

Policy Formulation of Integrated Defense Area Concept to Face Threats as Knowledge

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Abstract

This study discusses the formulation of the concept of an integrated defense area to deal with threats through the establishment of regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions. The research methods used include a descriptive approach, qualitative analysis, and a normative approach to identify problems, analyze obstacles, and formulate policy recommendations. The results of the study indicate that the existence of regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions is not optimal and there are still many obstacles faced, such as coordination between the central and regional governments that needs to be strengthened. The conclusion of this study underlines the need to improve coordination and capacity of regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions to support a more effective national defense policy.

Keywords: *Integration of Defense Areas, Regional Offices of the Ministry of Defense, Defense Threats.*

Introduction

Indonesia, as the largest archipelagic country in the world, with geographical, cultural, and ethnic diversity, faces very complex defense challenges. Various military and non-military threats continue to develop along with changes in global and regional security dynamics. Traditional threats such as foreign invasion remain a concern, but non-military threats such as terrorism, transnational crime, natural disasters, and cyber attacks are becoming increasingly relevant. In facing the increasingly diverse threat dynamics, the Indonesian government has attempted to formulate an integrated defense concept that involves cross-sectoral and inter-institutional coordination.

Facing various threats, both military and non-military, the Indonesian government needs to develop an adaptive and holistic integrated defense area concept. Traditional threats such as foreign invasion remain the main focus, but non-military threats (Peter J. Dean and Stephan Fruhling, 2014) such as natural disasters, terrorism, and cyber attacks are becoming increasingly relevant. Alfajri et al. (2019) revealed that health, food, water, and cyber security issues are examples of non-military threats that must be anticipated in regional defense. In this case, the concept of an integrated defense area involving various parties is very necessary. (Pants, 2018).

According to The Greatest Showman (2010), The Regional Office of the Ministry of Defense acts as a liaison between the central and regional governments in implementing defense policies. However, its effectiveness is often hampered by a lack of human resources, limited infrastructure, and minimal coordination between related institutions. (Zwack, 2018). This condition creates a gap in the implementation of defense policies in the regions, which could ultimately threaten the integrity of the nation. Pantin (2017) added that the mismatch of work programs between the center and regions was the main factor that hampered the effectiveness of the implementation of tasks in the regions.

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Integrated defense policy also requires increased coordination and strengthening the capacity of Ministry of Defense representatives in the regions. The Greatest Showman (2010) emphasizing the importance of the role of advanced technology and information in supporting integrated defense areas. The government must formulate more inclusive and comprehensive policies, which include transparency, accountability, and public participation. (Sjafrie Sjamsoeddin et al., 2023). Izzul et al. (2019) highlighting the importance of revitalizing the role of the state, good governance, and empowering communities to deal with non-military threats.

Comparison with countries such as the United States, Russia, China, Australia and India shows that they have developed a decentralized and organized defense structure based on specific geographical areas. (Cheung, 2009). The United States with its Regional Commands, Russia with its Military Districts, and China with its Theater Commands, all emphasize the importance of military readiness at the regional level. Indonesia can learn from this approach to strengthen an integrated defense region that is responsive to a variety of military and non-military threats. (David A. Shlapak, 2010).

This study makes a significant contribution by filling the gap in the literature on the strategic role of the Ministry of Defense regional offices in supporting national defense policies. Although there have been a number of studies discussing the defense system at the national level, specific studies on the role and challenges of the Ministry of Defense regional offices in addressing threats at the regional level are still relatively limited. This study highlights the urgent need for stronger integration between the central and regional governments and various related agencies to realize a more effective defense.

The main gap filled by this research is the lack of a comprehensive approach in integrated defense policy at the regional level. Currently, the implementation of defense policy in the regions is often not optimal due to coordination constraints and lack of resource readiness. Therefore, this research seeks to offer a new holistic approach by utilizing systems theories, military operational readiness, and inter-institutional synergy.

The objectives of this study are to: 1) Identify and analyze the main obstacles in the implementation of integrated defense policies in the regions. 2) Formulate policy solutions that support increased coordination between the central and regional governments and related agencies. 3) Propose strategies to strengthen the role of the Ministry of Defense regional offices in responding quickly and effectively to threats, both military and non-military. 4) Provide normative policy recommendations based on the existing legal framework to improve defense readiness at the regional level. Thus, this study is expected to provide a strategic contribution to the government in strengthening national defense through an integrated defense area approach that is more adaptive and responsive to future threats.

Literature Review

The literature review of this article is based on several literatures and theories relevant to the concept of integrated defense and the role of the regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions in facing various threats. The article refers to theories that support the importance of defense area integration, cross-sectoral coordination, and resource optimization as key elements in increasing the effectiveness of national defense.

General Systems Theory by Bertalanffy (2004)

General Systems Theory was proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy as a way to understand complexity in a system consisting of many interconnected elements. (Rosmayati & Maulana, 2020). In the context of national defense, this theory emphasizes that national defense cannot function effectively if each element in the system works separately. National defense is a system that involves various elements such as the central government, local government, military, and civil society, all of which must integrate and coordinate to create a strong and resilient defense system.

This integration and coordination are very important in facing complex threats, both from abroad and from within the country. With a general system approach, each element in national defense has an interrelated and interdependent role. For example, effective coordination between the central defense agency and the regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions will increase the country's ability to respond to threats quickly and appropriately. Bartalanfy emphasized that each part of the system must be viewed as part of a larger whole, and if one element fails, the function of the entire defense system can be disrupted.

Theory of State Defense from Law No. 3 of 2002

Law No. 3 of 2002 concerning National Defense is the main legal basis that regulates defense policy in Indonesia. This theory emphasizes the importance of the role of all components of the state, including the central government, regional governments, and the community, in maintaining sovereignty and territorial integrity. One of the key concepts in this law is the Total People's Defense and Security System (Sishankamrata), which emphasizes integration between military and non-military components.

This theory also emphasizes the importance of integration between the center and regions in implementing defense policies, especially through the establishment of regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions. With an integrated defense policy, the implementation of national defense can be more effective because it involves active participation from all levels of society and local governments. This is in line with the mandate of the law which demands cross-sector synergy to face threats, both from within the country such as social conflicts and from abroad such as foreign invasions.

Inter-Institutional Synergy Theory from Izzul et al. (2019)

This theory emphasizes the importance of synergy between institutions in the context of good governance to deal with non-military threats. Izzul et al. (2019) showed that in dealing with non-military threats such as natural disasters, terrorism, transnational crime, and cyber threats, synergy between various government agencies is very important. Good governance, effective coordination, and involvement of all parties are the keys to success in responding to these challenges.

This synergy is particularly evident in the relationship between the central government, regional governments, and related institutions such as the Indonesian National Army, Republic of Indonesia Police, National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), and the Ministry of Defense. Each institution has a specific role, but must work together to ensure that non-military threats can be addressed quickly and effectively. This theory supports the concept of integrated defense that requires close collaboration among various elements of government. This synergy will maximize the use of limited resources and increase the effectiveness of the country's defense policy in dealing with threats.

Cheung's Theory of Military Operational Readiness (2009)

This theory highlights the importance of military readiness at the regional level to ensure that threats to regional security can be responded to quickly and effectively. Cheung (2009) argues that military operational readiness does not only depend on sophisticated equipment or technology, but also on an efficient command and coordination structure in a particular geographic area. In the Indonesian context, this theory supports the need for the establishment of regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in various regions to ensure that each region has an optimal level of readiness in facing military and non-military threats.

Military operational readiness includes the ability to respond to diverse and dynamic threats, ranging from traditional threats such as armed conflict to modern threats such as cyber attacks. With strong military readiness at the regional level, the Indonesian government can ensure that each region has a well-structured and coordinated defense mechanism. This theory also shows that readiness does not only involve military aspects, but also integration between military and non-military components, including local governments and other agencies.

These four theories, when applied in an integrated manner, create a strong foundation for formulating and implementing an effective integrated defense policy. By understanding the importance of integrating defense elements, a solid legal basis, inter-institutional synergy, and regional military operational readiness, the Indonesian government can face various threats with a more holistic and adaptive strategy. (Rosmayati & Maulana, 2024).

Research Method

The research method used in this study is a combination of descriptive, qualitative and normative approaches, which are designed to support the research objectives in analyzing and formulating integrated defense area policies. (Maulana, 2022). The descriptive approach is used to describe the actual situation related to the implementation of defense policies in the regions, including the role of the regional offices of the Ministry of Defense. This approach is important for understanding the operational context in the field and identifying structural and operational constraints faced in implementing the policy. (Sugiyono, 2021). In addition, a qualitative approach was used to explore the views of various stakeholders involved in the implementation of defense policies in the region. (Maulana, 2023). Through in-depth interviews and document analysis, this approach allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of perceptions, experiences, and views related to the effectiveness of coordination between the central government, regional governments, and related institutions. This approach is relevant in explaining the complex social interactions and inter-institutional relationships in defense policy. (Creswell, 2013).

The normative approach is used to evaluate existing policies based on the legal framework, such as Law No. 3 of 2002 concerning National Defense. This normative analysis aims to assess the extent to which existing policies are able to support national defense integration, as well as provide policy recommendations that are in accordance with regulatory demands and future defense needs. By combining these three approaches, this study can provide a comprehensive picture of the challenges and opportunities in implementing integrated defense area policies in Indonesia, as well as formulate relevant and applicable policy solutions. (Widiatmoko & Pribadi, 2013)

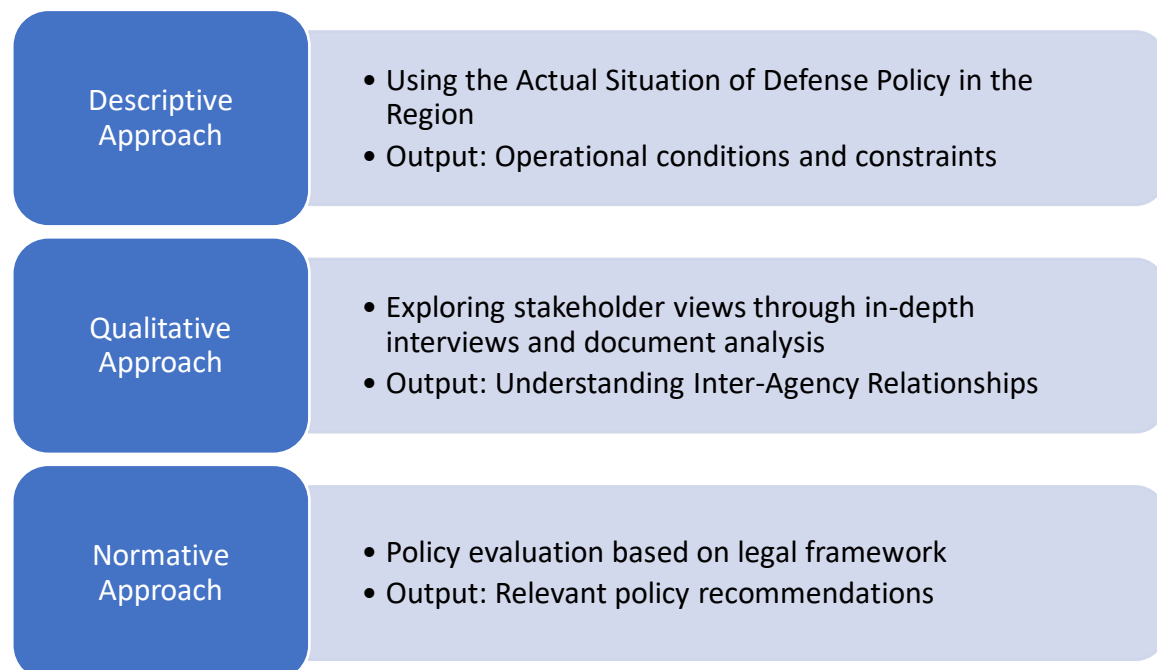


Figure 1. Research Method Discussion Flow

Through the use of this methodology, the research results are expected to support a comprehensive discussion on the importance of inter-agency coordination, military operational readiness at the regional level, and the strategic role of the Ministry of Defense regional offices in responding to evolving threats.

Results and Discussion

Integrated Defense Area Concept Formulation Policy

In facing increasingly complex security challenges, Indonesia as an archipelagic country with geographical and cultural diversity faces diverse threats, both from within and outside the country. (Maulana et al., 2021). The concept of an integrated defense area is crucial in maintaining national sovereignty and security. Zulkarnain & Runturambi (2022) underlined that the integration of defense areas can strengthen the national security system. However, the implementation of this concept through the establishment of the Ministry of Defense Regional Office in the regions still faces obstacles such as lack of coordination between institutions and limited infrastructure. (Widorekno et al., 2021).

The existence of this regional office plays an important role as a liaison between the central and regional governments, but its effectiveness is not yet optimal. Therefore, strategic steps are needed to strengthen the function of the regional office, improve cross-sector coordination, and provide sufficient resources (Swastanto, 2016).

The Importance of Defense Area Integration

Integration of defense areas is the key to creating synergy between institutions in facing various threats. This concept involves cooperation between the Indonesian National Armed Forces (Indonesian National Army), the Police, and other agencies in responding to threats quickly and efficiently. (Simamora, 2016). With the existence of regional defense offices in the regions, coordination between the central and regional governments can run more effectively, thus accelerating the response to military and non-military threats.

One example of the success of this concept is the improvement of response capabilities to natural disasters, where collaboration between institutions has succeeded in reducing greater impacts (Swastanto, 2016). Therefore, this integration allows for more optimal use of resources, both in terms of personal and budget. (Cheung, 2009).

Challenges in Policy Formulation

Despite its importance, the implementation of integrated defense areas still faces several major challenges:

- *Regulatory limitations*

Existing regulations do not fully support the establishment of regional defense offices at the regional level. Existing regulations focus more on the general duties of the Ministry of Defense. (Chen et al., 2020), which slows down the process of this policy.

- *Lack of Infrastructure and Personal*

Many areas do not have adequate infrastructure to support the operation of defense offices. In addition, the lack of trained personal is also an obstacle in implementing policies (Widorekno et al., 2021).

- *Complex Bureaucracy*

Slow bureaucratic processes, especially related to licensing and budgeting, are an obstacle to accelerating policy implementation.(Stanciu, 2003).

To address these challenges, the government needs to develop more supportive regulations, improve resource allocation, and simplify bureaucratic processes.

The Impact of the Absence of a Regional Defense Office

The absence of a regional defense office has a significant impact on various aspects of national defense, especially in terms of coordination and operational effectiveness. The lack of coordination between the central government, regions, and related agencies can hamper the response to threats.(Bartalanfi, 2004). In addition, the information gap between central and regional governments also slows down strategic decision-making which can reduce effectiveness in responding to threats.(Kalil, 2020).

Solution to Solve Problems

To improve the implementation of integrated defense areas, several solutions have been proposed:

Development of Supporting Regulations

More specific regulations are needed to support the establishment of regional defense offices. These regulations must clarify the duties and functions of regional offices and the coordination mechanism with local governments.(Swastanto, 2016).

Improvement of Infrastructure and Personal

It is important to allocate a sufficient budget to build infrastructure and increase the capacity of personal involved in regional office operations.(Widorekno et al., 2021).

Acceleration of Bureaucratic Processes

Simplification of licensing and budgeting processes is needed to accelerate policy implementation.(Stanciu, 2003).

Training and Capacity Development

Continuous training programs are needed to improve personal skills in carrying out regional office functions effectively (Swastanto, 2016).

Implementation and Evaluation

The success of the integrated defense area concept is highly dependent on structured implementation and continuous evaluation. The preparation of a comprehensive strategic plan must include short-term and long-term goals, with clear indicators of success (Swastanto, 2016). Cross-sector and inter-agency coordination is the main key in ensuring that all parties work synergistically to face various threats.

Regular monitoring and evaluation are important to assess the effectiveness of the steps taken and identify areas that need improvement. Thus, the concept of an integrated defense area is not only strong in theory, but its implementation in the field can effectively maintain the country's sovereignty and security (Zulkarnain & Runturambi, 2022).

Conclusion

In this study, the integrated defense area policy in Indonesia is examined as a response to increasingly complex and dynamic security challenges. The findings show that the implementation of integrated defense areas through the establishment of regional offices of the Ministry of Defense in the regions has not been optimal, hampered by various obstacles such as the lack of supporting regulations, inadequate infrastructure, and limited qualified personal. Weak cross-sector coordination and complicated bureaucratic processes also slow down policy implementation. On the other hand, the importance of defense area integration and better coordination between the central and regional governments is recognized as a key factor in improving the response to both military and non-military threats.

Based on these findings, practical recommendations that can be taken are to accelerate the ratification of more specific regulations for the establishment and operation of regional defense offices. The government also needs to allocate sufficient resources to build infrastructure and strengthen the capacity of personal who will carry out the functions of regional offices. Simplification of bureaucratic processes, especially in terms of licensing and budgeting, is needed to accelerate the implementation of this policy. In addition, training and capacity building programs must be carried out continuously to ensure that personal in regional offices are ready to face various defense challenges.

This study has limitations, especially in terms of the lack of in-depth empirical data related to the results of implementation in the field. Data collection is limited to literature studies and interviews, so further research is needed to explore the results of policy implementation in various regions. In addition, this study only focuses on the institutional perspective without considering broader social, political, and economic dimensions. Future research can further explore how political dynamics and socio-economic policies affect the implementation of integrated defense areas at the local level.

With further research and improved implementation of policies based on the recommendations provided, it is hoped that the concept of an integrated defense area can make a significant contribution to strengthening national defense and increasing the effectiveness of responses to threats throughout Indonesia.

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