

Implementation of Regional Government Authority on the Empowerment of Small-Scale Fishermen in Bandengan Village, Kendal Regency

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ABSTRACT: The This study aims to analyze the authority of the Regional Government in empowering small-scale fishermen in Bandengan Village, Kendal Regency, based on Law Number 7 of 2016 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Fishermen, Fish Farmers, and Salt Farmers. The research uses an empirical juridical approach with data collected through literature studies and interviews. The results show that the Regional Government plays an important role in providing fisheries infrastructure, facilitating access to capital, and conducting capacity-building training for fishermen. However, implementation remains constrained by limited budgets, weak inter-agency coordination, and fishermen's low access to financing. Strengthened synergy among stakeholders is needed to achieve sustainable empowerment of small-scale fishermen.

KEYWORDS: regional government authority, empowerment, small-scale fishermen, Kendal Regency.

I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a maritime country with vast seas and an abundance of natural resources. The marine sector, particularly fisheries, plays an important role in supporting both the national and regional economies. In this sector, small-scale fishermen are a group that plays a major role in maintaining the sustainability of fish production and meeting the consumption needs of the community. However, in reality, the lives of small-scale fishermen are still far from prosperous. They often face various problems such as limited capital, simple fishing equipment, difficulty accessing markets and technology, and a lack of policy support that favors them(de Juan et al., 2024).

To address these issues, the government has enacted Law Number 7 of 2016 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Fishermen, Fish Farmers, and Salt Farmers. This law serves as the basis for the government, both at the central and regional levels, to provide protection and improve the welfare of fishermen through various programs such as training, capital assistance, provision of facilities and infrastructure, and business mentoring for fisheries. In this context, Regional Governments have a very important role because they are closest to the community and better understand the real conditions faced by fishermen in their areas(Frawley et al., 2019).

In Bandengan Subdistrict, Kendal Regency, small-scale fishermen make up a large part of the coastal community whose livelihoods depend on marine catches. However, they still face various obstacles, whether economic, weather-related, or due to a lack of supporting facilities. Therefore, it is important to examine to what extent the Kendal Regency Regional Government exercises its authority in empowering small-scale fishermen in accordance with the mandate of Law Number 7 of 2016.

Through this study, it is expected that we will be able to identify how the regional government's small-scale fisher empowerment policies are implemented, what inhibiting factors exist, and what steps can be taken to improve the effectiveness of empowerment programs so that they can sustainably enhance the welfare of fishing communities(Said et al., 2020).

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The approach method used is normative juridical. The approach is based on primary and secondary legal materials, namely research that refers to the norms contained in the legislation. Descriptive analytical is a research specification used in this research, which describes the applicable laws and regulations and is associated with positive legal theories that are concerned with the problem under study.

The data collection method used is positive law inventory, literature study, and decision observation which aims to obtain data or information according to the research(Suteki & Taufani, 2020). The data analysis method will be carried out qualitatively, which

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emphasizes its analysis on the deductive and inductive inference process and on the analysis of the dynamics of the relationship between the problems at hand, with scientific logic, and answers research questions.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Forms of Empowerment for Small-Scale Fishermen Communities in Bandengan Subdistrict, Kendal Regency

1. Social Empowerment and Human Resource Capacity

The social aspect of empowerment is focused on enhancing the human resource capacity of fishermen (Muringai et al., 2022). The local government, together with fisheries extension officers, conducts training and outreach activities on sustainable fishing techniques, catch management, and business diversification such as salted fish processing and seafood product development. These training programs are important for shifting the mindset of fishermen from merely fish seekers to productive, economically oriented fisheries entrepreneurs.

However, the participation rate of fishing communities in training activities remains limited. Factors such as low levels of education, a lack of interest among younger generations in the fishing profession, and the limited frequency of outreach activities are significant challenges (Robinson et al., 2020). This indicates that social empowerment needs to be designed in a more integrated manner with a community-based approach, rather than just being project-based.

From perspective in Institutional Empowerment and Governance, From an institutional perspective, the Regional Government encourages the formation of fishermen groups and fisheries cooperatives as platforms to strengthen fishermen's bargaining position in economic activities (Patual et al., 2025). The presence of these groups also serves as a channel for aid distribution, joint management of fishing gear, and as a medium of communication between fishermen and the government. In Bandengan Sub-district, several fishermen groups have already been established and are actively involved in catch management and community mutual assistance activities.

However, in terms of governance, coordination between agencies still needs to be strengthened. The relationship between the Marine and Fisheries Office, the Social Services Office, and sub-district officials has not yet been fully synergistic (Dadi et al., 2024). As a result, some empowerment programs are carried out partially and are not integrated with regional development policies. In fact, according to the principles of good governance in the administration of regional government, the implementation of authority should be conducted based on the principles of coordination, participation, and accountability.

2. Constitutional Law Analysis of the Implementation of Regional Authority

From a constitutional law perspective, the empowerment of small fishermen in Bandengan Village, Kendal Regency, is a tangible form of the implementation of the attributive authority granted to local governments based on Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government and Law Number 7 of 2016 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Fishermen, Fish Farmers, and Salt Farmers (Tilley et al., 2019). These two regulations provide a constitutional basis for regions to carry out governmental functions in the marine and fisheries sector, as far as it concerns local affairs directly affecting the welfare of the community. In this context, the authority of the local government is concurrent and optional, meaning its implementation can be adjusted to the social, economic, and potential conditions of the region. This simultaneously reflects the application of the principle of decentralization as affirmed in Article 18 paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution, which grants regions the right to manage and govern their own governmental affairs according to the principles of autonomy and co-administration.

The exercise of this authority is part of the realization of a welfare state, where the state — including local governments as part of governmental organs — not only functions as a regulator that governs the life of society through legal norms but also actively takes responsibility for improving the living standards of its people. Empowering small fishermen is one form of implementing the social function of the state, where the local government acts as a facilitator, protector, and partner for economically vulnerable coastal communities (Freduah et al., 2019). This mandate aligns with the national goals enshrined in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution's fourth paragraph, which is to advance the general welfare and achieve social justice for all the people of Indonesia.

However, empirically, the implementation of this authority in Bandengan Village still faces various challenges. One of the main obstacles is the limited fiscal capacity of the region. Although the Kendal Regency Government has allocated funds for the fisheries sector through the Regional Budget (APBD), the amount is relatively small compared to the real needs in the field. For instance, the motorboat and eco-friendly fishing gear assistance program provided through the Kendal Regency Marine and Fisheries Office can only reach a small fraction of the fishermen in Bandengan. Many other fishermen still use traditional non-motorized boats, which limits their reach and results in low catches. This condition indicates that without adequate fiscal support, the empowerment authority held by local governments is difficult to optimally implement (TorresGuevara & Schlüter, 2016).

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Additionally, coordination among local government agencies is still weak. Efforts to empower fishermen are often conducted sectorally and are not integrated. For example, counseling and technical training programs conducted by the Marine Office have not been synergized with the economic empowerment programs of coastal communities run by the Cooperatives and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Agency, resulting in unsustainable outcomes. Consequently, fishermen who have been trained to process their catches lack support in accessing capital and marketing, making it difficult for their processed products to grow in the local market. Ideally, in the principle of good local governance, every development policy should be conducted in a coordinated, transparent manner, and based on community needs.

Another obstacle is the low participation of fishing communities in the planning and evaluation process of local government programs. The still bureaucratic policy pattern often results in small fishermen merely becoming policy recipients, not subjects actively involved. For instance, in the drafting of the annual work plan of the Marine and Fisheries Office, public consultation forums at the village level rarely directly involve representatives of small fishermen (Horta e Costa et al., 2013). As a result, the programs devised do not always align with the real needs in the field, such as improving docks, enhancing cold storage facilities, or providing subsidized fuel access for small fishermen. This phenomenon illustrates that although local governments have exercised authority based on positive law, from the perspective of local democratic substance, its implementation does not fully reflect the participatory principle that embodies local autonomy.

Normatively, the Kendal Regency Government has a strong legal basis for the implementation of small fishermen empowerment. However, sociologically, the success of this implementation is still influenced by institutional effectiveness, the quality of the human resources of the apparatus, and the local government's ability to build cooperation networks with the private sector and financial institutions.(Essaw et al., 2025) For example, one form of success starting to be seen is the collaboration initiative between Kendal Regency Government and Bank Jateng in a microcredit program for fishermen without large collateral, aimed at easing financing access for the catch and marine product processing businesses. Nevertheless, its scope is still limited, and many fishermen do not meet administrative requirements as they lack fisheries business permits. This illustrates the gap between ideal legal norms and administrative realities in the field.

From the constitutional law perspective, this condition emphasizes the need to strengthen local legal instruments as a complement to national policy. The Kendal Government can draft Regional Regulations or Regent Regulations specifically governing the mechanism for empowering small fishermen, including aid management, financing systems, and inter-agency coordination. With technical regulations at the regional level, the implementation of authority will be more directed and have clear legal legitimacy, thus not relying on short-term policies. Additionally, strengthening fishermen's institutions like Joint Business Groups (KUB) and fishermen's cooperatives also needs to be pursued so that they not only become recipients of aid but can develop into independent economic subjects with stronger bargaining positions in the market.(Essaw et al., 2025)

Conceptually, the implementation of small fishermen empowerment in areas like Bandengan Village can be seen as part of the constitutionalization of welfare in Indonesia's regional government system. The local government fulfills its constitutional function in ensuring social justice and economic welfare for coastal residents. Although various obstacles are still encountered, this policy direction indicates that the local government paradigm has shifted from merely executing central administration to actively realizing national goals at the local level(Salazar et al., 2024)l. By strengthening fiscal capacity, building cross-sectoral synergy, and substantively growing fishermen community participation, the empowerment of small fishermen in Kendal Regency has the potential to become a model for regional autonomy implementation oriented towards public welfare and in line with the spirit of Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution on the use of natural resources for the greatest prosperity of the people.

3. Implications for Constitutional Law and Good Governance

The empowerment of small-scale fishers in Bandengan Village, Kendal Regency, has significant implications for strengthening the constitutional legal system, especially within the framework of decentralization and regional autonomy. In Indonesia's constitutional system, local governments do not merely function as executors of central policy, but also as constitutional subjects with legitimate authority to regulate and manage government affairs directly related to the welfare of their local communities(Fulton et al., 2018). This aligns with the mandate of Article 18 paragraph (5) of the 1945 Constitution, which affirms that local governments have the right to enact policies that address the interests of their communities based on the principle of broadest possible autonomy. Therefore, the authority of local governments to empower small-scale fishers is not simply an administrative obligation but a manifestation of the constitutional principle of responsive governance that prioritizes public needs.

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These implications become even more significant in the context of Law Number 7 of 2016, which provides a legal foundation for governments, including local administrations, to implement structured and sustainable protection and empowerment of fishers. In this context, local governments have a constitutional function to guarantee the economic and social rights of citizens, particularly those in coastal communities who are vulnerable to economic uncertainty and climate change. The empowerment of small-scale fishers is not just an economic policy but a concrete form of realizing constitutional rights to prosperity, as guaranteed in Article 28H paragraph (1) and Article 33 of the 1945 Constitution, which declares that natural resources must be utilized to the greatest benefit of the people. Thus, the success of local governments in empowering small fishers becomes an indicator of how far these constitutional principles are being implemented at the local level.

From a modern constitutional law perspective, small-fisher empowerment policies also demonstrate the dynamics of central-local relations in the context of asymmetric decentralization. The central government sets norms and general policies through legislation, while local governments have discretionary space to tailor implementation to local needs (Oloko et al., 2024). In Kendal Regency, this authority is reflected in various local programs, such as support for fishery production facilities, training in processing marine products, and the provision of micro-financing access. The implementation of these programs demonstrates that constitutional law operates not just in the normative sphere, but also materializes in concrete, welfare-oriented public policies. In other words, every legal and administrative action taken by local governments is part of the execution of the state's constitutional functions in economic and social domains (Ahmad & Abu Talib, 2015).

In the context of good governance, the exercise of authority to empower small-scale fishers demands adherence to the principles of good government: accountability, transparency, participation, effectiveness, and justice. The implementation of these principles translates constitutional values into the practice of local administration. For example, accountability is reflected in the local government's openness regarding the use of budgets for fisher empowerment; transparency is realized through the publication of programs and recipient criteria; participation is visible in the involvement of fisher groups in the planning and evaluation of programs; effectiveness is measured by improvements in fisher welfare; and justice is evident in equitable access to resources and government facilities. However, in practice, a range of challenges remains, such as weak inter-agency coordination, limited capacity of officials, and low participation among fishing communities in policy formulation processes. This shows that good governance principles have yet to be fully internalized in the management of local administration.

Another implication is that the success or failure of local governments in empowering small-scale fishers can serve as a benchmark for the effectiveness of regional autonomy itself. When the authorities granted by law are not accompanied by the region's capacity to manage resources effectively and fairly, the spirit of decentralization loses its significance. Therefore, empowering small-scale fishers becomes a test case for how the principles of regional autonomy are applied within the framework of a unitary state. In the context of Kendal Regency, if the local government can optimize its authority to improve the welfare of Bandengan's fishers through integrated and participatory policies, it will not only strengthen the legitimacy of local government, but also reinforce the structure of Indonesia's constitutional law system oriented toward public welfare (Ahmad & Abu Talib, 2015).

Thus, the constitutional legal implications of local government authority regarding the empowerment of small-scale fishers in Bandengan Village lie in the strengthening of the region's function as a constitutional organ tasked with realizing the ideals of a welfare state through democratic, transparent, and participatory governance. From the perspective of good governance, the exercise of this authority serves as a concrete indicator of the quality of local government administration in balancing legal regulation and the socio-economic needs of the people. The harmonious relationship between legal foundation, public policy, and the welfare of the fishing community is the true manifestation of the local government's role as the spearhead of constitutional implementation at the local level (Hariyanto et al., 2024).

B. Obstacles Faced by the Local Government in Empowering Small-Scale Fishermen Communities in Bandengan Village, Kendal Regency

1. Structural and Institutional Constraints

The implementation of regional government authority in empowering small-scale fishermen does not always proceed as ideally as mandated by Law Number 7 of 2016 concerning the Protection and Empowerment of Fishermen, Fish Farmers, and Salt Farmers. Although this authority is normatively well-regulated, its implementation at the local level often encounters obstacles, whether from structural, regulatory, or socio-cultural aspects. In the context of Bandengan Village, Kendal Regency, research results show that there are three main obstacles affecting the effectiveness of empowerment efforts: structural and institutional constraints, regulatory and inter-agency coordination challenges, and the socio-economic constraints faced by the fishing community itself.

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One of the most fundamental obstacles in implementing empowerment programs for small-scale fishers in Bandengan Subdistrict is the weak institutional capacity of the local government, particularly at the technical implementation level. The Kendal District Marine and Fisheries Office faces limitations in human resources, both in terms of quantity and competence. Many officials lack an educational background or technical expertise in marine affairs and fisheries, resulting in program implementation that is often merely administrative and not oriented towards sustainable empowerment (González & Piñeiro Antelo, 2020).

In addition, the regional bureaucratic structure remains hierarchical, causing decision-making to be slow. Every policy requires a lengthy process through cross-agency coordination mechanisms, which are often inefficient. As a result, many empowerment programs are delayed or do not run optimally because they must wait for approval from higher levels of government (Tatali et al., 2018). As a concrete example, during the early years of implementing the environmentally friendly fishing gear assistance program, several fisher groups in Bandengan Subdistrict did not immediately receive the aid due to delays in administrative processes and recipient data verification. This caused dissatisfaction among fishers and reduced public trust in the local government. This situation demonstrates that institutional problems not only affect the effectiveness of policies, but also the legitimacy of local government as the executor of constitutional authority in community welfare matters.

One of the main obstacles faced by local government is the limited regional budget for the marine and fisheries sector. In the structure of Kendal Regency's regional budget (APBD), the portion allocated for empowering fishers is relatively small compared to other sectors such as infrastructure or education. As a result, various assistance programs, such as providing environmentally friendly fishing gear, vessel renewal, and training in marine product processing, are often unsustainable. For example, the boat engine aid program provided in 2022 reached only a small portion of Bandengan fisher groups, while many others did not receive similar support due to funding constraints. This shows that even though local governments have attributive authority to implement empowerment as mandated by law, such authority becomes ineffective without adequate fiscal support.

Another challenge is the low capacity of local government personnel and fisheries extension officers. In practice, the number of extension officers actively guiding fishers in Bandengan Subdistrict is still very limited. One extension officer must oversee several coastal villages at the same time, making it difficult to provide effective guidance (Hue & Tung-Wen Sun, 2022). Moreover, some local officials lack technical competence in coastal economic empowerment and sustainable fisheries management. As a result, empowerment programs often operate at an administrative level—limited to the distribution of aid—without ongoing accompaniment, evaluation, or monitoring processes. In fact, normatively, Article 28 of Law No. 7 of 2016 mandates that fisher empowerment must be carried out through continuous education, training, and extension approaches.

2. Regulatory Obstacles and Interagency Coordination

The second significant obstacle is the lack of regulatory synchronization and weak coordination between the central government, provincial government, and district government. According to the Appendix of Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government, marine and fisheries affairs fall under concurrent governmental authority, meaning that part of the authority lies with the central government and the rest is delegated to the regions. However, in practice, this division of authority often leads to overlaps.

For example, the central government, through the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP), establishes national programs such as the Assistance for Capture Fisheries Business Facilities (BSUPT), while regional governments have similar programs funded by the Regional Budget (APBD). Due to the absence of an integrated coordination system, assistance often accumulates with certain fisher groups, while others remain untouched. This phenomenon also occurs in Bandengan Subdistrict, where data on aid recipient groups from the central government does not always align with data held by the district government.

In addition, regulatory obstacles also arise due to delays by local governments in issuing Regional Regulations (Perda) or Regent Regulations as implementing instruments for Law No. 7 of 2016. Without a clear local legal basis, program implementation becomes less targeted and is vulnerable to policy inconsistencies. In fact, according to constitutional law, every delegation of authority from the center to the regions must be accompanied by adequate legal instruments to ensure legal certainty and accountability in implementation. The absence of these local legal instruments indicates a lack of normative awareness in translating the mandate of the law into regional policies.

From the perspective of the fishing community, challenges faced by the local government also stem from the low participation and legal awareness among coastal residents. Many small-scale fishers in Bandengan Subdistrict do not have business legality, licenses to fish, or membership in formal fisher groups. This makes it difficult for the local government to collect data and distribute programs. For example, many traditional fishers operate independently without joining groups, so they are not reached by training programs or equipment assistance. The lack of legal awareness is also evident in the minimal understanding of regulations on

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sustainable fishing, so some continue to use prohibited gear such as small trawl nets. In reality, active participation and legal compliance of the community are important prerequisites for the successful implementation of empowerment policies.

From the perspective of constitutional law, these various obstacles indicate a disparity between legal norms and the institutional capacity of the region. Local governments have authority granted attributively by law, but implementation is still hampered by technical and structural factors. This demonstrates that regional autonomy has not yet been fully accompanied by decentralization of resources and adequate institutional capabilities. In other words, granting authority without strong resource and bureaucratic capacity support actually leads to inefficiency in local government administration. Its constitutional implication is the weakening of the state's function in realizing the goal of welfare as mandated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution, namely to protect all the people of Indonesia and promote the general welfare.

These challenges also affect the application of good governance principles at the local level. Lack of transparency and accountability in aid distribution, minimal community participation in program planning, and weak performance evaluation of officials indicate that the governance of small-scale fisher empowerment in Kendal has yet to fully reflect good governance. This presents a special challenge within the framework of constitutional law, as good governance principles are part of constitutional norms that must be internalized by every government institution, whether at the central or regional level.

As a concrete example, in 2023 there was a case where some fishery support tools distributed to fisher groups in Bandengan were not optimally used due to a lack of technical assistance from the local government. Some gear was even damaged in a short time because it did not match local marine conditions. This case demonstrates weak planning and supervision stages, and illustrates that the effectiveness of empowerment is determined not only by the availability of regulations but also by the institutional capacity of local government to exercise its authority.

Thus, the challenges faced by local government in empowering small-scale fishers in Bandengan Subdistrict are not only technical or administrative but also structural and constitutional in nature. These obstacles reflect that the implementation of local authority continues to face difficulties in achieving synergy between law, public policy, and institutional capacity. Therefore, a reformulation of local policy is needed, oriented toward strengthening the capacity of officials, optimizing budget allocation, and increasing the participation of the fisher community, so that the exercise of local government authority can truly realize the constitutional objectives of a welfare state in the maritime and fisheries sector.

3. Regulatory Obstacles and Interagency Coordination

This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of legal understanding and the low level of community involvement among fishermen in the formulation and evaluation of empowerment programs. Many fishermen do not yet understand the direction and mechanisms of government programs, which often leads to misunderstandings in their implementation. For example, in seafood processing training activities organized by the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, fishermen's participation is often low because they prefer to go fishing to meet their daily economic needs.

Another challenge arises from the social and economic conditions of small-scale fishermen in Bandengan Subdistrict. In general, this group of fishermen still has a low level of welfare, with incomes that are highly dependent on daily catches and weather conditions. Low levels of education also affect their ability to access information, manage finances, and utilize modern technology in their fishing activities (Liao et al., 2019).

Additionally, the fishermen's perspective, which is still oriented toward short-term needs, makes it difficult to implement sustainable programs. Local governments are faced with the dilemma of meeting fishermen's urgent needs while encouraging more structured economic change (Liao et al., 2019). From the perspective of constitutional law, this situation reflects obstacles in realizing the principles of a welfare state at the regional level, where the government is not only obligated to provide protection but also to ensure the active participation of citizens in economic development.

These obstacles have profound implications for the effectiveness of regional authority implementation within the framework of Indonesian constitutional law. Conceptually, the empowerment of small-scale fishermen is part of the function of the developmental state, namely the state's active role in building the welfare of society. However, when institutions are weak, regulations overlap, and public participation is low, this constitutional function becomes suboptimal. In this context, the implementation of regional autonomy in Kendal Regency still faces structural and normative barriers that hinder the realization of the welfare state ideals as stated in the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution.

In other words, the obstacles to empowering small-scale fishermen are not merely matters of administrative technicality, but also constitutional issues concerning how local governments as constitutional organs fulfill their responsibilities to citizens. Failure to address these obstacles has the potential to weaken the legitimacy of regional governments and to decrease public trust in the state in carrying out its functions of protection and empowerment of coastal communities.

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The lack of legal awareness among small-scale fishers indicates that fulfilling the constitutional rights of citizens cannot be sufficiently regulated through formal regulations such as Law No. 7 of 2016. The state, through local governments, holds a constitutional responsibility to ensure that all segments of society, including small-scale fishers, are able to understand and internalize their rights and obligations within the framework of economic development. When public legal understanding is low, empowerment policies become ineffective, and the exercise of regional authority turns into mere administrative formalities without bringing about substantive improvements to people's living standards.

At this point, it is evident that empowering small-scale fishers is not solely a technical issue of developing the fisheries sector, but rather part of the state's constitutional duty to achieve general welfare, as stated in the fourth paragraph of the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution. The gap between legislative expectations and the social capacity of the community shows that local governments are facing a social transformation deficit. The state, through local governmental bodies, is required not only to implement programs, but also to ensure the creation of behavioral change, increased legal literacy, and a transformation in the outlook of coastal communities so they are able to adapt to long-term policy plans (Horta e Costa et al., 2013).

Furthermore, this perspective reveals that the low participation of fishing communities in policy-making also reflects the weakness of public participation mechanisms at the local level. Within Indonesia's constitutional system, which places public participation as one of the principles of substantive democracy, the lack of citizen involvement in the policy process results in policies that are unresponsive and fail to meet the standards of good governance. As a result, the legitimacy of local governments is gradually eroded because the programs formulated do not align with the sociological context of their target communities.

Moreover, the subsistence mindset prevalent among the community highlights that state policies have yet to fully address structurally empowering aspects. Local governments are caught in a dilemma: on one hand, the community demands quick solutions to meet daily needs; on the other, the state seeks long-term change toward coastal economic self-sufficiency. The tension between short-term needs and long-term development visions often makes regional policies difficult to measure effectively (Juza & Tintoré, 2021). This demonstrates that local government authority is still not adequately supported by the necessary social instruments to ensure that empowerment programs are implemented in accordance with legislative objectives.

Therefore, the socio-economic constraints faced by the fishing communities in Bandengan should not merely be seen as technical obstacles but rather as a reflection of greater challenges in the implementation of regional autonomy. These conditions show that the exercise of local government authority in empowering coastal communities has not yet fully complied with constitutional mandates and the principles of a welfare state. In order to improve the effectiveness of such authority, there needs to be a strengthening of the community's social capacity, increased legal literacy, and more active community involvement in every stage of public policymaking (Acharya, 2018).

IV. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Kendal Regional Government's authority in empowering small fishermen in Bandengan Village has, in principle, been carried out in accordance with the mandate of Law Number 7 of 2016, particularly through the provision of fisheries infrastructure and facilities, facilitation of access to capital, as well as various forms of training and assistance. Constitutionally, this authority represents the embodiment of the principle of decentralization and the welfare state function as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution. However, implementation at the local level still faces several obstacles, such as budget constraints, weak inter-agency coordination, low bureaucratic capacity, and minimal participation from the fisherfolk community in the program planning process.

Sociologically, the greatest challenges lie in the low socio-economic condition of the fishermen, the lack of business legality, limited legal understanding, and the community's still-subsistence orientation. These obstacles have resulted in empowerment programs not running optimally and often lacking sustainability. Therefore, strengthening local regulations, increasing the capacity of government institutions, cross-sectoral synergy, and expanding active participation of the fisherfolk community are crucial to ensure that the authority of the regional government is truly able to achieve the state's goal of improving public welfare, especially for vulnerable coastal communities.

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