have good coordination, technical rules of cooperation that were not optimally implemented, and an unclear reporting system. Those are caused by several things, such as changes in the staff responsible for cooperation, limited human resources and costs, changes in regulations from the Central Government regarding cooperation procedures, lack of communication between the two parties, and some initial agreements that were not implemented, which affected the implementation of subsequent cooperation activities.

Both provinces have great potential to continue their cooperation, especially in tourism. It can be seen from each region's rich cultural heritage and from each province's vision and mission, which is eager to promote its region by developing the tourism sector. Strengthening the cooperation that has been established can encourage economic development and human resources in each province. It aligns with each local government's and central government's vision and mission that supports regional development. The findings of this analysis provide valuable insights for both parties to evaluate and enhance their future cooperative efforts.

Further research can examine the potential for cooperation between the Yogyakarta Special Region Government and regional governments in ASEAN countries to boost the economy and socio-culture. This is in line with the three points of the direction of Takdir Ali Mukti's paradiplomacy policy which states that cooperation in the ASEAN region has not been widely initiated even though its potential is great and its proximity can increase the operational efficiency of the implementation of cooperation.

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