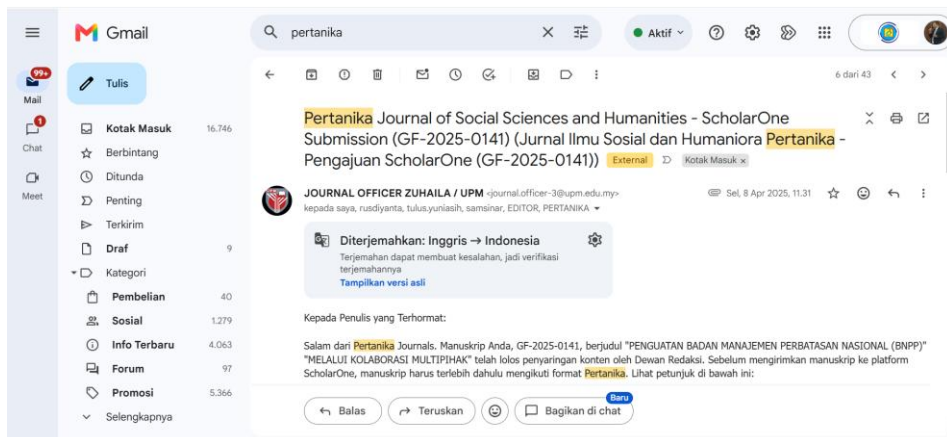
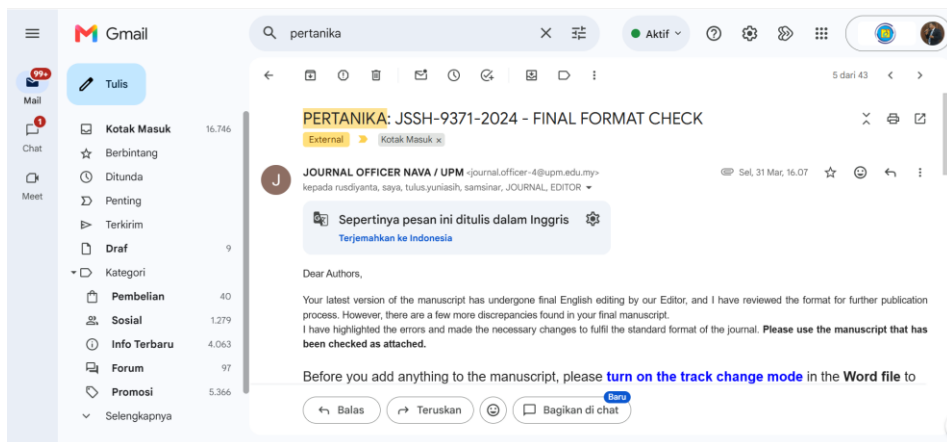


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Strengthening Border Agency via Multiparty Collaboration

Strengthening The National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

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Strengthening The National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

ABSTRACT

This study examines how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. Border governance in these regions is characterised by fragmented authority, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited involvement of non-state actors. Existing studies on border management largely emphasise security or decentralisation perspectives, leaving limited empirical explanation of how collaborative mechanisms operate institutionally, particularly in developing country contexts. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis conducted between August and November 2024. The findings reveal that BNPP's coordinating capacity is strengthened through four interrelated collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification, supported by information and communication technology (ICT). ICT functions as an institutional enabler that enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and facilitates cross-level governance. The study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency with limited formal authority can enhance institutional capacity through ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration. Policy implications emphasise strengthening BNPP's coordinating mandate, institutionalising non-state actor participation, and expanding ICT capacity at the local level.

Keywords: Border governance, collaborative governance, ICT, institutional capacity, multiparty collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Border governance constitutes one of the most complex policy domains in contemporary public administration, particularly in developing countries characterised by vast territories, institutional fragmentation, and uneven regional development. National borders no longer function solely as rigid territorial demarcations of state sovereignty; rather, they have evolved into dynamic governance spaces where security, development, economic exchange, and socio-cultural interaction intersect. In this context, border areas are expected to perform a dual role: as frontlines of national sovereignty and as front porches that reflect state presence, welfare provision, and development performance. However, empirical conditions in many border regions reveal persistent governance challenges that undermine this dual function.

In Indonesia, border areas remain disproportionately affected by structural underdevelopment, limited infrastructure, low access to public services, and high vulnerability to transnational threats such as illegal trade, smuggling, human trafficking, and environmental exploitation. These challenges are particularly evident in land border regions such as West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, which share extensive boundaries with Malaysia (Daldjoeni, 1991; Saiman, 2017). Despite their strategic geopolitical importance, these regions continue to face governance constraints rooted in fragmented authority, sectoral policy approaches, and weak coordination between central and regional governments. The persistence of these issues highlights the limitations of conventional border management paradigms that prioritise security enforcement while marginalising governance and development considerations.

The establishment of the National Border Management Agency (Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP) represents the Indonesian government's institutional response to these complex challenges. Mandated by Law No. 43 of 2008, BNPP is tasked with coordinating border management and development across ministries, agencies, and subnational governments. Unlike line ministries with direct operational authority, BNPP's role is primarily coordinative, requiring it to align diverse actors with varying mandates, resources, and institutional capacities. This unique positioning places BNPP at the centre of a highly fragmented governance network, where effectiveness depends less on hierarchical control and more on the ability to foster collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

However, the coordinative nature of BNPP also presents inherent limitations. BNPP operates within a governance environment characterised by overlapping legal frameworks,

decentralised administrative authority, and strong sectoral autonomy among ministries and regional governments. As a result, BNPP frequently encounters challenges related to weak inter-agent communication, inconsistent policy implementation, overlapping programs, and limited engagement of non-state actors such as private sector entities, civil society organisations, and local communities. These constraints raise critical questions regarding how BNPP can effectively strengthen its institutional capacity and fulfil its mandate in managing border areas.

Existing academic literature on border governance has largely approached the issue from three dominant perspectives. First, security-oriented studies emphasise border control, territorial defence, and sovereignty protection, often framing border areas as spaces of threat and vulnerability. Second, decentralisation and regional autonomy perspectives focus on the distribution of authority between central and local governments, highlighting both opportunities and coordination challenges arising from multi-level governance. Third, international relations and cross-border cooperation studies examine borders as sites of inter-state interaction and diplomacy. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they tend to underexplore the institutional mechanisms through which collaborative governance strengthens the capacity of a national border authority, particularly in developing country contexts.

In parallel, the growing body of literature on collaborative governance and multiparty collaboration emphasises the role of cross-sector and cross-level partnerships in addressing complex public problems that cannot be resolved by single actors. Collaborative governance frameworks highlight the importance of coordination, trust-building, shared problem definition, and joint action among heterogeneous stakeholders. Yet, empirical applications of these frameworks to border governance remain limited, especially about understanding how collaboration operates as an institutional capacity-building mechanism for a coordinative agency such as BNPP.

Moreover, recent advances in digital governance have drawn attention to the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in facilitating collaboration within fragmented governance systems. ICT enables real-time communication, data sharing, monitoring, and coordination across organisational and geographical boundaries. In border governance contexts—characterised by remote locations, limited infrastructure, and dispersed institutional actors—ICT has the potential to function as a critical enabler of collaborative capacity. Nevertheless, empirical

research examining ICT as an integral component of multiparty border governance remains scarce, leaving a significant gap in both theory and practice.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of BNPP in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan. Rather than treating collaboration as a normative ideal, this research analyses collaboration as a set of concrete governance mechanisms that enable BNPP to perform its coordinating role effectively despite limited formal authority. Specifically, this study conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. These mechanisms provide an analytical lens for understanding how diverse actors are aligned, how programs and policies are harmonised, how actions are synchronised across institutions, and how procedural complexity is reduced within border governance arrangements.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions: (1) How does multiparty collaboration operate in strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity in managing border areas? (2) What roles do state, private, and community actors play within this collaborative governance arrangement? (3) How does ICT facilitate coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification among stakeholders involved in border management? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the literature on collaborative governance and institutional capacity while offering policy-relevant insights for strengthening border governance in Indonesia.

Positioned within the field of public governance, this research advances the understanding of border management beyond security-centric and administrative perspectives. It highlights the importance of collaborative governance mechanisms and digital enablers in managing complex policy environments. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers on how BNPP and similar coordinative institutions can enhance their capacity through structured multiparty collaboration, thereby supporting more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable border area development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Governance and Multiparty Collaboration

Collaborative governance has emerged as a prominent framework in public administration to address complex public problems characterised by uncertainty, interdependence, and institutional fragmentation. Ansell and Torfing (2014) define collaborative governance as governance arrangements in which public agencies engage constructively with non-state actors in collective decision-making processes that are formal, deliberative, and consensus-oriented. This approach departs from traditional hierarchical governance by emphasising interaction, shared responsibility, and joint problem-solving among heterogeneous actors (Torfing, 2019).

Multiparty collaboration represents a broader conceptualisation of collaborative governance by highlighting the involvement of multiple actors across sectors and levels of governance. Gray and Purdy (2018) argue that multiparty collaboration is particularly relevant for addressing “wicked problems” that cannot be resolved by single organisations due to their complexity and cross-sectoral nature. Rather than focusing solely on participation, contemporary collaboration literature emphasises governance mechanisms that enable coordination, trust-building, alignment of interests, and effective collective action (Lawrence et al., 2023; Ahmed & Lee (2024).

In the public sector context, multiparty collaboration typically involves government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and local communities (Banerjee et al. 2020). Each actor brings distinct resources, authority, interests, and capacities, which can both enrich collaboration and generate conflict. As such, the effectiveness of collaboration depends not only on actor inclusion but also on the institutional arrangements that manage interdependence and mitigate power asymmetries (Bryson & Crosby, 2006; Gray et al., 2022).

Despite its growing prominence, collaborative governance is not without challenges. Scholars note that collaboration can be hindered by sectoral ego, weak leadership, unclear accountability, and institutional rigidity (O’Leary & Bingham, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in contexts where leading organisations lack formal authority over participating actors, as is often the case in coordinative agencies. (O’Leary et al. 2010). This highlights the importance of understanding collaboration as an institutional capacity-building process rather than merely a participatory arrangement.

Institutional Capacity in Public Sector Organisations

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public organisations to perform their mandated functions effectively by mobilising resources, coordinating actors, and adapting to dynamic governance environments. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) conceptualise capacity as a multidimensional construct encompassing institutional arrangements, human resources, organisational processes, networks, and the broader policy environment. Similarly, Wu et al. (2015) emphasise that policy capacity extends beyond technical expertise to include analytical, operational, and political capabilities.

In collaborative governance settings, institutional capacity is increasingly shaped by relational and network-based capabilities. Lead organisations must function as boundary spanners that connect actors across institutional, sectoral, and territorial boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). This role requires skills in coordination, negotiation, facilitation, and information management rather than command-and-control authority. Consequently, institutional capacity in such contexts depends on the ability to orchestrate collaboration rather than to impose decisions.

For coordinative agencies like BNPP, capacity constraints are often structural. Limited formal authority, dependence on other institutions' resources, and overlapping mandates can undermine effectiveness. However, scholars argue that these constraints can be mitigated through governance mechanisms that enhance coordination, integration, and alignment among actors (Kekez et al., 2018). Understanding how such mechanisms operate empirically is therefore critical for advancing institutional capacity theory in fragmented governance systems.

Border Governance as a Multidimensional Policy Arena

Border governance literature has evolved significantly from traditional geopolitical perspectives that conceptualise borders as fixed lines of sovereignty. Contemporary border studies emphasise borders as dynamic governance spaces characterised by flows of people, goods, capital, and information (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Newman, 2016; Guo, 2012). In this view, border areas are not merely peripheral zones but central arenas where national, regional, and local governance intersect (Keban, 2014).

Brunet-Jailly (2005, 2011) proposes a multidimensional framework for border governance that integrates market forces, cross-governmental policies, political participation of border communities, and local cultural contexts. This framework underscores the need for governance

arrangements that balance security concerns with socio-economic development and community well-being. In practice, however, many developing countries continue to prioritise security-oriented approaches that marginalise development and participatory dimensions.

In Indonesia, border governance is further complicated by decentralisation and regional autonomy. While decentralisation aims to empower local governments and improve service delivery, it has also generated coordination challenges due to fragmented authority and varying institutional capacities across regions. Studies indicate that decentralisation alone has not resolved disparities in border development and, in some cases, has exacerbated policy incoherence (Hadiwijoyo, 2009).

These dynamics highlight the necessity of collaborative governance mechanisms that can integrate central authority with regional autonomy and local participation. Border management agencies operating in such contexts must navigate complex institutional landscapes, making multiparty collaboration a functional necessity rather than a normative choice.

ICT as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance

The growing literature on digital governance emphasises the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration. ICT enables governments to enhance transparency, efficiency, and coordination by facilitating real-time communication, data integration, and monitoring across organisational boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). In collaborative governance contexts, ICT can reduce transaction costs, improve information symmetry, and support collective decision-making.

In geographically remote and institutionally fragmented settings such as border areas, ICT assumes heightened importance. Digital platforms—including integrated reporting systems, surveillance technologies, and inter-agency communication networks—enable coordination across distances and administrative levels. ICT thus functions not merely as a technical tool but as an institutional enabler that reshapes governance processes and interaction patterns.

However, scholars caution that ICT alone cannot resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks (Wu et al., 2015). In the absence of these conditions, digital initiatives risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. Empirical studies that examine ICT within

specific governance contexts are therefore essential for understanding its enabling and constraining effects.

Despite its relevance, empirical research on ICT-enabled collaboration in border governance remains limited. Most studies focus on e-government or digital service delivery rather than on how ICT supports institutional coordination and collaborative capacity. This gap is particularly evident in developing country contexts, where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary significantly across regions.

Analytical Framework: Collaboration Mechanisms

Building on collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and digital governance literature, this study employs an analytical framework based on four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination refers to aligning actors and activities through communication and information exchange. Integration involves harmonising policies, programs, and institutional roles. Synchronisation ensures that actions and timelines are mutually reinforcing across actors, while simplification aims to reduce procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers.

These mechanisms operationalise multiparty collaboration as a capacity-building process rather than a static arrangement. They provide a structured lens for analysing how BNPP navigates institutional fragmentation and leverages ICT to strengthen its coordinating role. By applying this framework to empirical data from West and North Kalimantan, the study seeks to advance theoretical understanding of collaborative governance while offering practical insights for border management institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory research design to examine how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study's objective to explore governance processes, interaction mechanisms, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Qualitative research allows

for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural contexts and is particularly suitable for analysing collaborative governance arrangements involving multiple actors, interests, and institutional settings (W. Creswell & D. Creswell, 2018).

The explanatory orientation of this study emphasises not only describing collaborative practices but also explaining how and why specific collaboration mechanisms contribute to institutional capacity strengthening. This design aligns with the study's analytical framework, which conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Research Sites

The research was conducted in West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. These provinces were purposively selected due to their strategic geopolitical position as land border regions adjacent to Malaysia and their relevance to national border governance policy. Both provinces host Integrated Border Crossing Posts (Pos Lintas Batas Negara/PLBN) and are actively involved in BNPP-coordinated border management and development programs. The selected sites represent typical characteristics of Indonesian land border areas, including geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, and multi-level governance arrangements involving central, provincial, and district authorities.

Informants and Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consist of organisations and actors involved in multiparty collaboration in border governance. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, responsibilities, and direct involvement in border management and development activities. This sampling strategy ensured that data were obtained from actors with relevant knowledge and experience of collaborative governance processes.

Key informants included: (1) officials from the National Border Management Agency (BNPP); (2) officials from Provincial and District Border Management Agencies (BPPD); (3) heads and staff of Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN); (4) representatives of sectoral agencies operating at border posts, such as customs, immigration, health quarantine, and agricultural quarantine; (5) local government officials and community leaders in border sub-districts; (6) academics and university representatives involved in research and community service

programs in border areas; and (7) representatives of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other local economic actors. This diversity of informants enabled a comprehensive examination of multiparty collaboration across sectors and governance levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected between August and November 2024 using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to enhance depth and credibility. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview guides were designed to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices related to multiparty collaboration, coordination challenges, and the role of ICT in border governance. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Second, direct field observations were undertaken at selected border locations, particularly at PLBN facilities and surrounding border communities. Observations focused on interaction patterns among institutions, coordination practices, use of ICT tools, and day-to-day governance activities related to border management. Field notes were systematically recorded to capture contextual insights that complemented interview data.

Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with local stakeholders, including community representatives, local officials, and economic actors. FGDs were used to validate preliminary findings, capture collective perspectives, and identify shared challenges and expectations related to border governance. Finally, secondary data were collected through document analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature to contextualise and triangulate primary data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process. All interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and field notes were then subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring concepts and themes. Open coding was initially applied to capture key ideas emerging from the data, followed by axial coding to group related codes into broader analytical categories.

The analytical categories were aligned with the study's four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Pattern matching and thematic analysis were employed to link empirical findings with the analytical framework and research questions. Manual data processing was applied throughout the analysis to allow close engagement with the data and iterative refinement of interpretations.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several validation strategies. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. Informant triangulation was achieved by engaging actors from different institutional backgrounds and governance levels. Member checking was conducted through follow-up communications with selected informants to confirm interpretations and clarify ambiguities. In addition, expert triangulation involving academics with expertise in governance and border studies was used to enhance analytical rigour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Informants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multiparty Collaboration in Border Governance: Empirical Overview

The empirical findings demonstrate that border governance in West and North Kalimantan involves a complex constellation of actors operating across multiple governance levels and sectors. These actors include central government institutions coordinated by BNPP, provincial and district border management agencies (BPPD), sectoral agencies operating at Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN), local governments, community actors, academics, and limited private sector participants. While formal institutional arrangements for collaboration exist, their effectiveness varies significantly depending on coordination capacity, institutional alignment, and enabling resources.

BNPP occupies a central position within this governance network as a coordinating institution mandated to align border management and development policies. However, its limited

formal authority constrains its ability to directly command other institutions. As a result, BNPP's institutional capacity relies heavily on collaborative governance mechanisms that facilitate alignment, cooperation, and collective action among diverse stakeholders. The findings reveal that this capacity is operationalised through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Coordination as a Foundational Mechanism

Coordination emerges as the most fundamental mechanism underpinning multiparty collaboration in border governance. BNPP facilitates coordination through both formal and informal channels, including inter-agency meetings, reporting systems, and hierarchical communication pathways linking central, provincial, and district institutions. These arrangements aim to reduce fragmentation and ensure that border-related information flows effectively across governance levels.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) significantly enhances coordination capacity. Digital reporting systems, WhatsApp coordination groups, and real-time monitoring tools such as CCTV and digital dashboards enable rapid information exchange regarding border crossings, security incidents, logistical challenges, and development needs. These tools are particularly valuable given the geographical remoteness and infrastructural limitations of border areas.

Nevertheless, coordination remains uneven. Differences in ICT infrastructure quality, digital literacy, and organisational capacity across regions constrain consistent implementation. Local-level actors often face limitations related to internet connectivity and human resource skills, which reduce the effectiveness of digital coordination mechanisms. Despite these challenges, ICT-supported coordination represents a critical advancement compared to previous reliance on fragmented and delayed communication channels.

Integration of Programs and Institutional Roles

Integration refers to the alignment and harmonisation of policies, programs, and institutional roles among stakeholders involved in border governance. The findings indicate that integration is more advanced among government actors than between government and non-state actors. Vertical

integration between BNPP and regional BPPD is facilitated through shared planning frameworks, policy documents, and coordinated development programs.

However, integration across sectors and with non-state actors remains limited. Private sector involvement is largely confined to investment activities without systematic incorporation into governance processes. Similarly, community and civil society actors primarily engage in monitoring, local conflict resolution, and informal consultations rather than structured policy participation. This limited integration reflects the absence of institutionalised mechanisms for non-state actor engagement within BNPP's governance framework.

The findings suggest that integration is constrained not only by institutional design but also by differing priorities and incentive structures among actors. While government institutions prioritise administrative compliance and policy coherence, private and community actors emphasise economic opportunity and social welfare. Without formal integration mechanisms, these divergent priorities limit the potential benefits of multiparty collaboration (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019).

Synchronisation of Actions and Policy Cycles

Synchronisation involves aligning the timing, sequencing, and implementation of programs and activities across institutions to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement. The study finds that synchronisation is partially achieved through centralised planning cycles and ICT-enabled reporting systems that allow BNPP to monitor ongoing activities across regions.

Despite these efforts, synchronisation challenges persist due to differences in institutional mandates, budget cycles, and operational priorities. Sectoral agencies often operate according to their own timelines and performance indicators, which may not align with BNPP-coordinated plans. These discrepancies can result in delayed implementation, overlapping initiatives, or gaps in service delivery.

ICT tools help mitigate synchronisation challenges by increasing transparency and enabling faster feedback loops. Real-time reporting allows BNPP to identify misalignments and initiate corrective coordination. However, ICT alone cannot fully overcome structural constraints arising from fragmented authority and regulatory rigidity. Effective synchronisation, therefore, requires both technological support and institutional commitment to shared planning and accountability.

Simplification of Collaborative Procedures

Simplification focuses on reducing procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers that hinder effective collaboration. The findings indicate that BNPP has initiated efforts to simplify coordination and reporting processes through digitalisation. Standardised reporting formats, streamlined communication channels, and centralised information systems have reduced administrative burdens and improved efficiency.

Nonetheless, simplification remains constrained by overlapping legal mandates and rigid regulatory frameworks governing border management. Multiple laws, regulations, and ministerial decrees create procedural complexity that limits BNPP's ability to streamline collaborative processes fully. As a result, simplification efforts often operate within narrow administrative boundaries rather than addressing systemic fragmentation.

The findings underscore that simplification is not merely a technical exercise but an institutional challenge that requires regulatory harmonisation and political support. Without such reforms, procedural complexity will continue to undermine collaborative capacity despite technological advancements.

ICT as an Institutional Enabler of Collaborative Capacity

Across all four mechanisms, ICT functions as a critical institutional enabler rather than a standalone solution. ICT enhances BNPP's boundary-spanning capacity by facilitating communication, information sharing, and monitoring across organisational and geographical boundaries. By reducing transaction costs and improving information symmetry, ICT strengthens BNPP's ability to coordinate actors despite limited formal authority.

However, the enabling role of ICT is contingent on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive governance arrangements. Where these conditions are absent, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. The findings therefore support arguments in digital governance literature that technology must be embedded within broader institutional reforms to achieve transformative impact.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency can strengthen institutional capacity through structured collaboration mechanisms supported by ICT. The findings extend institutional capacity theory by highlighting relational and network-based capacities as critical dimensions in fragmented governance systems.

Practically, the results suggest that strengthening BNPP's role requires a strategic focus on institutionalising collaboration mechanisms rather than expanding hierarchical authority. Policies should prioritise enhancing coordination infrastructure, formalising non-state actor participation, harmonising regulatory frameworks, and investing in ICT capacity at the local level. These measures can collectively improve the effectiveness and sustainability of border governance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas depends less on the expansion of formal hierarchical authority and more on the effectiveness of multiparty collaborative governance mechanisms. In the context of border management in West and North Kalimantan, BNPP operates within a highly fragmented governance environment characterised by overlapping mandates, sectoral autonomy, and multi-level institutional arrangements. Under such conditions, BNPP's capacity is shaped primarily by its ability to coordinate, align, and mobilise diverse actors rather than to directly command them.

The findings reveal that multiparty collaboration strengthens BNPP's institutional capacity through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination enables information exchange and alignment among actors; integration harmonises policies, programs, and institutional roles; synchronisation ensures coherence in timing and implementation; and simplification reduces procedural complexity that often undermines collaboration. Together, these mechanisms function as a governance architecture that allows BNPP to perform its boundary-spanning role effectively despite limited formal authority.

A central contribution of this study is the identification of information and communication technology (ICT) as a critical institutional enabler of collaborative capacity. ICT enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and supports both vertical and horizontal coordination across geographically dispersed border areas. However, the study also confirms that ICT alone is insufficient to resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks. Without these conditions, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and coordination failures.

Policy Implications

The findings yield several policy implications for strengthening border governance in Indonesia. First, border governance policies should explicitly recognise BNPP as a collaborative coordinator rather than merely an administrative institution. Strengthening BNPP's mandate to convene, integrate, and synchronise sectoral and regional programs is more critical than expanding its hierarchical authority.

Second, the institutionalisation of non-state actor participation should be prioritised. Formal mechanisms for engaging private sector actors, civil society organisations, and border communities—such as structured consultation forums and partnership frameworks—can enhance inclusivity, legitimacy, and sustainability in border development initiatives.

Third, continued investment in ICT infrastructure and digital governance systems is essential, particularly at the local level. Such investments should be accompanied by capacity-building programs to ensure effective utilisation and to reduce disparities in digital readiness across regions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The empirical analysis focuses on two land border provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other border contexts in Indonesia, such as maritime border regions. In addition, the qualitative research design prioritises depth of analysis over breadth and does not quantitatively measure collaboration outcomes or development impacts.

Directions for Future Research

Future research could adopt comparative or mixed method approaches to examine collaborative border governance across different regions or countries. Quantitative assessments of collaborative

performance and long-term socio-economic and security outcomes would complement the qualitative insights offered in this study. Further research may also explore the role of leadership, political dynamics, and regulatory reform in sustaining ICT-enabled collaborative governance in border areas.

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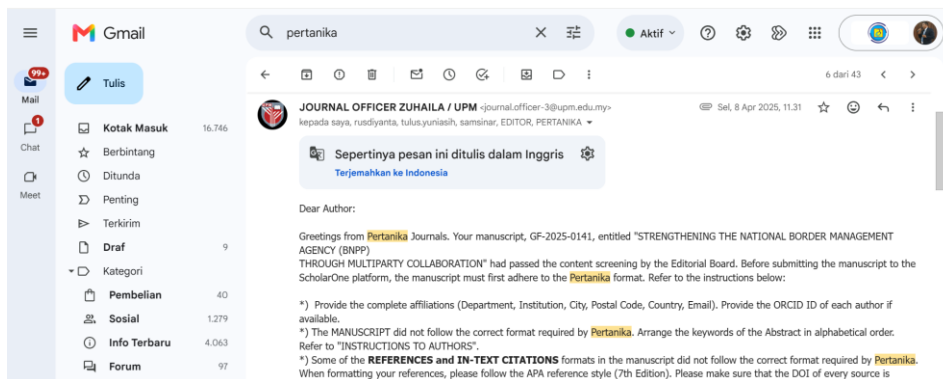
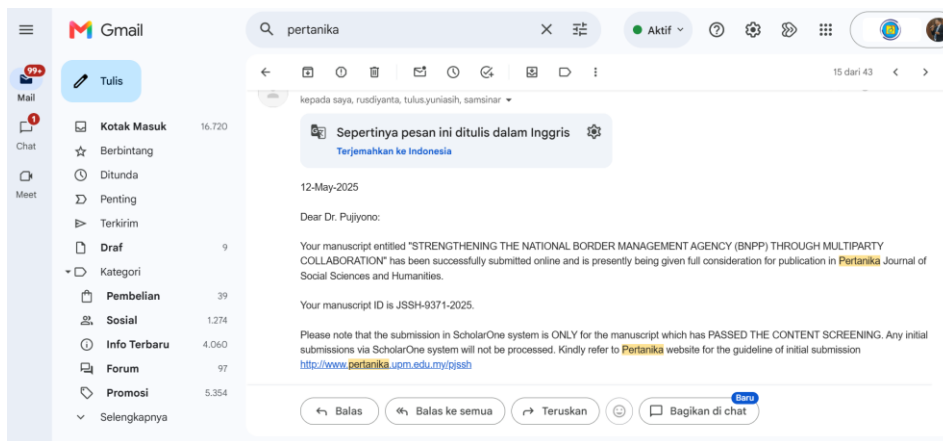
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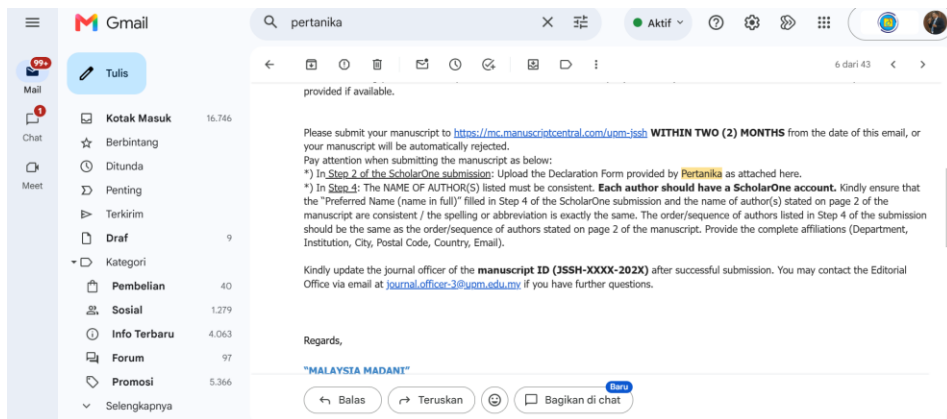
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Strengthening Border Agency via Multiparty Collaboration

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Strengthening The National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

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Strengthening The National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

ABSTRACT

This study examines how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. Border governance in these regions is characterised by fragmented authority, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited involvement of non-state actors. Existing studies on border management largely emphasise security or decentralisation perspectives, leaving limited empirical explanation of how collaborative mechanisms operate institutionally, particularly in developing country contexts. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis conducted between August and November 2024. The findings reveal that BNPP's coordinating capacity is strengthened through four interrelated collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification, supported by information and communication technology (ICT). ICT functions as an institutional enabler that enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and facilitates cross-level governance. The study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency with limited formal authority can enhance institutional capacity through ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration. Policy implications emphasise strengthening BNPP's coordinating mandate, institutionalising non-state actor participation, and expanding ICT capacity at the local level.

Keywords: Border governance, collaborative governance, ICT, institutional capacity, multiparty collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Border governance constitutes one of the most complex policy domains in contemporary public administration, particularly in developing countries characterised by vast territories, institutional fragmentation, and uneven regional development. National borders no longer function solely as rigid territorial demarcations of state sovereignty; rather, they have evolved into dynamic governance spaces where security, development, economic exchange, and socio-cultural interaction intersect. In this context, border areas are expected to perform a dual role: as frontlines of national sovereignty and as front porches that reflect state presence, welfare provision, and development performance. However, empirical conditions in many border regions reveal persistent governance challenges that undermine this dual function.

In Indonesia, border areas remain disproportionately affected by structural underdevelopment, limited infrastructure, low access to public services, and high vulnerability to transnational threats such as illegal trade, smuggling, human trafficking, and environmental exploitation. These challenges are particularly evident in land border regions such as West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, which share extensive boundaries with Malaysia (Daldjoeni,1991; Saiman,2017). Despite their strategic geopolitical importance, these regions continue to face governance constraints rooted in fragmented authority, sectoral policy approaches, and weak coordination between central and regional governments. The persistence of these issues highlights the limitations of conventional border management paradigms that prioritise security enforcement while marginalising governance and development considerations.

The establishment of the National Border Management Agency (Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP) represents the Indonesian government's institutional response to these complex challenges. Mandated by Law No. 43 of 2008, BNPP is tasked with coordinating border management and development across ministries, agencies, and subnational governments. Unlike line ministries with direct operational authority, BNPP's role is primarily coordinative, requiring it to align diverse actors with varying mandates, resources, and institutional capacities. This unique positioning places BNPP at the centre of a highly fragmented governance network, where effectiveness depends less on hierarchical control and more on the ability to foster collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

However, the coordinative nature of BNPP also presents inherent limitations. BNPP operates within a governance environment characterised by overlapping legal frameworks,

decentralised administrative authority, and strong sectoral autonomy among ministries and regional governments. As a result, BNPP frequently encounters challenges related to weak inter-agent communication, inconsistent policy implementation, overlapping programs, and limited engagement of non-state actors such as private sector entities, civil society organisations, and local communities. These constraints raise critical questions regarding how BNPP can effectively strengthen its institutional capacity and fulfil its mandate in managing border areas.

Existing academic literature on border governance has largely approached the issue from three dominant perspectives. First, security-oriented studies emphasise border control, territorial defence, and sovereignty protection, often framing border areas as spaces of threat and vulnerability. Second, decentralisation and regional autonomy perspectives focus on the distribution of authority between central and local governments, highlighting both opportunities and coordination challenges arising from multi-level governance. Third, international relations and cross-border cooperation studies examine borders as sites of inter-state interaction and diplomacy. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they tend to underexplore the institutional mechanisms through which collaborative governance strengthens the capacity of a national border authority, particularly in developing country contexts.

In parallel, the growing body of literature on collaborative governance and multiparty collaboration emphasises the role of cross-sector and cross-level partnerships in addressing complex public problems that cannot be resolved by single actors. Collaborative governance frameworks highlight the importance of coordination, trust-building, shared problem definition, and joint action among heterogeneous stakeholders. Yet, empirical applications of these frameworks to border governance remain limited, especially about understanding how collaboration operates as an institutional capacity-building mechanism for a coordinative agency such as BNPP.

Moreover, recent advances in digital governance have drawn attention to the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in facilitating collaboration within fragmented governance systems. ICT enables real-time communication, data sharing, monitoring, and coordination across organisational and geographical boundaries. In border governance contexts—characterised by remote locations, limited infrastructure, and dispersed institutional actors—ICT has the potential to function as a critical enabler of collaborative capacity. Nevertheless, empirical

research examining ICT as an integral component of multiparty border governance remains scarce, leaving a significant gap in both theory and practice.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of BNPP in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan. Rather than treating collaboration as a normative ideal, this research analyses collaboration as a set of concrete governance mechanisms that enable BNPP to perform its coordinating role effectively despite limited formal authority. Specifically, this study conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. These mechanisms provide an analytical lens for understanding how diverse actors are aligned, how programs and policies are harmonised, how actions are synchronised across institutions, and how procedural complexity is reduced within border governance arrangements.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions: (1) How does multiparty collaboration operate in strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity in managing border areas? (2) What roles do state, private, and community actors play within this collaborative governance arrangement? (3) How does ICT facilitate coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification among stakeholders involved in border management? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the literature on collaborative governance and institutional capacity while offering policy-relevant insights for strengthening border governance in Indonesia.

Positioned within the field of public governance, this research advances the understanding of border management beyond security-centric and administrative perspectives. It highlights the importance of collaborative governance mechanisms and digital enablers in managing complex policy environments. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers on how BNPP and similar coordinative institutions can enhance their capacity through structured multiparty collaboration, thereby supporting more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable border area development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Governance and Multiparty Collaboration

Collaborative governance has emerged as a prominent framework in public administration to address complex public problems characterised by uncertainty, interdependence, and institutional fragmentation. Ansell and Torfing (2014) define collaborative governance as governance arrangements in which public agencies engage constructively with non-state actors in collective decision-making processes that are formal, deliberative, and consensus-oriented. This approach departs from traditional hierarchical governance by emphasising interaction, shared responsibility, and joint problem-solving among heterogeneous actors (Torfing, 2019).

Multiparty collaboration represents a broader conceptualisation of collaborative governance by highlighting the involvement of multiple actors across sectors and levels of governance. Gray and Purdy (2018) argue that multiparty collaboration is particularly relevant for addressing “wicked problems” that cannot be resolved by single organisations due to their complexity and cross-sectoral nature. Rather than focusing solely on participation, contemporary collaboration literature emphasises governance mechanisms that enable coordination, trust-building, alignment of interests, and effective collective action (Lawrence et al., 2023; Ahmed & Lee (2024).

In the public sector context, multiparty collaboration typically involves government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and local communities (Banerjee et al. 2020). Each actor brings distinct resources, authority, interests, and capacities, which can both enrich collaboration and generate conflict. As such, the effectiveness of collaboration depends not only on actor inclusion but also on the institutional arrangements that manage interdependence and mitigate power asymmetries (Bryson & Crosby, 2006; Gray et al., 2022).

Despite its growing prominence, collaborative governance is not without challenges. Scholars note that collaboration can be hindered by sectoral ego, weak leadership, unclear accountability, and institutional rigidity (O’Leary & Bingham, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in contexts where leading organisations lack formal authority over participating actors, as is often the case in coordinative agencies. (O’Leary et al. 2010). This highlights the importance of understanding collaboration as an institutional capacity-building process rather than merely a participatory arrangement.

Institutional Capacity in Public Sector Organisations

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public organisations to perform their mandated functions effectively by mobilising resources, coordinating actors, and adapting to dynamic governance environments. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) conceptualise capacity as a multidimensional construct encompassing institutional arrangements, human resources, organisational processes, networks, and the broader policy environment. Similarly, Wu et al. (2015) emphasise that policy capacity extends beyond technical expertise to include analytical, operational, and political capabilities.

In collaborative governance settings, institutional capacity is increasingly shaped by relational and network-based capabilities. Lead organisations must function as boundary spanners that connect actors across institutional, sectoral, and territorial boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). This role requires skills in coordination, negotiation, facilitation, and information management rather than command-and-control authority. Consequently, institutional capacity in such contexts depends on the ability to orchestrate collaboration rather than to impose decisions.

For coordinative agencies like BNPP, capacity constraints are often structural. Limited formal authority, dependence on other institutions' resources, and overlapping mandates can undermine effectiveness. However, scholars argue that these constraints can be mitigated through governance mechanisms that enhance coordination, integration, and alignment among actors (Kekez et al., 2018). Understanding how such mechanisms operate empirically is therefore critical for advancing institutional capacity theory in fragmented governance systems.

Border Governance as a Multidimensional Policy Arena

Border governance literature has evolved significantly from traditional geopolitical perspectives that conceptualise borders as fixed lines of sovereignty. Contemporary border studies emphasise borders as dynamic governance spaces characterised by flows of people, goods, capital, and information (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Newman, 2016; Guo, 2012). In this view, border areas are not merely peripheral zones but central arenas where national, regional, and local governance intersect (Keban, 2014).

Brunet-Jailly (2005, 2011) proposes a multidimensional framework for border governance that integrates market forces, cross-governmental policies, political participation of border communities, and local cultural contexts. This framework underscores the need for governance

arrangements that balance security concerns with socio-economic development and community well-being. In practice, however, many developing countries continue to prioritise security-oriented approaches that marginalise development and participatory dimensions.

In Indonesia, border governance is further complicated by decentralisation and regional autonomy. While decentralisation aims to empower local governments and improve service delivery, it has also generated coordination challenges due to fragmented authority and varying institutional capacities across regions. Studies indicate that decentralisation alone has not resolved disparities in border development and, in some cases, has exacerbated policy incoherence (Hadiwijoyo, 2009).

These dynamics highlight the necessity of collaborative governance mechanisms that can integrate central authority with regional autonomy and local participation. Border management agencies operating in such contexts must navigate complex institutional landscapes, making multiparty collaboration a functional necessity rather than a normative choice.

ICT as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance

The growing literature on digital governance emphasises the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration. ICT enables governments to enhance transparency, efficiency, and coordination by facilitating real-time communication, data integration, and monitoring across organisational boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). In collaborative governance contexts, ICT can reduce transaction costs, improve information symmetry, and support collective decision-making.

In geographically remote and institutionally fragmented settings such as border areas, ICT assumes heightened importance. Digital platforms—including integrated reporting systems, surveillance technologies, and inter-agency communication networks—enable coordination across distances and administrative levels. ICT thus functions not merely as a technical tool but as an institutional enabler that reshapes governance processes and interaction patterns.

However, scholars caution that ICT alone cannot resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks (Wu et al., 2015). In the absence of these conditions, digital initiatives risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. Empirical studies that examine ICT within

specific governance contexts are therefore essential for understanding its enabling and constraining effects.

Despite its relevance, empirical research on ICT-enabled collaboration in border governance remains limited. Most studies focus on e-government or digital service delivery rather than on how ICT supports institutional coordination and collaborative capacity. This gap is particularly evident in developing country contexts, where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary significantly across regions.

Analytical Framework: Collaboration Mechanisms

Building on collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and digital governance literature, this study employs an analytical framework based on four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination refers to aligning actors and activities through communication and information exchange. Integration involves harmonising policies, programs, and institutional roles. Synchronisation ensures that actions and timelines are mutually reinforcing across actors, while simplification aims to reduce procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers.

These mechanisms operationalise multiparty collaboration as a capacity-building process rather than a static arrangement. They provide a structured lens for analysing how BNPP navigates institutional fragmentation and leverages ICT to strengthen its coordinating role. By applying this framework to empirical data from West and North Kalimantan, the study seeks to advance theoretical understanding of collaborative governance while offering practical insights for border management institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory research design to examine how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study's objective to explore governance processes, interaction mechanisms, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Qualitative research allows

for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural contexts and is particularly suitable for analysing collaborative governance arrangements involving multiple actors, interests, and institutional settings (W. Creswell & D. Creswell, 2018).

The explanatory orientation of this study emphasises not only describing collaborative practices but also explaining how and why specific collaboration mechanisms contribute to institutional capacity strengthening. This design aligns with the study's analytical framework, which conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Research Sites

The research was conducted in West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. These provinces were purposively selected due to their strategic geopolitical position as land border regions adjacent to Malaysia and their relevance to national border governance policy. Both provinces host Integrated Border Crossing Posts (Pos Lintas Batas Negara/PLBN) and are actively involved in BNPP-coordinated border management and development programs. The selected sites represent typical characteristics of Indonesian land border areas, including geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, and multi-level governance arrangements involving central, provincial, and district authorities.

Informants and Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consist of organisations and actors involved in multiparty collaboration in border governance. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, responsibilities, and direct involvement in border management and development activities. This sampling strategy ensured that data were obtained from actors with relevant knowledge and experience of collaborative governance processes.

Key informants included: (1) officials from the National Border Management Agency (BNPP); (2) officials from Provincial and District Border Management Agencies (BPPD); (3) heads and staff of Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN); (4) representatives of sectoral agencies operating at border posts, such as customs, immigration, health quarantine, and agricultural quarantine; (5) local government officials and community leaders in border sub-districts; (6) academics and university representatives involved in research and community service

programs in border areas; and (7) representatives of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other local economic actors. This diversity of informants enabled a comprehensive examination of multiparty collaboration across sectors and governance levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected between August and November 2024 using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to enhance depth and credibility. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview guides were designed to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices related to multiparty collaboration, coordination challenges, and the role of ICT in border governance. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Second, direct field observations were undertaken at selected border locations, particularly at PLBN facilities and surrounding border communities. Observations focused on interaction patterns among institutions, coordination practices, use of ICT tools, and day-to-day governance activities related to border management. Field notes were systematically recorded to capture contextual insights that complemented interview data.

Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with local stakeholders, including community representatives, local officials, and economic actors. FGDs were used to validate preliminary findings, capture collective perspectives, and identify shared challenges and expectations related to border governance. Finally, secondary data were collected through document analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature to contextualise and triangulate primary data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process. All interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and field notes were then subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring concepts and themes. Open coding was initially applied to capture key ideas emerging from the data, followed by axial coding to group related codes into broader analytical categories.

The analytical categories were aligned with the study's four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Pattern matching and thematic analysis were employed to link empirical findings with the analytical framework and research questions. Manual data processing was applied throughout the analysis to allow close engagement with the data and iterative refinement of interpretations.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several validation strategies. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. Informant triangulation was achieved by engaging actors from different institutional backgrounds and governance levels. Member checking was conducted through follow-up communications with selected informants to confirm interpretations and clarify ambiguities. In addition, expert triangulation involving academics with expertise in governance and border studies was used to enhance analytical rigour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Informants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multiparty Collaboration in Border Governance: Empirical Overview

The empirical findings demonstrate that border governance in West and North Kalimantan involves a complex constellation of actors operating across multiple governance levels and sectors. These actors include central government institutions coordinated by BNPP, provincial and district border management agencies (BPPD), sectoral agencies operating at Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN), local governments, community actors, academics, and limited private sector participants. While formal institutional arrangements for collaboration exist, their effectiveness varies significantly depending on coordination capacity, institutional alignment, and enabling resources.

BNPP occupies a central position within this governance network as a coordinating institution mandated to align border management and development policies. However, its limited

formal authority constrains its ability to directly command other institutions. As a result, BNPP's institutional capacity relies heavily on collaborative governance mechanisms that facilitate alignment, cooperation, and collective action among diverse stakeholders. The findings reveal that this capacity is operationalised through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Coordination as a Foundational Mechanism

Coordination emerges as the most fundamental mechanism underpinning multiparty collaboration in border governance. BNPP facilitates coordination through both formal and informal channels, including inter-agency meetings, reporting systems, and hierarchical communication pathways linking central, provincial, and district institutions. These arrangements aim to reduce fragmentation and ensure that border-related information flows effectively across governance levels.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) significantly enhances coordination capacity. Digital reporting systems, WhatsApp coordination groups, and real-time monitoring tools such as CCTV and digital dashboards enable rapid information exchange regarding border crossings, security incidents, logistical challenges, and development needs. These tools are particularly valuable given the geographical remoteness and infrastructural limitations of border areas.

Nevertheless, coordination remains uneven. Differences in ICT infrastructure quality, digital literacy, and organisational capacity across regions constrain consistent implementation. Local-level actors often face limitations related to internet connectivity and human resource skills, which reduce the effectiveness of digital coordination mechanisms. Despite these challenges, ICT-supported coordination represents a critical advancement compared to previous reliance on fragmented and delayed communication channels.

Integration of Programs and Institutional Roles

Integration refers to the alignment and harmonisation of policies, programs, and institutional roles among stakeholders involved in border governance. The findings indicate that integration is more advanced among government actors than between government and non-state actors. Vertical

integration between BNPP and regional BPPD is facilitated through shared planning frameworks, policy documents, and coordinated development programs.

However, integration across sectors and with non-state actors remains limited. Private sector involvement is largely confined to investment activities without systematic incorporation into governance processes. Similarly, community and civil society actors primarily engage in monitoring, local conflict resolution, and informal consultations rather than structured policy participation. This limited integration reflects the absence of institutionalised mechanisms for non-state actor engagement within BNPP's governance framework.

The findings suggest that integration is constrained not only by institutional design but also by differing priorities and incentive structures among actors. While government institutions prioritise administrative compliance and policy coherence, private and community actors emphasise economic opportunity and social welfare. Without formal integration mechanisms, these divergent priorities limit the potential benefits of multiparty collaboration (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019).

Synchronisation of Actions and Policy Cycles

Synchronisation involves aligning the timing, sequencing, and implementation of programs and activities across institutions to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement. The study finds that synchronisation is partially achieved through centralised planning cycles and ICT-enabled reporting systems that allow BNPP to monitor ongoing activities across regions.

Despite these efforts, synchronisation challenges persist due to differences in institutional mandates, budget cycles, and operational priorities. Sectoral agencies often operate according to their own timelines and performance indicators, which may not align with BNPP-coordinated plans. These discrepancies can result in delayed implementation, overlapping initiatives, or gaps in service delivery.

ICT tools help mitigate synchronisation challenges by increasing transparency and enabling faster feedback loops. Real-time reporting allows BNPP to identify misalignments and initiate corrective coordination. However, ICT alone cannot fully overcome structural constraints arising from fragmented authority and regulatory rigidity. Effective synchronisation, therefore, requires both technological support and institutional commitment to shared planning and accountability.

Simplification of Collaborative Procedures

Simplification focuses on reducing procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers that hinder effective collaboration. The findings indicate that BNPP has initiated efforts to simplify coordination and reporting processes through digitalisation. Standardised reporting formats, streamlined communication channels, and centralised information systems have reduced administrative burdens and improved efficiency.

Nonetheless, simplification remains constrained by overlapping legal mandates and rigid regulatory frameworks governing border management. Multiple laws, regulations, and ministerial decrees create procedural complexity that limits BNPP's ability to streamline collaborative processes fully. As a result, simplification efforts often operate within narrow administrative boundaries rather than addressing systemic fragmentation.

The findings underscore that simplification is not merely a technical exercise but an institutional challenge that requires regulatory harmonisation and political support. Without such reforms, procedural complexity will continue to undermine collaborative capacity despite technological advancements.

ICT as an Institutional Enabler of Collaborative Capacity

Across all four mechanisms, ICT functions as a critical institutional enabler rather than a standalone solution. ICT enhances BNPP's boundary-spanning capacity by facilitating communication, information sharing, and monitoring across organisational and geographical boundaries. By reducing transaction costs and improving information symmetry, ICT strengthens BNPP's ability to coordinate actors despite limited formal authority.

However, the enabling role of ICT is contingent on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive governance arrangements. Where these conditions are absent, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. The findings therefore support arguments in digital governance literature that technology must be embedded within broader institutional reforms to achieve transformative impact.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency can strengthen institutional capacity through structured collaboration mechanisms supported by ICT. The findings extend institutional capacity theory by highlighting relational and network-based capacities as critical dimensions in fragmented governance systems.

Practically, the results suggest that strengthening BNPP's role requires a strategic focus on institutionalising collaboration mechanisms rather than expanding hierarchical authority. Policies should prioritise enhancing coordination infrastructure, formalising non-state actor participation, harmonising regulatory frameworks, and investing in ICT capacity at the local level. These measures can collectively improve the effectiveness and sustainability of border governance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas depends less on the expansion of formal hierarchical authority and more on the effectiveness of multiparty collaborative governance mechanisms. In the context of border management in West and North Kalimantan, BNPP operates within a highly fragmented governance environment characterised by overlapping mandates, sectoral autonomy, and multi-level institutional arrangements. Under such conditions, BNPP's capacity is shaped primarily by its ability to coordinate, align, and mobilise diverse actors rather than to directly command them.

The findings reveal that multiparty collaboration strengthens BNPP's institutional capacity through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination enables information exchange and alignment among actors; integration harmonises policies, programs, and institutional roles; synchronisation ensures coherence in timing and implementation; and simplification reduces procedural complexity that often undermines collaboration. Together, these mechanisms function as a governance architecture that allows BNPP to perform its boundary-spanning role effectively despite limited formal authority.

A central contribution of this study is the identification of information and communication technology (ICT) as a critical institutional enabler of collaborative capacity. ICT enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and supports both vertical and horizontal coordination across geographically dispersed border areas. However, the study also confirms that ICT alone is insufficient to resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks. Without these conditions, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and coordination failures.

Policy Implications

The findings yield several policy implications for strengthening border governance in Indonesia. First, border governance policies should explicitly recognise BNPP as a collaborative coordinator rather than merely an administrative institution. Strengthening BNPP's mandate to convene, integrate, and synchronise sectoral and regional programs is more critical than expanding its hierarchical authority.

Second, the institutionalisation of non-state actor participation should be prioritised. Formal mechanisms for engaging private sector actors, civil society organisations, and border communities—such as structured consultation forums and partnership frameworks—can enhance inclusivity, legitimacy, and sustainability in border development initiatives.

Third, continued investment in ICT infrastructure and digital governance systems is essential, particularly at the local level. Such investments should be accompanied by capacity-building programs to ensure effective utilisation and to reduce disparities in digital readiness across regions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The empirical analysis focuses on two land border provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other border contexts in Indonesia, such as maritime border regions. In addition, the qualitative research design prioritises depth of analysis over breadth and does not quantitatively measure collaboration outcomes or development impacts.

Directions for Future Research

Future research could adopt comparative or mixed method approaches to examine collaborative border governance across different regions or countries. Quantitative assessments of collaborative

performance and long-term socio-economic and security outcomes would complement the qualitative insights offered in this study. Further research may also explore the role of leadership, political dynamics, and regulatory reform in sustaining ICT-enabled collaborative governance in border areas.

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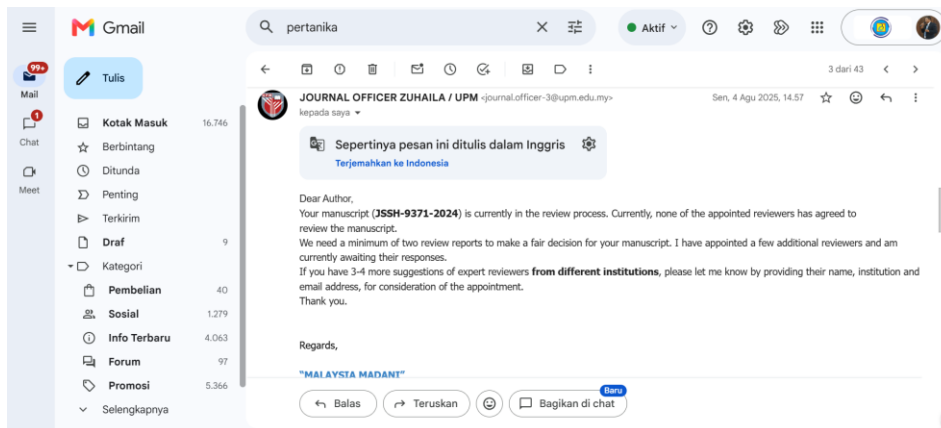
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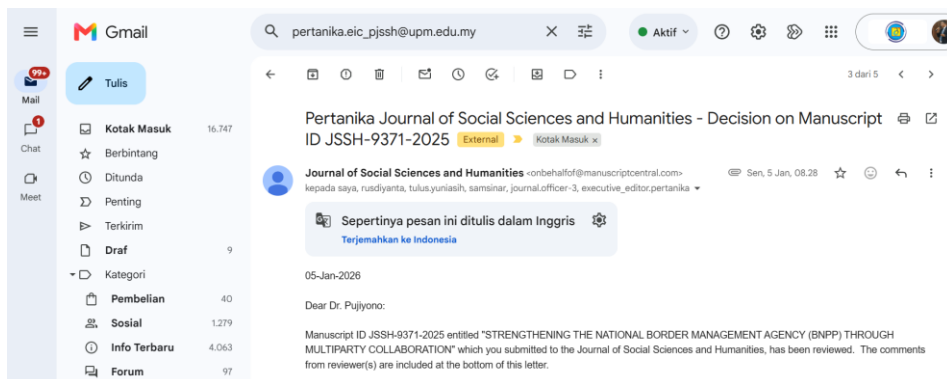
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Tanggapan Editor 4 Agustus Bahwa Naskah masih dalam proses





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Subject: Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities - Decision on Manuscript ID JSSH-9371-
t: 2025

Body: 05-Jan-2026

Dear Dr. Pujiyono:

Manuscript ID JSSH-9371-2025 entitled "STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL BORDER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (BNPP) THROUGH MULTIPARTY COLLABORATION" which you submitted to the Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, has been reviewed. The comments from reviewer(s) are included at the bottom of this letter.

In view of the criticisms of the reviewer(s), I must decline the manuscript for publication in the Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities at this time. However, a new manuscript may be submitted which takes into consideration these comments.

Please note that resubmitting your manuscript does not guarantee eventual acceptance, and that your resubmission will be subject to re-review by the reviewer(s) before a decision is rendered.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to the Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities, your resubmitted manuscript should be returned to me as soon as possible BEFORE 04-Feb-2026. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision by this date, I will consider your paper 'rejected'. If you are unable to submit by this date, please contact the Chief Executive Editor for options.

To revise your manuscript, log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/upm-jssh> and enter your Author Center, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

You may also click the below link to start the revision process (or continue the process if you have already started your revision) for your manuscript. If you use the below link you will not be required to login to ScholarOne Manuscripts.

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You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or colored text.

Once the revised manuscript is prepared, you can upload it and submit it through your Author Center.

When submitting your revised manuscript, you will be able to respond to the comments made by the reviewer(s) in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript. In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as possible in your response to the reviewer(s).

IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities and I look forward to a resubmission.

Sincerely,

Chief Executive Editor
Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities

Associate Editor Comments to Author:

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Corresponding Author
Review Result

Abstract: This abstract will describe in detail border issues and the role of border guard agencies by looking at collaboration between multiple actors. However, I do not see any border issues at the research location, and the research approach is not yet innovative enough to reveal the phenomenon.

Introduction: What are the border issues and what is the essential importance of border control institutions in legal, philosophical, and sociological terms? In addition, what is novel about this research that makes it important to conduct, given that there is a great deal of research on borders, especially from a multi-actor collaboration perspective?

Research method: The research method is not very detailed. Who are the informants, how was the data collected, and what data analysis techniques were used?

Results and Discussion: I do not see the collaboration mechanism and what needs to be done to make multi-actor collaboration effective.

The conclusions and recommendations are not yet detailed enough to improve multi-actor collaboration so that border surveillance can benefit both countries. In addition, the researchers have not provided any recommendations for future research, which is a limitation of this study.

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Corresponding Author

The topic of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) and multiparty collaboration is not only interesting but also an emerging area that has not been extensively explored in political studies or international relations.

However, the article's presentation does not meet the standards of a journal article or academic writing.

It is unclear what the primary focus, research issues, gaps or questions are. The abstract mentions that the focus is on the National Border Management Agency, but what research problem is being addressed in this context?. Therefore, the discussion and writing of the article are descriptive and not fundamentally sound as an academic article. In qualitative research, the main research question should be clear and serve as a guide for the analysis and discussion. This lack affects the quality of the article. The literature review is also insufficient and very brief. It is also unclear which sub-discipline or research framework the study falls under, whether international relations (IR), security, or governance. The author mentioned some theories of IR in the introduction, but the framework of the discussion and conclusion seems more focused on governance. Overall, the lack of clearly defined research issues and gaps (as outlined earlier) makes the article academically unsound.

Date Sent: 05-Jan-2026

File 1: [-PJSSH-Author-s-Responses-to-Reviewer-s-Comments--Template-.docx](#)

File 2: [JSSH-9371-2025-Ms-Rev-Kit--R1--Feedback--24-Aug-25.pdf](#)

Author's Response to Decision Letter for (JSSH-XXXX-XXXX)**TITLE: STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL BORDER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (BNPP) THROUGH MULTIPARTY COLLABORATION**

REVIEWER 1		
	Reviewer's Comment	Author's response
1	The abstract describes border issues and the role of border guard agencies, but the border issues at the research location are not clearly visible, and the research approach is not sufficiently innovative.	Thank you for the reviewer's insightful comment. The abstract has been substantially revised to clearly highlight the empirical border governance challenges in West and North Kalimantan and to specify the research focus on BNPP as a coordinating institution. In addition, the abstract now explicitly emphasizes the study's novelty by positioning ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration as an innovative mechanism for strengthening institutional capacity in border governance.
2	The introduction does not sufficiently explain the border issues and the essential importance of border control institutions from legal, philosophical, and sociological perspectives, nor does it clearly indicate the novelty of the research.	We appreciate this valuable comment. The Introduction has been comprehensively revised to clarify the border governance problems faced in Indonesian land border areas, particularly in West and North Kalimantan. The revised section now explicitly presents the research problem, research gap, and research questions, and positions the study within the collaborative governance and institutional capacity framework. The novelty of the research is also clearly articulated by emphasizing the role of ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration in strengthening BNPP's coordinating capacity.
3	The research method is not very detailed. Who are the informants, how was the data collected, and what data analysis techniques were used?	Thank you for highlighting this issue. The Research Methods section has been substantially expanded to provide detailed explanations of the research design, research sites, selection of

		informants, data collection techniques (in-depth interviews, observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis), and data analysis procedures. Additional clarification on triangulation and trustworthiness measures has also been included to enhance methodological rigor.
4	The collaboration mechanism and what needs to be done to make multiparty collaboration effective are not clearly presented.	We appreciate this important comment. The Results and Discussion sections have been restructured using a clear analytical framework that conceptualizes multiparty collaboration through four mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification. Each mechanism is now explicitly discussed based on empirical findings, and the discussion elaborates on how these mechanisms contribute to strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity and improving collaborative effectiveness.
5	The conclusions and recommendations are not sufficiently detailed, and the study does not provide recommendations for future research.	Thank you for this constructive feedback. The Conclusion section has been revised to include more analytical conclusions derived from the findings. In addition, detailed policy implications, study limitations, and explicit directions for future research have been added to strengthen the academic and practical contributions of the manuscript.
REVIEWER 2		
	Reviewer's Comment	Author's response
1	It is unclear what the primary focus, research issues, gaps, or questions of the article are, resulting in a descriptive discussion.	We thank the reviewer for this valuable observation. The Introduction has been revised to explicitly define the research problem, research gap, and guiding

		research questions. These revisions provide a clearer analytical focus and serve as a foundation for the subsequent analysis and discussion.
2	The article does not meet academic writing standards and lacks a clear analytical framework.	We appreciate this comment. The manuscript has been comprehensively revised to adopt a collaborative governance and institutional capacity framework. Theoretical concepts are now systematically linked to the research questions, methods, and empirical findings, ensuring analytical coherence and compliance with academic journal standards.
3	The literature review is insufficient and very brief.	Thank you for the reviewer's suggestion. The Literature Review section has been significantly expanded and reorganized to provide a more comprehensive discussion of collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and the role of ICT. The revised literature review directly supports the analytical framework and research questions.
4	It is unclear whether the study belongs to international relations, security studies, or governance.	We appreciate this important clarification request. The manuscript is now explicitly positioned within the field of public governance, particularly collaborative governance and institutional capacity studies. This positioning has been clearly stated in the Introduction and reinforced throughout the Literature Review and Discussion sections.
5	The discussion and conclusion lack coherence and do not sufficiently reflect the research framework.	Thank you for this constructive feedback. The Discussion section has been strengthened by systematically applying the analytical framework of coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification. The Conclusion has also been revised to ensure coherence with

		the research framework, findings, and contributions of the study.
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Naskah Revisi

STRENGTHENING THE NATIONAL BORDER MANAGEMENT AGENCY (BNPP) THROUGH MULTIPARTY COLLABORATION

ABSTRACT

This study examines how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. Border governance in these regions is characterized by fragmented authority, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited involvement of non-state actors. Existing studies on border management largely emphasize security or decentralization perspectives, leaving limited empirical explanation of how collaborative mechanisms operate institutionally, particularly in developing country contexts. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis conducted between August and November 2024. The findings reveal that BNPP’s coordinating capacity is strengthened through four interrelated collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification, supported by information and communication technology (ICT). ICT functions as an institutional enabler that enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and facilitates cross-level governance. The study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency with limited formal authority can enhance institutional capacity through ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration. Policy implications emphasize strengthening BNPP’s coordinating mandate, institutionalizing non-state actor participation, and expanding ICT capacity at the local level.

Keywords : collaborative governance; border governance; multiparty collaboration; institutional capacity; ICT

INTRODUCTION

Border governance constitutes one of the most complex policy domains in contemporary public administration, particularly in developing countries characterized by vast territories, institutional fragmentation, and uneven regional development. National borders no longer function solely as rigid territorial demarcations of state sovereignty; rather, they have evolved into dynamic governance spaces where security, development, economic exchange, and socio-cultural interaction intersect. In this context, border areas are expected to perform a dual role: as frontlines of national sovereignty and as front porches that reflect state presence, welfare provision, and development performance. However, empirical conditions in many border regions reveal persistent governance challenges that undermine this dual function.

In Indonesia, border areas remain disproportionately affected by structural underdevelopment, limited infrastructure, low access to public services, and high vulnerability to transnational threats such as illegal trade, smuggling, human trafficking, and environmental exploitation. These challenges are particularly evident in land border regions such as West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, which share extensive boundaries with Malaysia. Despite their strategic geopolitical importance, these regions continue to face governance constraints rooted in fragmented authority, sectoral policy approaches, and weak coordination between central and regional governments. The persistence of these issues highlights the

limitations of conventional border management paradigms that prioritize security enforcement while marginalizing governance and development considerations.

The establishment of the National Border Management Agency (Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP) represents the Indonesian government's institutional response to these complex challenges. Mandated by Law No. 43 of 2008, BNPP is tasked with coordinating border management and development across ministries, agencies, and subnational governments. Unlike line ministries with direct operational authority, BNPP's role is primarily coordinative, requiring it to align diverse actors with varying mandates, resources, and institutional capacities. This unique positioning places BNPP at the center of a highly fragmented governance network, where effectiveness depends less on hierarchical control and more on the ability to foster collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

However, the coordinative nature of BNPP also presents inherent limitations. BNPP operates within a governance environment characterized by overlapping legal frameworks, decentralized administrative authority, and strong sectoral autonomy among ministries and regional governments. As a result, BNPP frequently encounters challenges related to weak inter-agency communication, inconsistent policy implementation, overlapping programs, and limited engagement of non-state actors such as private sector entities, civil society organizations, and local communities. These constraints raise critical questions regarding how BNPP can effectively strengthen its institutional capacity and fulfill its mandate in managing border areas.

Existing academic literature on border governance has largely approached the issue from three dominant perspectives. First, security-oriented studies emphasize border control, territorial defense, and sovereignty protection, often framing border areas as spaces of threat and vulnerability. Second, decentralization and regional autonomy perspectives focus on the distribution of authority between central and local governments, highlighting both opportunities and coordination challenges arising from multi-level governance. Third, international relations and cross-border cooperation studies examine borders as sites of inter-state interaction and diplomacy. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they tend to underexplore the institutional mechanisms through which collaborative governance strengthens the capacity of a national border authority, particularly in developing country contexts.

In parallel, the growing body of literature on collaborative governance and multiparty collaboration emphasizes the role of cross-sector and cross-level partnerships in addressing complex public problems that cannot be resolved by single actors. Collaborative governance frameworks highlight the importance of coordination, trust-building, shared problem definition, and joint action among heterogeneous stakeholders. Yet, empirical applications of these frameworks to border governance remain limited, especially with regard to understanding how collaboration operates as an institutional capacity-building mechanism for a coordinative agency such as BNPP.

Moreover, recent advances in digital governance have drawn attention to the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in facilitating collaboration within fragmented governance systems. ICT enables real-time communication, data sharing, monitoring, and coordination across organizational and geographical boundaries. In border governance contexts—characterized by remote locations, limited infrastructure, and dispersed institutional actors—ICT has the potential to function as a critical enabler of collaborative capacity. Nevertheless, empirical research examining ICT as an integral component of multiparty border governance remains scarce, leaving a significant gap in both theory and practice.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of BNPP in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan. Rather than treating collaboration as a normative ideal, this research analyzes collaboration as a set of concrete governance mechanisms that enable BNPP to perform its coordinating role effectively despite limited formal authority. Specifically, this study conceptualizes multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification. These mechanisms provide an analytical lens for understanding how diverse actors are aligned, how programs and policies are

harmonized, how actions are synchronized across institutions, and how procedural complexity is reduced within border governance arrangements.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions: (1) How does multiparty collaboration operate in strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity in managing border areas? (2) What roles do state, private, and community actors play within this collaborative governance arrangement? and (3) How does ICT facilitate coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification among stakeholders involved in border management? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the literature on collaborative governance and institutional capacity while offering policy-relevant insights for strengthening border governance in Indonesia.

Positioned within the field of public governance, this research advances the understanding of border management beyond security-centric and administrative perspectives. It highlights the importance of collaborative governance mechanisms and digital enablers in managing complex policy environments. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers on how BNPP and similar coordinative institutions can enhance their capacity through structured multiparty collaboration, thereby supporting more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable border area development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Collaborative Governance and Multiparty Collaboration

Collaborative governance has emerged as a prominent framework in public administration to address complex public problems characterized by uncertainty, interdependence, and institutional fragmentation. Ansell and Torfing (2014) define collaborative governance as governance arrangements in which public agencies engage constructively with non-state actors in collective decision-making processes that are formal, deliberative, and consensus-oriented. This approach departs from traditional hierarchical governance by emphasizing interaction, shared responsibility, and joint problem-solving among heterogeneous actors.

Multiparty collaboration represents a broader conceptualization of collaborative governance by highlighting the involvement of multiple actors across sectors and levels of governance. Gray and Purdy (2018) argue that multiparty collaboration is particularly relevant for addressing "wicked problems" that cannot be resolved by single organizations due to their complexity and cross-sectoral nature. Rather than focusing solely on participation, contemporary collaboration literature emphasizes governance mechanisms that enable coordination, trust-building, alignment of interests, and effective collective action (Lawrence et al., 2023).

In the public sector context, multiparty collaboration typically involves government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and local communities. Each actor brings distinct resources, authority, interests, and capacities, which can both enrich collaboration and generate conflict. As such, the effectiveness of collaboration depends not only on actor inclusion but also on the institutional arrangements that manage interdependence and mitigate power asymmetries (Bryson & Crosby, 2006).

Despite its growing prominence, collaborative governance is not without challenges. Scholars note that collaboration can be hindered by sectoral ego, weak leadership, unclear accountability, and institutional rigidity (O'Leary & Bingham, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in contexts where lead organizations lack formal authority over participating actors, as is often the case in coordinative agencies. This highlights the importance of understanding collaboration as an institutional capacity-building process rather than merely a participatory arrangement.

2. Institutional Capacity in Public Sector Organizations

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public organizations to perform their mandated functions effectively by mobilizing resources, coordinating actors, and adapting to dynamic governance environments. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) conceptualize capacity as a multidimensional construct encompassing institutional arrangements, human resources, organizational processes, networks, and the broader policy environment. Similarly, Wu, Ramesh, and Howlett (2018) emphasize that policy capacity extends beyond technical expertise to include analytical, operational, and political capabilities.

In collaborative governance settings, institutional capacity is increasingly shaped by relational and network-based capabilities. Lead organizations must function as boundary spanners that connect actors across institutional, sectoral, and territorial boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). This role requires skills in coordination, negotiation, facilitation, and information management rather than command-and-control authority. Consequently, institutional capacity in such contexts depends on the ability to orchestrate collaboration rather than to impose decisions.

For coordinative agencies like BNPP, capacity constraints are often structural. Limited formal authority, dependence on other institutions' resources, and overlapping mandates can undermine effectiveness. However, scholars argue that these constraints can be mitigated through governance mechanisms that enhance coordination, integration, and alignment among actors (Kekez et al., 2018). Understanding how such mechanisms operate empirically is therefore critical for advancing institutional capacity theory in fragmented governance systems.

3. Border Governance as a Multidimensional Policy Arena

Border governance literature has evolved significantly from traditional geopolitical perspectives that conceptualize borders as fixed lines of sovereignty. Contemporary border studies emphasize borders as dynamic governance spaces characterized by flows of people, goods, capital, and information (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Newman, 2016). In this view, border areas are not merely peripheral zones but central arenas where national, regional, and local governance intersect.

Brunet-Jailly (2005, 2011) proposes a multidimensional framework for border governance that integrates market forces, cross-governmental policies, political participation of border communities, and local cultural contexts. This framework underscores the need for governance arrangements that balance security concerns with socio-economic development and community well-being. In practice, however, many developing countries continue to prioritize security-oriented approaches that marginalize development and participatory dimensions.

In Indonesia, border governance is further complicated by decentralization and regional autonomy. While decentralization aims to empower local governments and improve service delivery, it has also generated coordination challenges due to fragmented authority and varying institutional capacities across regions. Studies indicate that decentralization alone has not resolved disparities in border development and, in some cases, has exacerbated policy incoherence (Hadiwijoyo, 2009).

These dynamics highlight the necessity of collaborative governance mechanisms that can integrate central authority with regional autonomy and local participation. Border management agencies operating in such contexts must navigate complex institutional landscapes, making multiparty collaboration a functional necessity rather than a normative choice.

4. ICT as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance

The growing literature on digital governance emphasizes the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration. ICT enables governments to enhance transparency, efficiency, and coordination by facilitating real-time communication, data integration, and monitoring across organizational boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). In collaborative governance contexts, ICT can reduce transaction costs, improve information symmetry, and support collective decision-making.

In geographically remote and institutionally fragmented settings such as border areas, ICT assumes heightened importance. Digital platforms—including integrated reporting systems, surveillance technologies, and inter-agency communication networks—enable coordination across distances and administrative levels. ICT thus functions not merely as a technical tool but as an institutional enabler that reshapes governance processes and interaction patterns.

However, scholars caution that ICT alone cannot resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks (Wu et al., 2015). In the absence of these conditions, digital initiatives risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. Empirical studies that examine ICT within specific governance contexts are therefore essential for understanding its enabling and constraining effects.

Despite its relevance, empirical research on ICT-enabled collaboration in border governance remains limited. Most studies focus on e-government or digital service delivery rather than on how ICT supports institutional coordination and collaborative capacity. This gap is particularly evident in developing country contexts, where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary significantly across regions.

5. Analytical Framework: Collaboration Mechanisms

Building on collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and digital governance literature, this study employs an analytical framework based on four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification. Coordination refers to aligning actors and activities through communication and information exchange. Integration involves harmonizing policies, programs, and institutional roles. Synchronization ensures that actions and timelines are mutually reinforcing across actors, while simplification aims to reduce procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers.

These mechanisms operationalize multiparty collaboration as a capacity-building process rather than a static arrangement. They provide a structured lens for analyzing how BNPP navigates institutional fragmentation and leverages ICT to strengthen its coordinating role. By applying this framework to empirical data from West and North Kalimantan, the study seeks to advance theoretical understanding of collaborative governance while offering practical insights for border management institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory research design to examine how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study's objective to explore governance processes, interaction mechanisms, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural contexts and is particularly suitable for analyzing collaborative governance arrangements involving multiple actors, interests, and institutional settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The explanatory orientation of this study emphasizes not only describing collaborative practices but also explaining how and why specific collaboration mechanisms contribute to institutional capacity strengthening. This design aligns with the study's analytical framework, which conceptualizes multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification.

Research Sites

The research was conducted in West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. These provinces were purposively selected due to their strategic geopolitical position as land border regions adjacent to Malaysia and their relevance to national border governance policy. Both provinces host Integrated Border Crossing Posts (Pos Lintas Batas Negara/PLBN) and are actively involved in BNPP-coordinated border management and development programs. The selected sites represent typical characteristics of Indonesian land border areas, including geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, and multi-level governance arrangements involving central, provincial, and district authorities.

Informants and Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consist of organizations and actors involved in multiparty collaboration in border governance. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, responsibilities, and direct involvement in border management and development activities. This sampling strategy ensured that data were obtained from actors with relevant knowledge and experience of collaborative governance processes.

Key informants included: (1) officials from the National Border Management Agency (BNPP); (2) officials from Provincial and District Border Management Agencies (BPPD); (3) heads and staff of Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN); (4) representatives of sectoral agencies operating at border posts, such as customs, immigration, health quarantine, and agricultural quarantine; (5) local government officials and community leaders in border sub-districts; (6) academics and university representatives involved in research and community service programs in border areas; and (7) representatives of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other local economic actors. This diversity of informants enabled a comprehensive examination of multiparty collaboration across sectors and governance levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected between August and November 2024 using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to enhance depth and credibility. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview guides were designed to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices related to multiparty collaboration, coordination challenges, and the role of ICT in border governance. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Second, direct field observations were undertaken at selected border locations, particularly at PLBN facilities and surrounding border communities. Observations focused on interaction patterns among institutions, coordination practices, use of ICT tools, and day-to-day governance activities related to border management. Field notes were systematically recorded to capture contextual insights that complemented interview data.

Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with local stakeholders, including community representatives, local officials, and economic actors. FGDs were used to validate preliminary findings, capture collective perspectives, and identify shared challenges and expectations related to border governance. Finally, secondary data were collected through document analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature to contextualize and triangulate primary data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process. All interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and field notes were then subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring concepts and themes. Open coding was initially applied to capture key ideas emerging from the data, followed by axial coding to group related codes into broader analytical categories.

The analytical categories were aligned with the study's four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification. Pattern matching and thematic analysis were employed to link empirical findings with the analytical framework and research questions. Manual data processing was applied throughout the analysis to allow close engagement with the data and iterative refinement of interpretations.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several validation strategies. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. Informant triangulation was achieved by engaging actors from different institutional backgrounds and governance levels. Member checking was conducted through follow-up communications with selected informants to confirm interpretations and clarify ambiguities. In addition, expert triangulation involving academics with expertise in governance and border studies was used to enhance analytical rigor.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Informants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION (±1.600 words)

1. Multiparty Collaboration in Border Governance: Empirical Overview

The empirical findings demonstrate that border governance in West and North Kalimantan involves a complex constellation of actors operating across multiple governance levels and sectors. These actors include central government institutions coordinated by BNPP, provincial and district border management agencies (BPPD), sectoral agencies operating at Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN), local governments, community actors, academics, and limited private sector participants. While formal institutional arrangements for collaboration exist, their effectiveness varies significantly depending on coordination capacity, institutional alignment, and enabling resources.

BNPP occupies a central position within this governance network as a coordinating institution mandated to align border management and development policies. However, its limited formal authority constrains its ability to directly command other institutions. As a result, BNPP's institutional capacity relies heavily on collaborative governance mechanisms that facilitate alignment, cooperation, and collective action among diverse stakeholders. The findings reveal that this capacity is operationalized through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification.

2. Coordination as a Foundational Mechanism

Coordination emerges as the most fundamental mechanism underpinning multiparty collaboration in border governance. BNPP facilitates coordination through both formal and informal channels, including inter-agency meetings, reporting systems, and hierarchical communication pathways linking central, provincial, and district institutions. These arrangements aim to reduce fragmentation and ensure that border-related information flows effectively across governance levels.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) significantly enhances coordination capacity. Digital reporting systems, WhatsApp coordination groups, and real-time monitoring tools such as CCTV and digital dashboards enable rapid information exchange regarding border crossings, security incidents, logistical challenges, and development needs. These tools are particularly valuable given the geographical remoteness and infrastructural limitations of border areas.

Nevertheless, coordination remains uneven. Differences in ICT infrastructure quality, digital literacy, and organizational capacity across regions constrain consistent implementation. Local-level actors often face limitations related to internet connectivity and human resource skills, which reduce the effectiveness of digital coordination mechanisms. Despite these challenges, ICT-supported coordination represents a critical advancement compared to previous reliance on fragmented and delayed communication channels.

3. Integration of Programs and Institutional Roles

Integration refers to the alignment and harmonization of policies, programs, and institutional roles among stakeholders involved in border governance. The findings indicate that integration is more advanced among government actors than between government and non-state actors. Vertical integration between BNPP and regional BPPD is facilitated through shared planning frameworks, policy documents, and coordinated development programs.

However, integration across sectors and with non-state actors remains limited. Private sector involvement is largely confined to investment activities without systematic incorporation into governance processes. Similarly, community and civil society actors primarily engage in monitoring, local conflict resolution, and informal consultations rather than structured policy participation. This limited integration reflects the absence of institutionalized mechanisms for non-state actor engagement within BNPP's governance framework.

The findings suggest that integration is constrained not only by institutional design but also by differing priorities and incentive structures among actors. While government institutions prioritize administrative compliance and policy coherence, private and community actors emphasize economic opportunity and social welfare. Without formal integration mechanisms, these divergent priorities limit the potential benefits of multiparty collaboration.

4. Synchronization of Actions and Policy Cycles

Synchronization involves aligning the timing, sequencing, and implementation of programs and activities across institutions to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement. The study finds that synchronization is partially achieved through centralized planning cycles and ICT-enabled reporting systems that allow BNPP to monitor ongoing activities across regions.

Despite these efforts, synchronization challenges persist due to differences in institutional mandates, budget cycles, and operational priorities. Sectoral agencies often operate according to their own timelines and performance indicators, which may not align with BNPP-coordinated plans. These discrepancies can result in delayed implementation, overlapping initiatives, or gaps in service delivery.

ICT tools help mitigate synchronization challenges by increasing transparency and enabling faster feedback loops. Real-time reporting allows BNPP to identify misalignments and initiate corrective coordination. However, ICT alone cannot fully overcome structural constraints arising from fragmented authority and regulatory rigidity. Effective synchronization therefore requires both technological support and institutional commitment to shared planning and accountability.

5. Simplification of Collaborative Procedures

Simplification focuses on reducing procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers that hinder effective collaboration. The findings indicate that BNPP has initiated efforts to simplify coordination and reporting processes through digitalization. Standardized reporting formats, streamlined communication channels, and centralized information systems have reduced administrative burdens and improved efficiency.

Nonetheless, simplification remains constrained by overlapping legal mandates and rigid regulatory frameworks governing border management. Multiple laws, regulations, and ministerial decrees create procedural complexity that limits BNPP's ability to streamline collaborative processes fully. As a result, simplification efforts often operate within narrow administrative boundaries rather than addressing systemic fragmentation.

The findings underscore that simplification is not merely a technical exercise but an institutional challenge that requires regulatory harmonization and political support. Without such reforms, procedural complexity will continue to undermine collaborative capacity despite technological advancements.

6. ICT as an Institutional Enabler of Collaborative Capacity

Across all four mechanisms, ICT functions as a critical institutional enabler rather than a standalone solution. ICT enhances BNPP's boundary-spanning capacity by facilitating communication, information sharing, and monitoring across organizational and geographical boundaries. By reducing transaction costs and improving information symmetry, ICT strengthens BNPP's ability to coordinate actors despite limited formal authority.

However, the enabling role of ICT is contingent on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive governance arrangements. Where these conditions are absent, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. The findings therefore support arguments in digital governance literature that technology must be embedded within broader institutional reforms to achieve transformative impact.

7. Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency can strengthen institutional capacity through structured collaboration mechanisms supported by ICT. The findings extend institutional capacity theory by

highlighting relational and network-based capacities as critical dimensions in fragmented governance systems.

Practically, the results suggest that strengthening BNPP's role requires a strategic focus on institutionalizing collaboration mechanisms rather than expanding hierarchical authority. Policies should prioritize enhancing coordination infrastructure, formalizing non-state actor participation, harmonizing regulatory frameworks, and investing in ICT capacity at the local level. These measures can collectively improve the effectiveness and sustainability of border governance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas depends less on the expansion of formal hierarchical authority and more on the effectiveness of multiparty collaborative governance mechanisms. In the context of border management in West and North Kalimantan, BNPP operates within a highly fragmented governance environment characterized by overlapping mandates, sectoral autonomy, and multi-level institutional arrangements. Under such conditions, BNPP's capacity is shaped primarily by its ability to coordinate, align, and mobilize diverse actors rather than to directly command them.

The findings reveal that multiparty collaboration strengthens BNPP's institutional capacity through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronization, and simplification. Coordination enables information exchange and alignment among actors; integration harmonizes policies, programs, and institutional roles; synchronization ensures coherence in timing and implementation; and simplification reduces procedural complexity that often undermines collaboration. Together, these mechanisms function as a governance architecture that allows BNPP to perform its boundary-spanning role effectively despite limited formal authority.

A central contribution of this study is the identification of information and communication technology (ICT) as a critical institutional enabler of collaborative capacity. ICT enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and supports both vertical and horizontal coordination across geographically dispersed border areas. However, the study also confirms that ICT alone is insufficient to resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks. Without these conditions, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and coordination failures.

Policy Implications

The findings yield several policy implications for strengthening border governance in Indonesia. First, border governance policies should explicitly recognize BNPP as a collaborative coordinator rather than merely an administrative institution. Strengthening BNPP's mandate to convene, integrate, and synchronize sectoral and regional programs is more critical than expanding its hierarchical authority.

Second, the institutionalization of non-state actor participation should be prioritized. Formal mechanisms for engaging private sector actors, civil society organizations, and border communities—such as structured consultation forums and partnership frameworks—can enhance inclusivity, legitimacy, and sustainability in border development initiatives.

Third, continued investment in ICT infrastructure and digital governance systems is essential, particularly at the local level. Such investments should be accompanied by capacity-building programs to ensure effective utilization and to reduce disparities in digital readiness across regions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The empirical analysis focuses on two land border provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other border contexts in Indonesia, such as maritime border regions. In addition, the qualitative research design prioritizes depth of analysis over breadth and does not quantitatively measure collaboration outcomes or development impacts.

Directions for Future Research

Future research could adopt comparative or mixed-method approaches to examine collaborative border governance across different regions or countries. Quantitative assessments of collaborative performance and long-term socio-economic and security outcomes would complement the qualitative insights offered in this study. Further research may also explore the role of leadership, political dynamics, and regulatory reform in sustaining ICT-enabled collaborative governance in border areas.

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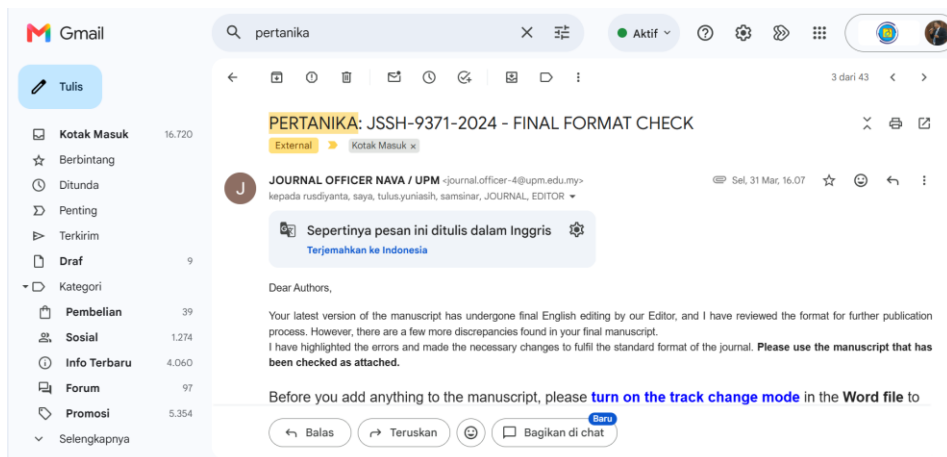
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Strengthening Border Agency via Multiparty Collaboration

Strengthening The National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

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Strengthening The National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

ABSTRACT

This study examines how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. Border governance in these regions is characterised by fragmented authority, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited involvement of non-state actors. Existing studies on border management largely emphasise security or decentralisation perspectives, leaving limited empirical explanation of how collaborative mechanisms operate institutionally, particularly in developing country contexts. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis conducted between August and November 2024. The findings reveal that BNPP's coordinating capacity is strengthened through four interrelated collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification, supported by information and communication technology (ICT). ICT functions as an institutional enabler that enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and facilitates cross-level governance. The study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency with limited formal authority can enhance institutional capacity through ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration. Policy implications emphasise strengthening BNPP's coordinating mandate, institutionalising non-state actor participation, and expanding ICT capacity at the local level.

Keywords: Border governance, collaborative governance, ICT, institutional capacity, multiparty collaboration

INTRODUCTION

Border governance constitutes one of the most complex policy domains in contemporary public administration, particularly in developing countries characterised by vast territories, institutional fragmentation, and uneven regional development. National borders no longer function solely as rigid territorial demarcations of state sovereignty; rather, they have evolved into dynamic governance spaces where security, development, economic exchange, and socio-cultural interaction intersect. In this context, border areas are expected to perform a dual role: as frontlines of national sovereignty and as front porches that reflect state presence, welfare provision, and development performance. However, empirical conditions in many border regions reveal persistent governance challenges that undermine this dual function.

In Indonesia, border areas remain disproportionately affected by structural underdevelopment, limited infrastructure, low access to public services, and high vulnerability to transnational threats such as illegal trade, smuggling, human trafficking, and environmental exploitation. These challenges are particularly evident in land border regions such as West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, which share extensive boundaries with Malaysia (Daldjoeni, 1991; Saiman, 2017). Despite their strategic geopolitical importance, these regions continue to face governance constraints rooted in fragmented authority, sectoral policy approaches, and weak coordination between central and regional governments. The persistence of these issues highlights the limitations of conventional border management paradigms that prioritise security enforcement while marginalising governance and development considerations.

The establishment of the National Border Management Agency (Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP) represents the Indonesian government's institutional response to these complex challenges. Mandated by Law No. 43 of 2008, BNPP is tasked with coordinating border management and

development across ministries, agencies, and subnational governments. Unlike line ministries with direct operational authority, BNPP's role is primarily coordinative, requiring it to align diverse actors with varying mandates, resources, and institutional capacities. This unique positioning places BNPP at the centre of a highly fragmented governance network, where effectiveness depends less on hierarchical control and more on the ability to foster collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

However, the coordinative nature of BNPP also presents inherent limitations. BNPP operates within a governance environment characterised by overlapping legal frameworks, decentralised administrative authority, and strong sectoral autonomy among ministries and regional governments. As a result, BNPP frequently encounters challenges related to weak inter-agent communication, inconsistent policy implementation, overlapping programs, and limited engagement of non-state actors such as private sector entities, civil society organisations, and local communities. These constraints raise critical questions regarding how BNPP can effectively strengthen its institutional capacity and fulfil its mandate in managing border areas.

Existing academic literature on border governance has largely approached the issue from three dominant perspectives. First, security-oriented studies emphasise border control, territorial defence, and sovereignty protection, often framing border areas as spaces of threat and vulnerability. Second, decentralisation and regional autonomy perspectives focus on the distribution of authority between central and local governments, highlighting both opportunities and coordination challenges arising from multi-level governance. Third, international relations and cross-border cooperation studies examine borders as sites of inter-state interaction and diplomacy. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they tend to underexplore the institutional mechanisms through which collaborative governance strengthens the capacity of a national border authority, particularly in developing country contexts.

In parallel, the growing body of literature on collaborative governance and multiparty collaboration emphasises the role of cross-sector and cross-level partnerships in addressing complex public problems that cannot be resolved by single actors. Collaborative governance frameworks highlight the importance of coordination, trust-building, shared problem definition, and joint action among heterogeneous stakeholders. Yet, empirical applications of these frameworks to border governance remain limited, especially about understanding how collaboration operates as an institutional capacity-building mechanism for a coordinative agency such as BNPP.

Moreover, recent advances in digital governance have drawn attention to the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in facilitating collaboration within fragmented governance systems. ICT enables real-time communication, data sharing, monitoring, and coordination across organisational and geographical boundaries. In border governance contexts—characterised by remote locations, limited infrastructure, and dispersed institutional actors—ICT has the potential to function as a critical enabler of collaborative capacity. Nevertheless, empirical research examining ICT as an integral component of multiparty border governance remains scarce, leaving a significant gap in both theory and practice.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of BNPP in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan. Rather than treating collaboration as a normative ideal, this research analyses collaboration as a set of concrete governance mechanisms that enable BNPP to perform its coordinating role effectively despite limited formal authority. Specifically, this study conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. These mechanisms provide an analytical lens for understanding how diverse actors are aligned, how programs and policies are harmonised, how actions are synchronised across institutions, and how procedural complexity is reduced within border governance arrangements.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions: (1) How does multiparty collaboration operate in strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity in managing border areas? (2) What roles do state, private, and community actors play within this collaborative governance arrangement? (3) How does ICT

facilitate coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification among stakeholders involved in border management? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the literature on collaborative governance and institutional capacity while offering policy-relevant insights for strengthening border governance in Indonesia.

Positioned within the field of public governance, this research advances the understanding of border management beyond security-centric and administrative perspectives. It highlights the importance of collaborative governance mechanisms and digital enablers in managing complex policy environments. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers on how BNPP and similar coordinative institutions can enhance their capacity through structured multiparty collaboration, thereby supporting more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable border area development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Governance and Multiparty Collaboration

Collaborative governance has emerged as a prominent framework in public administration to address complex public problems characterised by uncertainty, interdependence, and institutional fragmentation. Ansell and Torfing (2014) define collaborative governance as governance arrangements in which public agencies engage constructively with non-state actors in collective decision-making processes that are formal, deliberative, and consensus-oriented. This approach departs from traditional hierarchical governance by emphasising interaction, shared responsibility, and joint problem-solving among heterogeneous actors (Torfing, 2019).

Multiparty collaboration represents a broader conceptualisation of collaborative governance by highlighting the involvement of multiple actors across sectors and levels of governance. Gray and Purdy (2018) argue that multiparty collaboration is particularly relevant for addressing “wicked problems” that cannot be resolved by single organisations due to their complexity and cross-sectoral nature. Rather than focusing solely on participation, contemporary collaboration literature emphasises governance mechanisms that enable coordination, trust-building, alignment of interests, and effective collective action (Lawrence et al., 2023; Ahmed & Lee (2024).

In the public sector context, multiparty collaboration typically involves government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and local communities (Banerjee et al. 2020). Each actor brings distinct resources, authority, interests, and capacities, which can both enrich collaboration and generate conflict. As such, the effectiveness of collaboration depends not only on actor inclusion but also on the institutional arrangements that manage interdependence and mitigate power asymmetries (Bryson & Crosby, 2006; Gray et al., 2022).

Despite its growing prominence, collaborative governance is not without challenges. Scholars note that collaboration can be hindered by sectoral ego, weak leadership, unclear accountability, and institutional rigidity (O’Leary & Bingham, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in contexts where leading organisations lack formal authority over participating actors, as is often the case in coordinative agencies. (O’Leary et al. 2010). This highlights the importance of understanding collaboration as an institutional capacity-building process rather than merely a participatory arrangement.

Institutional Capacity in Public Sector Organisations

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public organisations to perform their mandated functions effectively by mobilising resources, coordinating actors, and adapting to dynamic governance environments. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) conceptualise capacity as a multidimensional construct encompassing institutional arrangements, human resources, organisational processes, networks, and the

broader policy environment. Similarly, Wu et al. (2015) emphasise that policy capacity extends beyond technical expertise to include analytical, operational, and political capabilities.

In collaborative governance settings, institutional capacity is increasingly shaped by relational and network-based capabilities. Lead organisations must function as boundary spanners that connect actors across institutional, sectoral, and territorial boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). This role requires skills in coordination, negotiation, facilitation, and information management rather than command-and-control authority. Consequently, institutional capacity in such contexts depends on the ability to orchestrate collaboration rather than to impose decisions.

For coordinative agencies like BNPP, capacity constraints are often structural. Limited formal authority, dependence on other institutions' resources, and overlapping mandates can undermine effectiveness. However, scholars argue that these constraints can be mitigated through governance mechanisms that enhance coordination, integration, and alignment among actors (Kekez et al., 2018). Understanding how such mechanisms operate empirically is therefore critical for advancing institutional capacity theory in fragmented governance systems.

Border Governance as a Multidimensional Policy Arena

Border governance literature has evolved significantly from traditional geopolitical perspectives that conceptualise borders as fixed lines of sovereignty. Contemporary border studies emphasise borders as dynamic governance spaces characterised by flows of people, goods, capital, and information (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Newman, 2016; Guo, 2012). In this view, border areas are not merely peripheral zones but central arenas where national, regional, and local governance intersect (Keban, 2014).

Brunet-Jailly (2005, 2011) proposes a multidimensional framework for border governance that integrates market forces, cross-governmental policies, political participation of border communities, and local cultural contexts. This framework underscores the need for governance arrangements that balance security concerns with socio-economic development and community well-being. In practice, however, many developing countries continue to prioritise security-oriented approaches that marginalise development and participatory dimensions.

In Indonesia, border governance is further complicated by decentralisation and regional autonomy. While decentralisation aims to empower local governments and improve service delivery, it has also generated coordination challenges due to fragmented authority and varying institutional capacities across regions. Studies indicate that decentralisation alone has not resolved disparities in border development and, in some cases, has exacerbated policy incoherence (Hadiwijoyo, 2009).

These dynamics highlight the necessity of collaborative governance mechanisms that can integrate central authority with regional autonomy and local participation. Border management agencies operating in such contexts must navigate complex institutional landscapes, making multiparty collaboration a functional necessity rather than a normative choice.

ICT as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance

The growing literature on digital governance emphasises the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration. ICT enables governments to enhance transparency, efficiency, and coordination by facilitating real-time communication, data integration, and monitoring across organisational boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). In collaborative governance contexts, ICT can reduce transaction costs, improve information symmetry, and support collective decision-making. In geographically remote and institutionally fragmented settings such as border areas, ICT assumes heightened importance. Digital platforms—including integrated reporting systems, surveillance technologies, and inter-agency communication networks—enable coordination across distances and administrative levels. ICT thus functions not merely as a technical tool but as an institutional enabler that reshapes governance processes and interaction patterns.

However, scholars caution that ICT alone cannot resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks (Wu et al., 2015). In the absence of these conditions, digital initiatives risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. Empirical studies that examine ICT within specific governance contexts are therefore essential for understanding its enabling and constraining effects.

Despite its relevance, empirical research on ICT-enabled collaboration in border governance remains limited. Most studies focus on e-government or digital service delivery rather than on how ICT supports institutional coordination and collaborative capacity. This gap is particularly evident in developing country contexts, where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary significantly across regions.

Analytical Framework: Collaboration Mechanisms

Building on collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and digital governance literature, this study employs an analytical framework based on four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination refers to aligning actors and activities through communication and information exchange. Integration involves harmonising policies, programs, and institutional roles. Synchronisation ensures that actions and timelines are mutually reinforcing across actors, while simplification aims to reduce procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers.

These mechanisms operationalise multiparty collaboration as a capacity-building process rather than a static arrangement. They provide a structured lens for analysing how BNPP navigates institutional fragmentation and leverages ICT to strengthen its coordinating role. By applying this framework to empirical data from West and North Kalimantan, the study seeks to advance theoretical understanding of collaborative governance while offering practical insights for border management institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory research design to examine how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study's objective to explore governance processes, interaction mechanisms, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural contexts and is particularly suitable for analysing collaborative governance arrangements involving multiple actors, interests, and institutional settings (W. Creswell & D. Creswell, 2018).

The explanatory orientation of this study emphasises not only describing collaborative practices but also explaining how and why specific collaboration mechanisms contribute to institutional capacity strengthening. This design aligns with the study's analytical framework, which conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Research Sites

The research was conducted in West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. These provinces were purposively selected due to their strategic geopolitical position as land border regions adjacent to Malaysia and their relevance to national border governance policy. Both provinces host Integrated Border Crossing Posts (Pos Lintas Batas Negara/PLBN) and are actively involved in BNPP-coordinated border management and development programs. The selected sites represent typical characteristics of

Indonesian land border areas, including geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, and multi-level governance arrangements involving central, provincial, and district authorities.

Informants and Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consist of organisations and actors involved in multiparty collaboration in border governance. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, responsibilities, and direct involvement in border management and development activities. This sampling strategy ensured that data were obtained from actors with relevant knowledge and experience of collaborative governance processes.

Key informants included: (1) officials from the National Border Management Agency (BNPP); (2) officials from Provincial and District Border Management Agencies (BPPD); (3) heads and staff of Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN); (4) representatives of sectoral agencies operating at border posts, such as customs, immigration, health quarantine, and agricultural quarantine; (5) local government officials and community leaders in border sub-districts; (6) academics and university representatives involved in research and community service programs in border areas; and (7) representatives of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other local economic actors. This diversity of informants enabled a comprehensive examination of multiparty collaboration across sectors and governance levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected between August and November 2024 using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to enhance depth and credibility. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview guides were designed to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices related to multiparty collaboration, coordination challenges, and the role of ICT in border governance. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Second, direct field observations were undertaken at selected border locations, particularly at PLBN facilities and surrounding border communities. Observations focused on interaction patterns among institutions, coordination practices, use of ICT tools, and day-to-day governance activities related to border management. Field notes were systematically recorded to capture contextual insights that complemented interview data.

Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with local stakeholders, including community representatives, local officials, and economic actors. FGDs were used to validate preliminary findings, capture collective perspectives, and identify shared challenges and expectations related to border governance. Finally, secondary data were collected through document analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature to contextualise and triangulate primary data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process. All interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and field notes were then subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring concepts and themes. Open coding was initially applied to capture key ideas emerging from the data, followed by axial coding to group related codes into broader analytical categories.

The analytical categories were aligned with the study's four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Pattern matching and thematic analysis were employed to link empirical findings with the analytical framework and research questions. Manual data processing

was applied throughout the analysis to allow close engagement with the data and iterative refinement of interpretations.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several validation strategies. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. Informant triangulation was achieved by engaging actors from different institutional backgrounds and governance levels. Member checking was conducted through follow-up communications with selected informants to confirm interpretations and clarify ambiguities. In addition, expert triangulation involving academics with expertise in governance and border studies was used to enhance analytical rigour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Informants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multiparty Collaboration in Border Governance: Empirical Overview

The empirical findings demonstrate that border governance in West and North Kalimantan involves a complex constellation of actors operating across multiple governance levels and sectors. These actors include central government institutions coordinated by BNPP, provincial and district border management agencies (BPPD), sectoral agencies operating at Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN), local governments, community actors, academics, and limited private sector participants. While formal institutional arrangements for collaboration exist, their effectiveness varies significantly depending on coordination capacity, institutional alignment, and enabling resources.

BNPP occupies a central position within this governance network as a coordinating institution mandated to align border management and development policies. However, its limited formal authority constrains its ability to directly command other institutions. As a result, BNPP's institutional capacity relies heavily on collaborative governance mechanisms that facilitate alignment, cooperation, and collective action among diverse stakeholders. The findings reveal that this capacity is operationalised through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Coordination as a Foundational Mechanism

Coordination emerges as the most fundamental mechanism underpinning multiparty collaboration in border governance. BNPP facilitates coordination through both formal and informal channels, including inter-agency meetings, reporting systems, and hierarchical communication pathways linking central, provincial, and district institutions. These arrangements aim to reduce fragmentation and ensure that border-related information flows effectively across governance levels.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) significantly enhances coordination capacity. Digital reporting systems, WhatsApp coordination groups, and real-time monitoring tools such as CCTV and digital dashboards enable rapid information exchange regarding border crossings, security incidents, logistical challenges, and development needs. These tools are particularly valuable given the geographical remoteness and infrastructural limitations of border areas.

Nevertheless, coordination remains uneven. Differences in ICT infrastructure quality, digital literacy, and organisational capacity across regions constrain consistent implementation. Local-level actors often face limitations related to internet connectivity and human resource skills, which reduce the effectiveness of digital coordination mechanisms. Despite these challenges, ICT-supported coordination represents a

critical advancement compared to previous reliance on fragmented and delayed communication channels.

Integration of Programs and Institutional Roles

Integration refers to the alignment and harmonisation of policies, programs, and institutional roles among stakeholders involved in border governance. The findings indicate that integration is more advanced among government actors than between government and non-state actors. Vertical integration between BNPP and regional BPPD is facilitated through shared planning frameworks, policy documents, and coordinated development programs.

However, integration across sectors and with non-state actors remains limited. Private sector involvement is largely confined to investment activities without systematic incorporation into governance processes. Similarly, community and civil society actors primarily engage in monitoring, local conflict resolution, and informal consultations rather than structured policy participation. This limited integration reflects the absence of institutionalised mechanisms for non-state actor engagement within BNPP's governance framework.

The findings suggest that integration is constrained not only by institutional design but also by differing priorities and incentive structures among actors. While government institutions prioritise administrative compliance and policy coherence, private and community actors emphasise economic opportunity and social welfare. Without formal integration mechanisms, these divergent priorities limit the potential benefits of multiparty collaboration (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019).

Synchronisation of Actions and Policy Cycles

Synchronisation involves aligning the timing, sequencing, and implementation of programs and activities across institutions to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement. The study finds that synchronisation is partially achieved through centralised planning cycles and ICT-enabled reporting systems that allow BNPP to monitor ongoing activities across regions.

Despite these efforts, synchronisation challenges persist due to differences in institutional mandates, budget cycles, and operational priorities. Sectoral agencies often operate according to their own timelines and performance indicators, which may not align with BNPP-coordinated plans. These discrepancies can result in delayed implementation, overlapping initiatives, or gaps in service delivery.

ICT tools help mitigate synchronisation challenges by increasing transparency and enabling faster feedback loops. Real-time reporting allows BNPP to identify misalignments and initiate corrective coordination. However, ICT alone cannot fully overcome structural constraints arising from fragmented authority and regulatory rigidity. Effective synchronisation, therefore, requires both technological support and institutional commitment to shared planning and accountability.

Simplification of Collaborative Procedures

Simplification focuses on reducing procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers that hinder effective collaboration. The findings indicate that BNPP has initiated efforts to simplify coordination and reporting processes through digitalisation. Standardised reporting formats, streamlined communication channels, and centralised information systems have reduced administrative burdens and improved efficiency.

Nonetheless, simplification remains constrained by overlapping legal mandates and rigid regulatory frameworks governing border management. Multiple laws, regulations, and ministerial decrees create procedural complexity that limits BNPP's ability to streamline collaborative processes fully. As a result, simplification efforts often operate within narrow administrative boundaries rather than addressing systemic fragmentation.

The findings underscore that simplification is not merely a technical exercise but an institutional challenge that requires regulatory harmonisation and political support. Without such reforms, procedural complexity will continue to undermine collaborative capacity despite technological advancements.

ICT as an Institutional Enabler of Collaborative Capacity

Across all four mechanisms, ICT functions as a critical institutional enabler rather than a standalone solution. ICT enhances BNPP's boundary-spanning capacity by facilitating communication, information sharing, and monitoring across organisational and geographical boundaries. By reducing transaction costs and improving information symmetry, ICT strengthens BNPP's ability to coordinate actors despite limited formal authority.

However, the enabling role of ICT is contingent on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive governance arrangements. Where these conditions are absent, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. The findings therefore support arguments in digital governance literature that technology must be embedded within broader institutional reforms to achieve transformative impact.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency can strengthen institutional capacity through structured collaboration mechanisms supported by ICT. The findings extend institutional capacity theory by highlighting relational and network-based capacities as critical dimensions in fragmented governance systems.

Practically, the results suggest that strengthening BNPP's role requires a strategic focus on institutionalising collaboration mechanisms rather than expanding hierarchical authority. Policies should prioritise enhancing coordination infrastructure, formalising non-state actor participation, harmonising regulatory frameworks, and investing in ICT capacity at the local level. These measures can collectively improve the effectiveness and sustainability of border governance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas depends less on the expansion of formal hierarchical authority and more on the effectiveness of multiparty collaborative governance mechanisms. In the context of border management in West and North Kalimantan, BNPP operates within a highly fragmented governance environment characterised by overlapping mandates, sectoral autonomy, and multi-level institutional arrangements. Under such conditions, BNPP's capacity is shaped primarily by its ability to coordinate, align, and mobilise diverse actors rather than to directly command them.

The findings reveal that multiparty collaboration strengthens BNPP's institutional capacity through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination enables information exchange and alignment among actors; integration harmonises policies, programs, and institutional roles; synchronisation ensures coherence in timing and implementation; and simplification reduces procedural complexity that often undermines collaboration. Together, these mechanisms function as a governance architecture that allows BNPP to perform its boundary-spanning role effectively despite limited formal authority.

A central contribution of this study is the identification of information and communication technology (ICT) as a critical institutional enabler of collaborative capacity. ICT enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and supports both vertical and horizontal coordination across geographically dispersed border areas. However, the study also confirms that ICT alone is insufficient to resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive

regulatory frameworks. Without these conditions, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and coordination failures.

Policy Implications

The findings yield several policy implications for strengthening border governance in Indonesia. First, border governance policies should explicitly recognise BNPP as a collaborative coordinator rather than merely an administrative institution. Strengthening BNPP's mandate to convene, integrate, and synchronise sectoral and regional programs is more critical than expanding its hierarchical authority. Second, the institutionalisation of non-state actor participation should be prioritised. Formal mechanisms for engaging private sector actors, civil society organisations, and border communities—such as structured consultation forums and partnership frameworks—can enhance inclusivity, legitimacy, and sustainability in border development initiatives.

Third, continued investment in ICT infrastructure and digital governance systems is essential, particularly at the local level. Such investments should be accompanied by capacity-building programs to ensure effective utilisation and to reduce disparities in digital readiness across regions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The empirical analysis focuses on two land border provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other border contexts in Indonesia, such as maritime border regions. In addition, the qualitative research design prioritises depth of analysis over breadth and does not quantitatively measure collaboration outcomes or development impacts.

Directions for Future Research

Future research could adopt comparative or mixed method approaches to examine collaborative border governance across different regions or countries. Quantitative assessments of collaborative performance and long-term socio-economic and security outcomes would complement the qualitative insights offered in this study. Further research may also explore the role of leadership, political dynamics, and regulatory reform in sustaining ICT-enabled collaborative governance in border areas.

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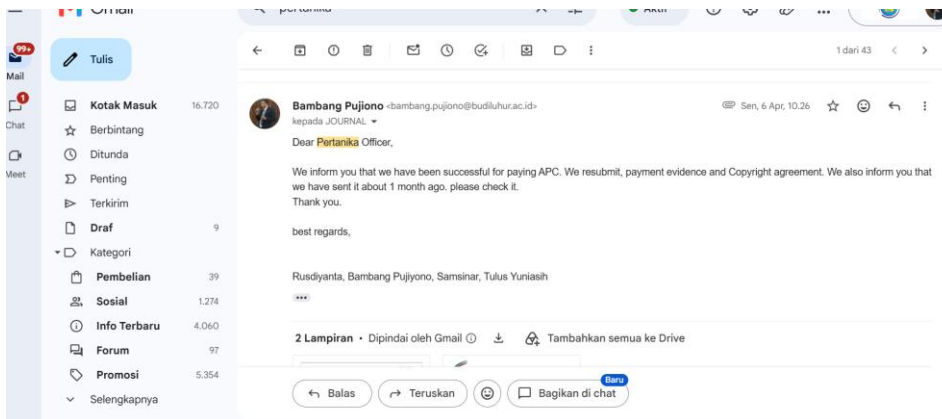
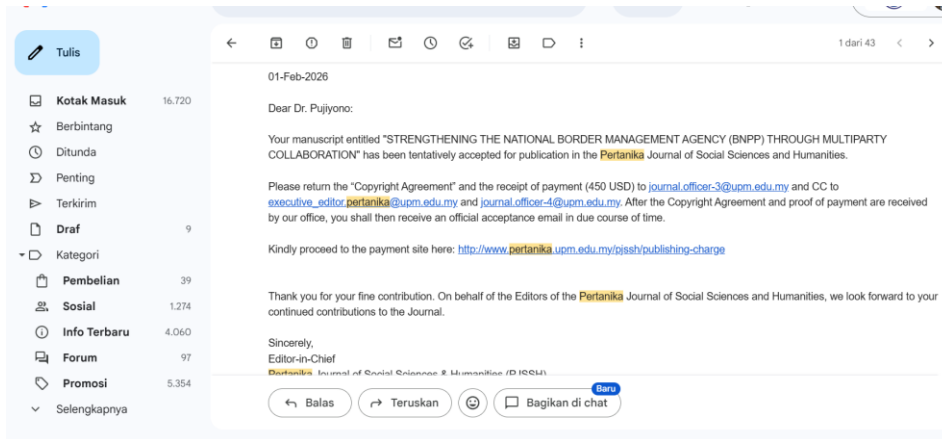
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Strengthening the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. Border governance in these regions is characterised by fragmented authority, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited involvement of non-state actors. Existing studies on border management largely emphasise security or decentralisation perspectives, leaving limited empirical explanation of how collaborative mechanisms operate institutionally, particularly in developing country contexts. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis conducted between August and November 2024. The findings reveal that BNPP’s coordinating capacity is strengthened through four interrelated collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification, supported by information and communication technology (ICT). ICT functions as an institutional enabler that enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and facilitates cross-level governance. The study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency with limited formal authority can enhance institutional capacity through ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration. Policy implications emphasise strengthening BNPP’s coordinating mandate, institutionalising non-state actor participation, and expanding ICT capacity at the local level.

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INTRODUCTION

Border governance constitutes one of the most complex policy domains in contemporary

public administration, particularly in developing countries characterised by vast territories, institutional fragmentation, and uneven regional development. National borders no longer function solely as rigid territorial demarcations of state sovereignty; rather, they have evolved into dynamic governance spaces where security, development, economic exchange, and socio-cultural interaction intersect. In this context, border areas are expected to perform a dual role: as frontlines of national sovereignty and as front porches that reflect state presence, welfare provision, and development performance. However, empirical conditions in many border regions reveal persistent governance challenges that undermine this dual function.

In Indonesia, border areas remain disproportionately affected by structural underdevelopment, limited infrastructure, low access to public services, and high vulnerability to transnational threats such as illegal trade, smuggling, human trafficking, and environmental exploitation. These challenges are particularly evident in land border regions such as West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, which share extensive boundaries with Malaysia (Daldjoeni, 1991; Saiman, 2017). Despite their strategic geopolitical importance, these regions continue to face governance constraints rooted in fragmented authority, sectoral policy approaches, and weak coordination between central and regional governments. The persistence of these issues highlights the limitations of conventional border management paradigms that prioritise security enforcement while marginalising governance and development considerations.

The establishment of the National Border Management Agency (Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP) represents the Indonesian government's institutional response to these complex challenges. Mandated by Law No. 43 of 2008, BNPP is tasked with coordinating border management and development across ministries, agencies, and subnational governments. Unlike line ministries with direct operational authority, BNPP's role is primarily coordinative, requiring it to align diverse actors with varying mandates, resources, and institutional capacities. This unique positioning places BNPP at the centre of a highly fragmented governance network, where effectiveness depends less on hierarchical control and more on the ability to foster collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

However, the coordinative nature of BNPP also presents inherent limitations. BNPP operates within a governance environment characterised by overlapping legal frameworks, decentralised administrative authority, and strong sectoral autonomy among ministries and regional governments. As a result, BNPP frequently encounters challenges related to weak inter-agent communication, inconsistent policy implementation, overlapping programmes, and limited engagement of non-state actors such as private sector entities, civil society organisations, and local communities. These constraints raise critical questions regarding how BNPP can effectively strengthen its institutional capacity and fulfil its mandate in managing border areas.

Existing academic literature on border governance has largely approached the issue from three dominant perspectives. First, security-oriented studies emphasise border control, territorial defence, and sovereignty protection, often framing border areas as spaces of threat and vulnerability. Second, decentralisation and regional autonomy perspectives focus on the distribution of authority between central and local governments, highlighting both opportunities and coordination challenges arising from multi-level governance. Third, international relations and cross-border cooperation studies examine borders as sites of inter-state interaction and diplomacy. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they tend to underexplore the institutional mechanisms through which collaborative governance strengthens the capacity of a national border authority, particularly in developing country contexts.

In parallel, the growing body of literature on collaborative governance and multiparty collaboration emphasises the role of cross-sector and cross-level partnerships in addressing complex public problems that cannot be resolved by single actors. Collaborative governance frameworks highlight the importance of coordination, trust-building, shared problem definition, and joint action among heterogeneous stakeholders. Yet, empirical applications of these frameworks to border governance remain limited, especially in understanding how collaboration operates as an institutional capacity-building mechanism for a coordinative agency such as BNPP.

Moreover, recent advances in digital governance have drawn attention to the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in facilitating collaboration within fragmented governance systems. ICT enables real-time communication, data sharing, monitoring, and coordination across organisational and geographical boundaries. In border governance contexts—characterised by remote locations, limited infrastructure, and dispersed institutional actors—ICT has the potential to function as a critical enabler of collaborative capacity. Nevertheless, empirical research examining ICT as an integral component of multiparty border governance remains scarce, leaving a significant gap in both theory and practice.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of BNPP in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan. Rather than treating collaboration as a normative ideal, this research analyses collaboration as a set of concrete governance mechanisms that enable BNPP to perform its coordinating role effectively despite limited formal authority. Specifically, this study conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. These mechanisms provide an analytical lens for understanding how diverse actors are aligned, how programmes and policies are harmonised, how actions are synchronised across institutions, and how procedural complexity is reduced within border governance arrangements.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions: (1) How does multiparty collaboration operate in strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity in managing border areas? (2) What roles do state, private, and community actors play within this collaborative governance arrangement? (3) How does ICT facilitate coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification among stakeholders involved in border management? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the literature on collaborative governance and institutional capacity while offering policy-relevant insights for strengthening border governance in Indonesia.

Positioned within the field of public governance, this research advances the understanding of border management beyond security-centric and administrative perspectives. It highlights the importance of collaborative governance mechanisms and digital enablers in managing complex policy environments. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers on how BNPP and similar coordinative institutions can enhance their capacity through structured multiparty collaboration, thereby supporting more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable border area development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Governance and Multiparty Collaboration

Collaborative governance has emerged as a prominent framework in public administration to address complex public

problems characterised by uncertainty, interdependence, and institutional fragmentation. Ansell and Torfing (2014) define collaborative governance as governance arrangements in which public agencies engage constructively with non-state actors in collective decision-making processes that are formal, deliberative, and consensus oriented. This approach departs from traditional hierarchical governance by emphasising interaction, shared responsibility, and joint problem-solving among heterogeneous actors (Torfing, 2019).

Multiparty collaboration represents a broader conceptualisation of collaborative governance by highlighting the involvement of multiple actors across sectors and levels of governance. Gray and Purdy (2018) argue that multiparty collaboration is particularly relevant for addressing “wicked problems” that cannot be resolved by single organisations due to their complexity and cross-sectoral nature. Rather than focusing solely on participation, contemporary collaboration literature emphasises governance mechanisms that enable coordination, trust-building, alignment of interests, and effective collective action (Ahmed & Lee, 2024; Lawrence et al., 2023).

In the public sector context, multiparty collaboration typically involves government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and local communities (Banerjee et al., 2020). Each actor brings distinct resources, authority, interests, and capacities, which can both enrich collaboration and generate conflict. As such, the effectiveness

of collaboration depends not only on actor inclusion but also on institutional arrangements that manage interdependence and mitigate power asymmetries (Bryson & Crosby, 2006; Gray et al., 2022).

Despite its growing prominence, collaborative governance is not without challenges. Scholars note that collaboration can be hindered by sectoral ego, weak leadership, unclear accountability, and institutional rigidity (O'Leary & Bingham, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in contexts where lead organisations lack formal authority over participating actors, as is often the case in coordinative agencies. (O'Leary et al. 2010). This highlights the importance of understanding collaboration as an institutional capacity-building process rather than merely a participatory arrangement.

Institutional Capacity in Public Sector Organisations

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public organisations to perform their mandated functions effectively by mobilising resources, coordinating actors, and adapting to dynamic governance environments. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) conceptualise capacity as a multidimensional construct encompassing institutional arrangements, human resources, organisational processes, networks, and the broader policy environment. Similarly, Wu et al. (2015) emphasise that policy capacity extends beyond technical expertise to include analytical, operational, and political capabilities.

In collaborative governance settings, institutional capacity is increasingly shaped by relational and network-based capabilities. Lead organisations must function as boundary spanners that connect actors across institutional, sectoral, and territorial boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). This role requires skills in coordination, negotiation, facilitation, and information management rather than command-and-control authority. Consequently, institutional capacity in such contexts depends on the ability to orchestrate collaboration rather than to impose decisions.

For coordinative agencies like BNPP, capacity constraints are often structural. Limited formal authority, dependence on other institutions' resources, and overlapping mandates can undermine effectiveness. However, scholars argue that these constraints can be mitigated through governance mechanisms that enhance coordination, integration, and alignment among actors (Kekez et al., 2018). Understanding how such mechanisms operate empirically is therefore critical for advancing institutional capacity theory in fragmented governance systems.

Border Governance as a Multidimensional Policy Arena

Border governance literature has evolved significantly from traditional geopolitical perspectives that conceptualise borders as fixed lines of sovereignty. Contemporary border studies emphasise borders as dynamic governance spaces characterised by flows of people, goods, capital, and

information (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Guo, 2012; Newman, 2016). In this view, border areas are not merely peripheral zones, but central arenas where national, regional, and local governance intersect (Keban, 2014).

Brunet-Jailly (2005, 2011) proposes a multidimensional framework for border governance that integrates market forces, cross-governmental policies, political participation of border communities, and local cultural contexts. This framework underscores the need for governance arrangements that balance security concerns with socio-economic development and community well-being. In practice, however, many developing countries continue to prioritise security-oriented approaches that marginalise development and participatory dimensions.

In Indonesia, border governance is further complicated by decentralisation and regional autonomy. While decentralisation aims to empower local governments and improve service delivery, it has also generated coordination challenges due to fragmented authority and varying institutional capacities across regions. Studies indicate that decentralisation alone has not resolved disparities in border development and, in some cases, has exacerbated policy incoherence (Hadiwijoyo, 2009).

These dynamics highlight the necessity of collaborative governance mechanisms that can integrate central authority with regional autonomy and local participation. Border management agencies operating in such contexts must navigate complex institutional landscapes, making multiparty

collaboration a functional necessity rather than a normative choice.

ICT as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance

The growing literature on digital governance emphasises the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration. ICT enables governments to enhance transparency, efficiency, and coordination by facilitating real-time communication, data integration, and monitoring across organisational boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). In collaborative governance contexts, ICT can reduce transaction costs, improve information symmetry, and support collective decision-making.

In geographically remote and institutionally fragmented settings such as border areas, ICT assumes heightened importance. Digital platforms—including integrated reporting systems, surveillance technologies, and inter-agency communication networks—enable for coordination across distances and administrative levels. ICT thus functions not merely as a technical tool but as an institutional enabler that reshapes governance processes and interaction patterns.

However, scholars caution that ICT alone cannot resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks (Wu et al., 2015). In the absence of these conditions, digital initiatives risk reinforcing

existing inequalities and fragmentation. Empirical studies that examine ICT within specific governance contexts are therefore essential for understanding its enabling and constraining effects.

Despite its relevance, empirical research on ICT-enabled collaboration in border governance remains limited. Most studies focus on e-government or digital service delivery rather than on how ICT supports institutional coordination and collaborative capacity. This gap is particularly evident in developing country contexts, where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary significantly across regions.

Analytical Framework: Collaboration Mechanisms

Building on collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and digital governance literature, this study employs an analytical framework based on four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination refers to aligning actors and activities through communication and information exchange. Integration involves harmonising policies, programmes, and institutional roles. Synchronisation ensures that actions and timelines are mutually reinforcing across actors, while simplification aims to reduce procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers.

These mechanisms operationalise multiparty collaboration as a capacity-building process rather than a static arrangement. They provide a structured

lens for analysing how BNPP navigates institutional fragmentation and leverages ICT to strengthen its coordinating role. By applying this framework to empirical data from West and North Kalimantan, the study seeks to advance theoretical understanding of collaborative governance while offering practical insights for border management institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory research design to examine how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study's objective to explore governance processes, interaction mechanisms, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural contexts and is particularly suitable for analysing collaborative governance arrangements involving multiple actors, interests, and institutional settings (W. Creswell & D. Creswell, 2018).

The explanatory orientation of this study emphasises not only describing collaborative practices but also explaining how and why specific collaboration mechanisms contribute to institutional capacity strengthening. This design aligns with the study's analytical framework, which conceptualises multiparty collaboration

through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Research Sites

The research was conducted in West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. These provinces were purposively selected due to their strategic geopolitical position as land border regions adjacent to Malaysia and their relevance to national border governance policy. Both provinces host Integrated Border Crossing Posts (Pos Lintas Batas Negara/PLBN) and are actively involved in BNPP-coordinated border management and development programmes. The selected sites represent typical characteristics of Indonesian land border areas, including geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, and multi-level governance arrangements involving central, provincial, and district authorities.

Informants and Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consist of organisations and actors involved in multiparty collaboration in border governance. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, responsibilities, and direct involvement in border management and development activities. This sampling strategy ensured that data were obtained from actors with relevant knowledge and experience of collaborative governance processes.

Key informants included: (1) officials from the National Border Management Agency (BNPP); (2) officials from Provincial and District Border Management Agencies (BPPD); (3) heads and staff of Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN); (4) representatives of sectoral agencies operating at border posts, such as customs, immigration, health quarantine, and agricultural quarantine; (5) local government officials and community leaders in border sub-districts; (6) academics and university representatives involved in research and community service programmes in border areas; and (7) representatives of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other local economic actors. This diversity of informants enabled a comprehensive examination of multiparty collaboration across sectors and governance levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected between August and November 2024 using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to enhance depth and credibility. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview guides were designed to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices related to multiparty collaboration, coordination challenges, and the role of ICT in border governance. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Second, direct field observations were undertaken at selected border

locations, particularly at PLBN facilities and surrounding border communities. Observations focused on interaction patterns among institutions, coordination practices, use of ICT tools, and day-to-day governance activities related to border management. Field notes were systematically recorded to capture contextual insights that complemented interview data.

Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with local stakeholders, including community representatives, local officials, and economic actors. FGDs were used to validate preliminary findings, capture collective perspectives, and identify shared challenges and expectations related to border governance. Finally, secondary data were collected through document analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature to contextualise and triangulate primary data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process. All interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and field notes were then subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring concepts and themes. Open coding was initially applied to capture key ideas emerging from the data, followed by axial coding to group related codes into broader analytical categories.

The analytical categories were aligned with the study's four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Pattern matching and thematic analysis were

employed to link empirical findings with the analytical framework and research questions. Manual data processing was applied throughout the analysis to allow close engagement with the data and iterative refinement of interpretations.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several validation strategies. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. Informant triangulation was achieved by engaging actors from different institutional backgrounds and governance levels. Member checking was conducted through follow-up communications with selected informants to confirm interpretations and clarify ambiguities. In addition, expert triangulation involving academics with expertise in governance and border studies was used to enhance analytical rigour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Informants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multiparty Collaboration in Border Governance: Empirical Overview

The empirical findings demonstrate that border governance in West and

North Kalimantan involves a complex constellation of actors operating across multiple governance levels and sectors. These actors include central government institutions coordinated by BNPP, provincial and district border management agencies (BPPD), sectoral agencies operating at Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN), local governments, community actors, academics, and limited private sector participants. While formal institutional arrangements for collaboration exist, their effectiveness varies significantly depending on coordination capacity, institutional alignment, and enabling resources.

BNPP occupies a central position within this governance network as a coordinating institution mandated to align border management and development policies. However, its limited formal authority constrains its ability to directly command other institutions. As a result, BNPP's institutional capacity relies heavily on collaborative governance mechanisms that facilitate alignment, cooperation, and collective action among diverse stakeholders. The findings reveal that this capacity is operationalised through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Coordination as a Foundational Mechanism

Coordination emerges as the most fundamental mechanism underpinning multiparty collaboration in border governance. BNPP facilitates coordination through both formal and informal channels,

including inter-agency meetings, reporting systems, and hierarchical communication pathways linking central, provincial, and district institutions. These arrangements aim to reduce fragmentation and ensure that border-related information flows effectively across governance levels.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) significantly enhances coordination capacity. Digital reporting systems, WhatsApp coordination groups, and real-time monitoring tools such as CCTV and digital dashboards enable rapid information exchange regarding border crossings, security incidents, logistical challenges, and development needs. These tools are particularly valuable given the geographical remoteness and infrastructural limitations of border areas.

Nevertheless, coordination remains uneven. Differences in ICT infrastructure quality, digital literacy, and organisational capacity across regions constrain consistent implementation. Local-level actors often face limitations related to internet connectivity and human resource skills, which reduce the effectiveness of digital coordination mechanisms. Despite these challenges, ICT-supported coordination represents a critical advancement compared to previous reliance on fragmented and delayed communication channels.

Integration of Programmes and Institutional Roles

Integration refers to the alignment and harmonisation of policies, programmes, and institutional roles among stakeholders

involved in border governance. The findings indicate that integration is more advanced among government actors than between government and non-state actors. Vertical integration between BNPP and regional BPPD is facilitated through shared planning frameworks, policy documents, and coordinated development programmes.

However, integration across sectors and non-state actors remains limited. Private sector involvement is largely confined to investment activities without systematic incorporation into governance processes. Similarly, community and civil society actors primarily engage in monitoring, local conflict resolution, and informal consultations rather than structured policy participation. This limited integration reflects the absence of institutionalised mechanisms for non-state actor engagement within BNPP's governance framework.

The findings suggest that integration is constrained not only by institutional design but also by differing priorities and incentive structures among actors. While government institutions prioritise administrative compliance and policy coherence, private and community actors emphasise economic opportunity and social welfare. Without formal integration mechanisms, these divergent priorities limit the potential benefits of multiparty collaboration (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019).

Synchronisation of Actions and Policy Cycles

Synchronisation involves aligning the timing, sequencing, and implementation

of programmes and activities across institutions to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement. The study finds that synchronisation is partially achieved through centralised planning cycles and ICT-enabled reporting systems that allow BNPP to monitor ongoing activities across regions.

Despite these efforts, synchronisation challenges persist due to differences in institutional mandates, budget cycles, and operational priorities. Sectoral agencies often operate according to their own timelines and performance indicators, which may not align with BNPP-coordinated plans. These discrepancies can result in delayed implementation, overlapping initiatives, or gaps in service delivery.

ICT tools help mitigate synchronisation challenges by increasing transparency and enabling faster feedback loops. Real-time reporting allows BNPP to identify misalignments and initiate corrective coordination. However, ICT alone cannot fully overcome structural constraints arising from fragmented authority and regulatory rigidity. Effective synchronisation, therefore, requires both technological support and institutional commitment to shared planning and accountability.

Simplification of Collaborative Procedures

Simplification focuses on reducing procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers that hinder effective collaboration. The findings indicate that BNPP has

initiated efforts to simplify coordination and reporting processes through digitalisation. Standardised reporting formats, streamlined communication channels, and centralised information systems have reduced administrative burdens and improved efficiency.

Nonetheless, simplification remains constrained by overlapping legal mandates and rigid regulatory frameworks governing border management. Multiple laws, regulations, and ministerial decrees create procedural complexity that limits BNPP's ability to streamline collaborative processes fully. As a result, simplification efforts often operate within narrow administrative boundaries rather than addressing systemic fragmentation.

The findings underscore that simplification is not merely a technical exercise but an institutional challenge that requires regulatory harmonisation and political support. Without such reforms, procedural complexity will continue to undermine collaborative capacity despite technological advancements.

ICT as an Institutional Enabler of Collaborative Capacity

Across all four mechanisms, ICT functions as a critical institutional enabler rather than a standalone solution. ICT enhances BNPP's boundary-spanning capacity by facilitating communication, information sharing, and monitoring across organisational and geographical boundaries. By reducing transaction costs and improving information symmetry, ICT strengthens BNPP's ability

to coordinate actors despite limited formal authority.

However, the enabling role of ICT is contingent on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive governance arrangements. Where these conditions are absent, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. The findings therefore support arguments in digital governance literature that technology must be embedded within broader institutional reforms to achieve transformative impact.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency can strengthen institutional capacity through structured collaboration mechanisms supported by ICT. The findings extend institutional capacity theory by highlighting relational and network-based capacities as critical dimensions in fragmented governance systems.

Practically, the results suggest that strengthening BNPP's role requires a strategic focus on institutionalising collaboration mechanisms rather than expanding hierarchical authority. Policies should prioritise enhancing coordination infrastructure, formalising non-state actor participation, harmonising regulatory frameworks, and investing in ICT capacity at the local level. These measures can collectively improve the effectiveness and sustainability of border governance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas depends less on the expansion of formal hierarchical authority and more on the effectiveness of multiparty collaborative governance mechanisms. In the context of border management in West and North Kalimantan, BNPP operates within a highly fragmented governance environment characterised by overlapping mandates, sectoral autonomy, and multi-level institutional arrangements. Under such conditions, BNPP's capacity is shaped primarily by its ability to coordinate, align, and mobilise diverse actors rather than to directly command them.

The findings reveal that multiparty collaboration strengthens BNPP's institutional capacity through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination enables information exchange and alignment among actors; integration harmonises policies, programmes, and institutional roles; synchronisation ensures coherence in timing and implementation; and simplification reduces procedural complexity that often undermines collaboration. Together, these mechanisms function as a governance architecture that allows BNPP to perform its boundary-spanning role effectively despite limited formal authority.

A central contribution of this study is the identification of information and communication technology (ICT) as a

critical institutional enabler of collaborative capacity. ICT enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and supports both vertical and horizontal coordination across geographically dispersed border areas. However, the study also confirms that ICT alone is insufficient to resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks. Without these conditions, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and coordination failures.

Policy Implications

The findings yield several policy implications for strengthening border governance in Indonesia. First, border governance policies should explicitly recognise BNPP as a collaborative coordinator rather than merely an administrative institution. Strengthening BNPP's mandate to convene, integrate, and synchronise sectoral and regional programmes is more critical than expanding its hierarchical authority.

Second, the institutionalisation of non-state actor participation should be prioritised. Formal mechanisms for engaging private sector actors, civil society organisations, and border communities—such as structured consultation forums and partnership frameworks—can enhance inclusivity, legitimacy, and sustainability in border development initiatives.

Third, continued investment in ICT infrastructure and digital governance systems is essential, particularly at the local level. Such investments should be accompanied

by capacity-building programmes to ensure effective utilisation and to reduce disparities in digital readiness across regions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The empirical analysis focuses on two land border provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other border contexts in Indonesia, such as maritime border regions. In addition, the qualitative research design prioritises depth of analysis over breadth and does not quantitatively measure collaboration outcomes or development impacts.

Directions for Future Research

Future research could adopt comparative or mixed method approaches to examine collaborative border governance across different regions or countries. Quantitative assessments of collaborative performance and long-term socio-economic and security outcomes would complement the qualitative insights offered in this study. Further research may also explore the role of leadership, political dynamics, and regulatory reform in sustaining ICT-enabled collaborative governance in border areas.

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Strengthening the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) Through Multiparty Collaboration

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. Border governance in these regions is characterised by fragmented authority, weak inter-agency coordination, and limited involvement of non-state actors. Existing studies on border management largely emphasise security or decentralisation perspectives, leaving limited empirical explanation of how collaborative mechanisms operate institutionally, particularly in developing country contexts. Employing a qualitative explanatory approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis conducted between August and November 2024. The findings reveal that BNPP's coordinating capacity is strengthened through four interrelated collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification, supported by information and communication technology (ICT). ICT functions as an institutional enabler that enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and facilitates cross-level governance. The study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency with limited formal authority can enhance institutional capacity through ICT-enabled multiparty collaboration. Policy implications emphasise strengthening BNPP's coordinating mandate, institutionalising non-state actor participation, and expanding ICT capacity at the local level.

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INTRODUCTION

Border governance constitutes one of the most complex policy domains in contemporary

public administration, particularly in developing countries characterised by vast territories, institutional fragmentation, and uneven regional development. National borders no longer function solely as rigid territorial demarcations of state sovereignty; rather, they have evolved into dynamic governance spaces where security, development, economic exchange, and socio-cultural interaction intersect. In this context, border areas are expected to perform a dual role: as frontlines of national sovereignty and as front porches that reflect state presence, welfare provision, and development performance. However, empirical conditions in many border regions reveal persistent governance challenges that undermine this dual function.

In Indonesia, border areas remain disproportionately affected by structural underdevelopment, limited infrastructure, low access to public services, and high vulnerability to transnational threats such as illegal trade, smuggling, human trafficking, and environmental exploitation. These challenges are particularly evident in land border regions such as West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, which share extensive boundaries with Malaysia (Daldjoeni, 1991; Saiman, 2017). Despite their strategic geopolitical importance, these regions continue to face governance constraints rooted in fragmented authority, sectoral policy approaches, and weak coordination between central and regional governments. The persistence of these issues highlights the limitations of conventional border management paradigms that prioritise security enforcement while marginalising governance and development considerations.

The establishment of the National Border Management Agency (Badan Nasional Pengelola Perbatasan/BNPP) represents the Indonesian government's institutional response to these complex challenges. Mandated by Law No. 43 of 2008, BNPP is tasked with coordinating border management and development across ministries, agencies, and subnational governments. Unlike line ministries with direct operational authority, BNPP's role is primarily coordinative, requiring it to align diverse actors with varying mandates, resources, and institutional capacities. This unique positioning places BNPP at the centre of a highly fragmented governance network, where effectiveness depends less on hierarchical control and more on the ability to foster collaboration among multiple stakeholders.

However, the coordinative nature of BNPP also presents inherent limitations. BNPP operates within a governance environment characterised by overlapping legal frameworks, decentralised administrative authority, and strong sectoral autonomy among ministries and regional governments. As a result, BNPP frequently encounters challenges related to weak inter-agent communication, inconsistent policy implementation, overlapping programmes, and limited engagement of non-state actors such as private sector entities, civil society organisations, and local communities. These constraints raise critical questions regarding how BNPP can effectively strengthen its institutional capacity and fulfil its mandate in managing border areas.

Existing academic literature on border governance has largely approached the issue from three dominant perspectives. First, security-oriented studies emphasise border control, territorial defence, and sovereignty protection, often framing border areas as spaces of threat and vulnerability. Second, decentralisation and regional autonomy perspectives focus on the distribution of authority between central and local governments, highlighting both opportunities and coordination challenges arising from multi-level governance. Third, international relations and cross-border cooperation studies examine borders as sites of inter-state interaction and diplomacy. While these approaches offer valuable insights, they tend to underexplore the institutional mechanisms through which collaborative governance strengthens the capacity of a national border authority, particularly in developing country contexts.

In parallel, the growing body of literature on collaborative governance and multiparty collaboration emphasises the role of cross-sector and cross-level partnerships in addressing complex public problems that cannot be resolved by single actors. Collaborative governance frameworks highlight the importance of coordination, trust-building, shared problem definition, and joint action among heterogeneous stakeholders. Yet, empirical applications of these frameworks to border governance remain limited, especially in understanding how collaboration operates as an institutional capacity-building mechanism for a coordinative agency such as BNPP.

Moreover, recent advances in digital governance have drawn attention to the role of information and communication technology (ICT) in facilitating collaboration within fragmented governance systems. ICT enables real-time communication, data sharing, monitoring, and coordination across organisational and geographical boundaries. In border governance contexts—characterised by remote locations, limited infrastructure, and dispersed institutional actors—ICT has the potential to function as a critical enabler of collaborative capacity. Nevertheless, empirical research examining ICT as an integral component of multiparty border governance remains scarce, leaving a significant gap in both theory and practice.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of BNPP in managing border areas in West and North Kalimantan. Rather than treating collaboration as a normative ideal, this research analyses collaboration as a set of concrete governance mechanisms that enable BNPP to perform its coordinating role effectively despite limited formal authority. Specifically, this study conceptualises multiparty collaboration through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. These mechanisms provide an analytical lens for understanding how diverse actors are aligned, how programmes and policies are harmonised, how actions are synchronised across institutions, and how procedural complexity is reduced within border governance arrangements.

Accordingly, this study is guided by three research questions: (1) How does multiparty collaboration operate in strengthening BNPP's institutional capacity in managing border areas? (2) What roles do state, private, and community actors play within this collaborative governance arrangement? (3) How does ICT facilitate coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification among stakeholders involved in border management? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the literature on collaborative governance and institutional capacity while offering policy-relevant insights for strengthening border governance in Indonesia.

Positioned within the field of public governance, this research advances the understanding of border management beyond security-centric and administrative perspectives. It highlights the importance of collaborative governance mechanisms and digital enablers in managing complex policy environments. Practically, the findings are expected to inform policymakers on how BNPP and similar coordinative institutions can enhance their capacity through structured multiparty collaboration, thereby supporting more inclusive, integrated, and sustainable border area development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaborative Governance and Multiparty Collaboration

Collaborative governance has emerged as a prominent framework in public administration to address complex public

problems characterised by uncertainty, interdependence, and institutional fragmentation. Ansell and Torfing (2014) define collaborative governance as governance arrangements in which public agencies engage constructively with non-state actors in collective decision-making processes that are formal, deliberative, and consensus oriented. This approach departs from traditional hierarchical governance by emphasising interaction, shared responsibility, and joint problem-solving among heterogeneous actors (Torfing, 2019).

Multiparty collaboration represents a broader conceptualisation of collaborative governance by highlighting the involvement of multiple actors across sectors and levels of governance. Gray and Purdy (2018) argue that multiparty collaboration is particularly relevant for addressing “wicked problems” that cannot be resolved by single organisations due to their complexity and cross-sectoral nature. Rather than focusing solely on participation, contemporary collaboration literature emphasises governance mechanisms that enable coordination, trust-building, alignment of interests, and effective collective action (Ahmed & Lee, 2024; Lawrence et al., 2023).

In the public sector context, multiparty collaboration typically involves government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and local communities (Banerjee et al., 2020). Each actor brings distinct resources, authority, interests, and capacities, which can both enrich collaboration and generate conflict. As such, the effectiveness

of collaboration depends not only on actor inclusion but also on institutional arrangements that manage interdependence and mitigate power asymmetries (Bryson & Crosby, 2006; Gray et al., 2022).

Despite its growing prominence, collaborative governance is not without challenges. Scholars note that collaboration can be hindered by sectoral ego, weak leadership, unclear accountability, and institutional rigidity (O'Leary & Bingham, 2009). These challenges are particularly acute in contexts where lead organisations lack formal authority over participating actors, as is often the case in coordinative agencies. (O'Leary et al. 2010). This highlights the importance of understanding collaboration as an institutional capacity-building process rather than merely a participatory arrangement.

Institutional Capacity in Public Sector Organisations

Institutional capacity refers to the ability of public organisations to perform their mandated functions effectively by mobilising resources, coordinating actors, and adapting to dynamic governance environments. Grindle and Hilderbrand (1995) conceptualise capacity as a multidimensional construct encompassing institutional arrangements, human resources, organisational processes, networks, and the broader policy environment. Similarly, Wu et al. (2015) emphasise that policy capacity extends beyond technical expertise to include analytical, operational, and political capabilities.

In collaborative governance settings, institutional capacity is increasingly shaped by relational and network-based capabilities. Lead organisations must function as boundary spanners that connect actors across institutional, sectoral, and territorial boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). This role requires skills in coordination, negotiation, facilitation, and information management rather than command-and-control authority. Consequently, institutional capacity in such contexts depends on the ability to orchestrate collaboration rather than to impose decisions.

For coordinative agencies like BNPP, capacity constraints are often structural. Limited formal authority, dependence on other institutions' resources, and overlapping mandates can undermine effectiveness. However, scholars argue that these constraints can be mitigated through governance mechanisms that enhance coordination, integration, and alignment among actors (Kekez et al., 2018). Understanding how such mechanisms operate empirically is therefore critical for advancing institutional capacity theory in fragmented governance systems.

Border Governance as a Multidimensional Policy Arena

Border governance literature has evolved significantly from traditional geopolitical perspectives that conceptualise borders as fixed lines of sovereignty. Contemporary border studies emphasise borders as dynamic governance spaces characterised by flows of people, goods, capital, and

information (Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Guo, 2012; Newman, 2016). In this view, border areas are not merely peripheral zones, but central arenas where national, regional, and local governance intersect (Keban, 2014).

Brunet-Jailly (2005, 2011) proposes a multidimensional framework for border governance that integrates market forces, cross-governmental policies, political participation of border communities, and local cultural contexts. This framework underscores the need for governance arrangements that balance security concerns with socio-economic development and community well-being. In practice, however, many developing countries continue to prioritise security-oriented approaches that marginalise development and participatory dimensions.

In Indonesia, border governance is further complicated by decentralisation and regional autonomy. While decentralisation aims to empower local governments and improve service delivery, it has also generated coordination challenges due to fragmented authority and varying institutional capacities across regions. Studies indicate that decentralisation alone has not resolved disparities in border development and, in some cases, has exacerbated policy incoherence (Hadiwijoyo, 2009).

These dynamics highlight the necessity of collaborative governance mechanisms that can integrate central authority with regional autonomy and local participation. Border management agencies operating in such contexts must navigate complex institutional landscapes, making multiparty

collaboration a functional necessity rather than a normative choice.

ICT as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance

The growing literature on digital governance emphasises the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration. ICT enables governments to enhance transparency, efficiency, and coordination by facilitating real-time communication, data integration, and monitoring across organisational boundaries (Howlett et al., 2020). In collaborative governance contexts, ICT can reduce transaction costs, improve information symmetry, and support collective decision-making.

In geographically remote and institutionally fragmented settings such as border areas, ICT assumes heightened importance. Digital platforms—including integrated reporting systems, surveillance technologies, and inter-agency communication networks—enable for coordination across distances and administrative levels. ICT thus functions not merely as a technical tool but as an institutional enabler that reshapes governance processes and interaction patterns.

However, scholars caution that ICT alone cannot resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks (Wu et al., 2015). In the absence of these conditions, digital initiatives risk reinforcing

existing inequalities and fragmentation. Empirical studies that examine ICT within specific governance contexts are therefore essential for understanding its enabling and constraining effects.

Despite its relevance, empirical research on ICT-enabled collaboration in border governance remains limited. Most studies focus on e-government or digital service delivery rather than on how ICT supports institutional coordination and collaborative capacity. This gap is particularly evident in developing country contexts, where digital infrastructure and institutional capacity vary significantly across regions.

Analytical Framework: Collaboration Mechanisms

Building on collaborative governance, institutional capacity, border governance, and digital governance literature, this study employs an analytical framework based on four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination refers to aligning actors and activities through communication and information exchange. Integration involves harmonising policies, programmes, and institutional roles. Synchronisation ensures that actions and timelines are mutually reinforcing across actors, while simplification aims to reduce procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers.

These mechanisms operationalise multiparty collaboration as a capacity-building process rather than a static arrangement. They provide a structured

lens for analysing how BNPP navigates institutional fragmentation and leverages ICT to strengthen its coordinating role. By applying this framework to empirical data from West and North Kalimantan, the study seeks to advance theoretical understanding of collaborative governance while offering practical insights for border management institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design and Approach

This study adopts a qualitative explanatory research design to examine how multiparty collaboration strengthens the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas. A qualitative approach is appropriate given the study's objective to explore governance processes, interaction mechanisms, and institutional dynamics that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena within their natural contexts and is particularly suitable for analysing collaborative governance arrangements involving multiple actors, interests, and institutional settings (W. Creswell & D. Creswell, 2018).

The explanatory orientation of this study emphasises not only describing collaborative practices but also explaining how and why specific collaboration mechanisms contribute to institutional capacity strengthening. This design aligns with the study's analytical framework, which conceptualises multiparty collaboration

through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Research Sites

The research was conducted in West Kalimantan and North Kalimantan, Indonesia. These provinces were purposively selected due to their strategic geopolitical position as land border regions adjacent to Malaysia and their relevance to national border governance policy. Both provinces host Integrated Border Crossing Posts (Pos Lintas Batas Negara/PLBN) and are actively involved in BNPP-coordinated border management and development programmes. The selected sites represent typical characteristics of Indonesian land border areas, including geographical remoteness, infrastructural limitations, and multi-level governance arrangements involving central, provincial, and district authorities.

Informants and Units of Analysis

The units of analysis in this study consist of organisations and actors involved in multiparty collaboration in border governance. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their institutional roles, responsibilities, and direct involvement in border management and development activities. This sampling strategy ensured that data were obtained from actors with relevant knowledge and experience of collaborative governance processes.

Key informants included: (1) officials from the National Border Management Agency (BNPP); (2) officials from Provincial and District Border Management Agencies (BPPD); (3) heads and staff of Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN); (4) representatives of sectoral agencies operating at border posts, such as customs, immigration, health quarantine, and agricultural quarantine; (5) local government officials and community leaders in border sub-districts; (6) academics and university representatives involved in research and community service programmes in border areas; and (7) representatives of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and other local economic actors. This diversity of informants enabled a comprehensive examination of multiparty collaboration across sectors and governance levels.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected between August and November 2024 using multiple qualitative data collection techniques to enhance depth and credibility. First, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants. Interview guides were designed to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices related to multiparty collaboration, coordination challenges, and the role of ICT in border governance. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility to probe emerging themes while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Second, direct field observations were undertaken at selected border

locations, particularly at PLBN facilities and surrounding border communities. Observations focused on interaction patterns among institutions, coordination practices, use of ICT tools, and day-to-day governance activities related to border management. Field notes were systematically recorded to capture contextual insights that complemented interview data.

Third, focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with local stakeholders, including community representatives, local officials, and economic actors. FGDs were used to validate preliminary findings, capture collective perspectives, and identify shared challenges and expectations related to border governance. Finally, secondary data were collected through document analysis of laws, regulations, policy documents, institutional reports, and relevant academic literature to contextualise and triangulate primary data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis process. All interviews and FGDs were transcribed verbatim. The transcripts and field notes were then subjected to systematic coding to identify recurring concepts and themes. Open coding was initially applied to capture key ideas emerging from the data, followed by axial coding to group related codes into broader analytical categories.

The analytical categories were aligned with the study's four collaboration mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Pattern matching and thematic analysis were

employed to link empirical findings with the analytical framework and research questions. Manual data processing was applied throughout the analysis to allow close engagement with the data and iterative refinement of interpretations.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, this study employed several validation strategies. Source triangulation was applied by comparing data from interviews, observations, FGDs, and documents. Informant triangulation was achieved by engaging actors from different institutional backgrounds and governance levels. Member checking was conducted through follow-up communications with selected informants to confirm interpretations and clarify ambiguities. In addition, expert triangulation involving academics with expertise in governance and border studies was used to enhance analytical rigour (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Informants were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained by removing identifying information from transcripts and reports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Multiparty Collaboration in Border Governance: Empirical Overview

The empirical findings demonstrate that border governance in West and

North Kalimantan involves a complex constellation of actors operating across multiple governance levels and sectors. These actors include central government institutions coordinated by BNPP, provincial and district border management agencies (BPPD), sectoral agencies operating at Integrated Border Crossing Posts (PLBN), local governments, community actors, academics, and limited private sector participants. While formal institutional arrangements for collaboration exist, their effectiveness varies significantly depending on coordination capacity, institutional alignment, and enabling resources.

BNPP occupies a central position within this governance network as a coordinating institution mandated to align border management and development policies. However, its limited formal authority constrains its ability to directly command other institutions. As a result, BNPP's institutional capacity relies heavily on collaborative governance mechanisms that facilitate alignment, cooperation, and collective action among diverse stakeholders. The findings reveal that this capacity is operationalised through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification.

Coordination as a Foundational Mechanism

Coordination emerges as the most fundamental mechanism underpinning multiparty collaboration in border governance. BNPP facilitates coordination through both formal and informal channels,

including inter-agency meetings, reporting systems, and hierarchical communication pathways linking central, provincial, and district institutions. These arrangements aim to reduce fragmentation and ensure that border-related information flows effectively across governance levels.

The use of information and communication technology (ICT) significantly enhances coordination capacity. Digital reporting systems, WhatsApp coordination groups, and real-time monitoring tools such as CCTV and digital dashboards enable rapid information exchange regarding border crossings, security incidents, logistical challenges, and development needs. These tools are particularly valuable given the geographical remoteness and infrastructural limitations of border areas.

Nevertheless, coordination remains uneven. Differences in ICT infrastructure quality, digital literacy, and organisational capacity across regions constrain consistent implementation. Local-level actors often face limitations related to internet connectivity and human resource skills, which reduce the effectiveness of digital coordination mechanisms. Despite these challenges, ICT-supported coordination represents a critical advancement compared to previous reliance on fragmented and delayed communication channels.

Integration of Programmes and Institutional Roles

Integration refers to the alignment and harmonisation of policies, programmes, and institutional roles among stakeholders

involved in border governance. The findings indicate that integration is more advanced among government actors than between government and non-state actors. Vertical integration between BNPP and regional BPPD is facilitated through shared planning frameworks, policy documents, and coordinated development programmes.

However, integration across sectors and non-state actors remains limited. Private sector involvement is largely confined to investment activities without systematic incorporation into governance processes. Similarly, community and civil society actors primarily engage in monitoring, local conflict resolution, and informal consultations rather than structured policy participation. This limited integration reflects the absence of institutionalised mechanisms for non-state actor engagement within BNPP's governance framework.

The findings suggest that integration is constrained not only by institutional design but also by differing priorities and incentive structures among actors. While government institutions prioritise administrative compliance and policy coherence, private and community actors emphasise economic opportunity and social welfare. Without formal integration mechanisms, these divergent priorities limit the potential benefits of multiparty collaboration (Clarke & MacDonald, 2019).

Synchronisation of Actions and Policy Cycles

Synchronisation involves aligning the timing, sequencing, and implementation

of programmes and activities across institutions to ensure coherence and mutual reinforcement. The study finds that synchronisation is partially achieved through centralised planning cycles and ICT-enabled reporting systems that allow BNPP to monitor ongoing activities across regions.

Despite these efforts, synchronisation challenges persist due to differences in institutional mandates, budget cycles, and operational priorities. Sectoral agencies often operate according to their own timelines and performance indicators, which may not align with BNPP-coordinated plans. These discrepancies can result in delayed implementation, overlapping initiatives, or gaps in service delivery.

ICT tools help mitigate synchronisation challenges by increasing transparency and enabling faster feedback loops. Real-time reporting allows BNPP to identify misalignments and initiate corrective coordination. However, ICT alone cannot fully overcome structural constraints arising from fragmented authority and regulatory rigidity. Effective synchronisation, therefore, requires both technological support and institutional commitment to shared planning and accountability.

Simplification of Collaborative Procedures

Simplification focuses on reducing procedural complexity and bureaucratic barriers that hinder effective collaboration. The findings indicate that BNPP has

initiated efforts to simplify coordination and reporting processes through digitalisation. Standardised reporting formats, streamlined communication channels, and centralised information systems have reduced administrative burdens and improved efficiency.

Nonetheless, simplification remains constrained by overlapping legal mandates and rigid regulatory frameworks governing border management. Multiple laws, regulations, and ministerial decrees create procedural complexity that limits BNPP's ability to streamline collaborative processes fully. As a result, simplification efforts often operate within narrow administrative boundaries rather than addressing systemic fragmentation.

The findings underscore that simplification is not merely a technical exercise but an institutional challenge that requires regulatory harmonisation and political support. Without such reforms, procedural complexity will continue to undermine collaborative capacity despite technological advancements.

ICT as an Institutional Enabler of Collaborative Capacity

Across all four mechanisms, ICT functions as a critical institutional enabler rather than a standalone solution. ICT enhances BNPP's boundary-spanning capacity by facilitating communication, information sharing, and monitoring across organisational and geographical boundaries. By reducing transaction costs and improving information symmetry, ICT strengthens BNPP's ability

to coordinate actors despite limited formal authority.

However, the enabling role of ICT is contingent on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive governance arrangements. Where these conditions are absent, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and fragmentation. The findings therefore support arguments in digital governance literature that technology must be embedded within broader institutional reforms to achieve transformative impact.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to collaborative governance literature by demonstrating how a coordinative public agency can strengthen institutional capacity through structured collaboration mechanisms supported by ICT. The findings extend institutional capacity theory by highlighting relational and network-based capacities as critical dimensions in fragmented governance systems.

Practically, the results suggest that strengthening BNPP's role requires a strategic focus on institutionalising collaboration mechanisms rather than expanding hierarchical authority. Policies should prioritise enhancing coordination infrastructure, formalising non-state actor participation, harmonising regulatory frameworks, and investing in ICT capacity at the local level. These measures can collectively improve the effectiveness and sustainability of border governance.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strengthening the institutional capacity of the National Border Management Agency (BNPP) in managing border areas depends less on the expansion of formal hierarchical authority and more on the effectiveness of multiparty collaborative governance mechanisms. In the context of border management in West and North Kalimantan, BNPP operates within a highly fragmented governance environment characterised by overlapping mandates, sectoral autonomy, and multi-level institutional arrangements. Under such conditions, BNPP's capacity is shaped primarily by its ability to coordinate, align, and mobilise diverse actors rather than to directly command them.

The findings reveal that multiparty collaboration strengthens BNPP's institutional capacity through four interrelated mechanisms: coordination, integration, synchronisation, and simplification. Coordination enables information exchange and alignment among actors; integration harmonises policies, programmes, and institutional roles; synchronisation ensures coherence in timing and implementation; and simplification reduces procedural complexity that often undermines collaboration. Together, these mechanisms function as a governance architecture that allows BNPP to perform its boundary-spanning role effectively despite limited formal authority.

A central contribution of this study is the identification of information and communication technology (ICT) as a

critical institutional enabler of collaborative capacity. ICT enhances communication, reduces fragmentation, and supports both vertical and horizontal coordination across geographically dispersed border areas. However, the study also confirms that ICT alone is insufficient to resolve governance challenges. Its effectiveness depends on institutional readiness, human resource capacity, and supportive regulatory frameworks. Without these conditions, digital tools risk reinforcing existing inequalities and coordination failures.

Policy Implications

The findings yield several policy implications for strengthening border governance in Indonesia. First, border governance policies should explicitly recognise BNPP as a collaborative coordinator rather than merely an administrative institution. Strengthening BNPP's mandate to convene, integrate, and synchronise sectoral and regional programmes is more critical than expanding its hierarchical authority.

Second, the institutionalisation of non-state actor participation should be prioritised. Formal mechanisms for engaging private sector actors, civil society organisations, and border communities—such as structured consultation forums and partnership frameworks—can enhance inclusivity, legitimacy, and sustainability in border development initiatives.

Third, continued investment in ICT infrastructure and digital governance systems is essential, particularly at the local level. Such investments should be accompanied

by capacity-building programmes to ensure effective utilisation and to reduce disparities in digital readiness across regions.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations. The empirical analysis focuses on two land border provinces, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other border contexts in Indonesia, such as maritime border regions. In addition, the qualitative research design prioritises depth of analysis over breadth and does not quantitatively measure collaboration outcomes or development impacts.

Directions for Future Research

Future research could adopt comparative or mixed method approaches to examine collaborative border governance across different regions or countries. Quantitative assessments of collaborative performance and long-term socio-economic and security outcomes would complement the qualitative insights offered in this study. Further research may also explore the role of leadership, political dynamics, and regulatory reform in sustaining ICT-enabled collaborative governance in border areas.

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