



Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program by the Bintan Regency Government in Pengudang Village in 2024

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Abstract

The Fishermen Community Empowerment Program implemented by the Bintan Regency Government in Pengudang Village in 2024 was designed to strengthen fishermen's capacity, productivity, social protection, and welfare. This study aimed to analyze the implementation of the program and identify supporting and inhibiting factors affecting its effectiveness. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. Nineteen informants were selected purposively, consisting of representatives from the Department of Fisheries, village government, Village Consultative Body, coastal youth community, and fishermen. Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings were analyzed using George C. Edward III's policy implementation model, covering communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure. The results indicate that the program was generally implemented and provided fishing equipment, social protection, fish-processing facilities, and seasonal assistance. However, communication was inconsistent, technical mentoring remained limited, and monitoring and evaluation were insufficient. Positive implementer commitment and inter-institutional coordination supported implementation. Strengthening continuous communication, technical assistance, field facilitation, coordination, and monitoring is therefore necessary to improve program effectiveness and sustainability.

Keywords: Fishermen Empowerment, Policy Implementation, Coastal Community, Local Government, Fisheries Program.



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INTRODUCTION

Community empowerment in coastal areas is an important strategy for promoting sustainable economic development because a significant proportion of coastal communities depend on marine and fisheries resources for their livelihoods. Indonesia, as an archipelagic country, possesses substantial marine resources, with approximately 5.8 million km² of marine territory, around 17,840 islands, and a coastline extending approximately 95,181 km, providing abundant biological and non-biological resources with significant economic value (Yuliantiningsih et al., 2022). This substantial potential should provide a strong foundation for improving the welfare of fishing communities through strengthened capacities, improved access to resources, and the development of sustainable economic activities. However, the availability of marine resources has not been fully reflected in the welfare conditions of fishermen, who continue to face limitations in human resource capacity, access to capital, fishing technology, and income stability due to seasonal fluctuations and environmental conditions (Puspitasari et al., 2025).

The welfare challenges experienced by fishermen can also be observed through the dynamics of employment in coastal communities, where fisheries remain an important source of livelihood. National data indicate that the number of fishermen in Indonesia increased from 1,689,807 during 2021–2022 to 1,725,762 in 2023, demonstrating the continued importance of the fisheries sector in the economic lives of coastal communities. A similar condition can be observed in Pengudang Village, Teluk Sebong District, Bintan Regency, where the number of fishermen has continued to increase despite a decline in the overall working population. Nevertheless, this condition does not necessarily indicate an improvement in welfare, as preliminary observations show that the average monthly

income of fishermen in Pengudang Village ranges from only IDR 1,000,000 to IDR 3,000,000, indicating that this community remains economically vulnerable.

These conditions have encouraged local governments to develop empowerment policies that are not limited to the distribution of material assistance but are also directed toward strengthening fishermen's capacities and independence. The Bintan Regency Government, through the Department of Fisheries, implemented the Small-Scale Fishermen Capacity Development Program in 2024 as an intervention to address various limitations faced by fishermen at the local level. The program includes the provision of fishing equipment and infrastructure, employment social security assistance through BPJS Ketenagakerjaan, technical training, and capacity-building activities related to fishing operations. The implementation of the program is essentially intended to improve fishermen's productivity, occupational safety, independence, and welfare through the strengthening of human resources and institutional capacity within both government and community organizations (Anwar, 2018; Dewi & Dadiara, 2022).

Community empowerment should not merely be understood as a process of distributing material assistance to target groups, but rather as a process of strengthening people's capacities so that they are able to identify, manage, and address their own problems independently. Dewi and Dadiara (2022) explain that empowerment is a process of increasing community capacity, independence, and ability to identify and solve problems by utilizing available resources. This perspective positions communities as active subjects of development, meaning that the success of empowerment programs is determined by the extent to which communities obtain adequate capacity, access, assistance, and opportunities for participation. This understanding is consistent with Regulation of the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2024, which emphasizes community participation and empowerment in the management of coastal areas and small islands as an integral component of sustainable development.

Previous studies have demonstrated that fishermen empowerment programs can contribute to improvements in community capacity, participation, productivity, and welfare when implemented appropriately and sustainably. Anwar (2018) found that the implementation of fishermen empowerment requires government support that extends beyond program provision and includes continuous assistance and capacity strengthening. Dewi and Dadiara (2022) similarly demonstrated that empowerment of fishermen groups can improve community capabilities when programs are designed according to local needs and potentials. Meanwhile, studies by Windasai et al. (2021) and Bolkiah et al. (2021) indicate that the role of local governments and program evaluation are important factors in determining the success of fishermen empowerment initiatives and improving the welfare of target communities.

Although research on fishermen empowerment has continued to develop, there remains a limitation in studies specifically examining the implementation of local government programs at the village level while considering the alignment between program design and the actual needs of beneficiary communities. Previous studies have generally focused on fishermen empowerment, the role of local governments, or program evaluation based on welfare outcomes, whereas the implementation process itself requires further empirical investigation (Ahmad & Afni, 2022; Dessy Tuasamu, 2019). This limitation is particularly relevant because the success of an empowerment program is influenced not only by the availability of assistance but also by policy communication, resource capacity, implementer commitment, institutional coordination, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (Herabudin, 2016; Pramono, 2020). Therefore, empirical research is needed to comprehensively examine how fishermen empowerment programs are implemented within local contexts and the extent to which their implementation responds to the needs of target communities.

Pengudang Village represents an important context for examination because it is one of the areas that received the Small-Scale Fishermen Capacity Development Program implemented by the Bintan Regency Government through the Department of Fisheries in 2024. As a relatively new program, its implementation provides an opportunity to evaluate the process from program execution to the initial outcomes experienced by fishermen, including the factors that support or hinder the achievement of program objectives. Village-level analysis is also important because social and economic conditions, institutional capacity, fishermen characteristics, and community needs may differ across locations, meaning that the success of a policy cannot be separated from its local context (Rifa'i et al., 2025; Sumai, 2025). Accordingly, the novelty of this study lies in its focus on examining

the implementation of a newly introduced fishermen empowerment program in Pengudang Village in 2024 while incorporating the experiences and needs of beneficiary communities into the assessment of program implementation.

Based on the preceding discussion, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program conducted by the Bintan Regency Department of Fisheries in Pengudang Village in 2024. The analysis focuses on the implementation process and the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing the program's efforts to improve the capacity and welfare of local fishermen. The study is expected to provide empirical contributions to the fields of public administration and community empowerment policy, particularly concerning the implementation of local government programs within coastal communities. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as an evaluation basis for the Bintan Regency Government in strengthening communication, mentoring, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms so that future fishermen empowerment programs can be implemented more effectively and sustainably.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to examine the implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village, Teluk Sebong District, Bintan Regency, in 2024. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of the planning, implementation process, constraints, and outcomes of the empowerment program within its natural setting. The research focused on the implementation of the program, including program planning, implementation activities, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the benefits perceived by the fishing community. The study was conducted in Pengudang Village because the area was one of the beneficiaries of the 2024 Small-Scale Fishermen Capacity Development Program and has an active fishing community.

Data were obtained from primary and secondary sources using observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. Primary data were collected from purposively selected informants consisting of representatives of the Department of Fisheries, village government, Village Consultative Body, coastal youth community, and fishermen, with a total of 19 informants, while secondary data were obtained from government documents, relevant regulations, program reports, statistical data, and previous studies. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, while data credibility was supported through the use of multiple data collection techniques and sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication in the Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program

The communication dimension represents an important component in the implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village because the effectiveness of a government program depends on how well policy information is conveyed to the target community. In the context of this study, communication concerns the process through which the Bintan Regency Department of Fisheries conveys information regarding the objectives, forms of assistance, implementation procedures, and expected outcomes of the program to fishermen. The findings indicate that program socialization had been conducted through community meetings and extension activities, demonstrating that the implementing agency had established an initial communication mechanism with the target group. However, the communication process had not been conducted continuously, resulting in differences in the level of understanding among fishermen regarding the program and its implementation procedures.

The implementation of socialization activities indicates that the government had recognized the importance of communicating program information before and during implementation. Information concerning the empowerment program was delivered to fishermen through meetings and extension activities intended to introduce the program and explain its general objectives. Nevertheless, the results of interviews indicated that communication activities were not consistently maintained throughout the implementation period. This condition is important because inconsistent communication can create information gaps between government implementers and beneficiaries,

particularly when programs involve several forms of assistance, technical requirements, and administrative procedures.

The limited continuity of communication was reflected in the varying understanding of fishermen concerning the objectives and mechanisms of the program. Some beneficiaries understood the general purpose of the government intervention, particularly its orientation toward supporting fishermen's livelihoods, but their understanding of specific implementation procedures remained uneven. The findings therefore suggest that communication had functioned at the initial socialization stage but had not yet developed into a continuous process of interaction between implementers and beneficiaries. Such a condition is consistent with the broader perspective of public policy implementation, in which the transmission of policy information must be sufficiently clear and sustained to prevent differences in interpretation among policy actors and target groups (Herabudin, 2016; Pramono, 2020).

Another important finding concerns the limited opportunity available for fishermen to communicate their concerns and obtain clarification after the initial program socialization. Interviews indicated that fishermen did not always have adequate opportunities to ask questions regarding program procedures, assistance utilization, and problems encountered during implementation. This situation demonstrates that communication should not be viewed merely as a one-way transfer of information from government agencies to communities. Rather, effective empowerment requires two-way communication in which fishermen are able to provide feedback, communicate their needs, and participate in discussions concerning the implementation of programs that directly affect their livelihoods (Dewi & Dadiara, 2022).

The communication findings can be summarized according to the main aspects identified during the field investigation. The following table presents the empirical condition of communication in the implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village based on observations, interviews, and documentation.

Table 1. Empirical Findings on Communication in the Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village

No	Communication Aspect	Research Finding	Interpretation
1	Program socialization	Socialization had been conducted through community meetings and extension activities.	An initial communication mechanism had been established.
2	Continuity of communication	Communication activities had not been conducted consistently.	Information was not continuously reinforced among beneficiaries.
3	Understanding of the program	Fishermen demonstrated different levels of understanding regarding objectives and implementation procedures.	Uneven communication contributed to differences in program understanding.
4	Feedback mechanism	Opportunities for fishermen to express concerns and obtain clarification remained limited.	Two-way communication had not been fully optimized.
5	Information dissemination	Information had reached the community, but its continuity remained inadequate.	Communication required stronger follow-up and regular interaction.

Source: Processed by the authors based on field observations, interviews, and documentation (2026).

The table demonstrates that the principal communication problem was not the complete absence of socialization but rather the lack of continuity and follow-up communication. The government had already established direct communication channels through meetings and extension activities, yet these channels had not been utilized consistently throughout the program

implementation process. Consequently, the initial information received by fishermen was not always reinforced through subsequent communication, particularly when beneficiaries encountered questions or difficulties. This finding indicates that communication effectiveness should be assessed not only from whether socialization has taken place but also from whether information remains accessible and understandable throughout the implementation process.

The communication condition also has implications for community participation in the empowerment program. When information concerning objectives, procedures, rights, and responsibilities is not communicated continuously, beneficiaries may have difficulty determining how they should participate in the program and how they should respond to implementation requirements. Previous research has emphasized the importance of government involvement in strengthening the capacity and participation of fishermen through sustained empowerment interventions (Anwar, 2018). Similarly, research on fishermen empowerment indicates that government programs require communication and institutional support that are responsive to the characteristics and needs of coastal communities (Ahmad & Afni, 2022; Windasai et al., 2021).

From the perspective of community empowerment, the communication problem is particularly significant because empowerment requires an active relationship between government institutions and community members. Fishermen should not merely function as recipients of assistance but should also have opportunities to understand the objectives of programs, communicate their experiences, and contribute to the implementation process. Dewi and Dadiara (2022) emphasize that empowerment is associated with strengthening community capacity and independence, which requires meaningful community involvement rather than merely the distribution of government assistance. Therefore, continuous communication can serve as a mechanism for transforming the relationship between the government and fishermen from a predominantly administrative relationship into a more participatory empowerment process.

The findings further suggest that communication needs to be integrated with other components of program implementation rather than treated as an independent administrative activity. Information regarding fishing equipment, social protection, training, and other forms of assistance needs to be accompanied by explanations concerning utilization, maintenance, responsibilities, and follow-up activities. This is particularly important because previous studies have found that empowerment programs require sustained government support and appropriate implementation mechanisms to produce meaningful benefits for fishing communities (Bolkiah et al., 2021; Sumai, 2025). Thus, strengthening communication should be accompanied by technical assistance and institutional coordination so that information delivered to fishermen can be translated into effective participation and program utilization.

The communication dimension of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village can be categorized as implemented but not yet fully effective. The Bintan Regency Department of Fisheries had undertaken program socialization, but the absence of continuous communication resulted in uneven understanding among fishermen and limited opportunities for beneficiaries to provide feedback and seek clarification. These findings reinforce the importance of sustained communication in public policy implementation because the effectiveness of a program is influenced not only by the existence of policy information but also by its clarity, continuity, and accessibility to target communities (Herabudin, 2016; Pramono, 2020). Therefore, future implementation should strengthen routine communication forums, establish more consistent channels for receiving fishermen's feedback, and ensure that program information is repeatedly communicated throughout the implementation cycle so that community empowerment can become more participatory, responsive, and sustainable.

Resources in the Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program

The resource dimension is a fundamental component in the implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program because the achievement of policy objectives depends substantially on the availability and adequacy of resources supporting implementation. In this study, resources include not only physical assistance and financial support but also human resources, technical knowledge, information, and institutional capacity required to ensure that the program can operate effectively. The findings indicate that the Bintan Regency Government has provided several forms of assistance to fishermen in Pengudang Village, including fishing equipment, solar-powered

fish drying facilities, food assistance during the northern monsoon season, and employment social security through BPJS Ketenagakerjaan. These forms of support demonstrate that the government has attempted to address both the productive and social vulnerabilities experienced by local fishing communities.

The provision of fishing equipment represents one of the most visible forms of government intervention within the program. The assistance included fishing traps (bubu) and shrimp nets intended to support fishermen's operational activities and improve their ability to conduct fishing activities. Based on interviews and observations, the availability of these facilities has helped reduce some operational constraints faced by fishermen and has provided additional productive resources for their livelihoods. Nevertheless, the existence of physical assistance alone cannot automatically guarantee increased productivity because the effectiveness of such resources depends on the ability of beneficiaries to utilize, maintain, and adapt them to their operational conditions.

In addition to fishing equipment, the program provided a solar-powered fish drying facility as an effort to support the processing and utilization of fishery products. This type of assistance is important because fishermen's economic vulnerability is partly related to their dependence on direct fishing activities and fluctuating market and environmental conditions. The availability of post-harvest facilities potentially provides opportunities for fishermen and their communities to preserve fishery products and increase the added value of catches. However, the research findings indicate that the utilization of government-provided facilities still requires stronger technical guidance and continued assistance so that the resources can generate sustainable benefits for the community.

The program also included social protection through BPJS Ketenagakerjaan assistance, which represents an important dimension of resource provision beyond productive equipment. Social protection can reduce the economic vulnerability of fishermen whose occupations are characterized by occupational risks and uncertain working conditions. In addition, food assistance was provided during the northern monsoon season when fishing activities may be constrained by weather and environmental conditions. These interventions indicate that the program addressed fishermen's needs from both livelihood and social protection perspectives, consistent with the broader understanding that empowerment should strengthen people's capacity and resilience rather than simply provide short-term material support (Dewi & Dadiara, 2022; Pakpahan et al., 2024).

Despite the availability of several forms of assistance, the research identified a significant limitation concerning technical assistance and post-distribution mentoring. Fishermen reported difficulties in utilizing and maintaining some of the equipment effectively because follow-up guidance was still limited. This finding demonstrates that resources in policy implementation should be understood comprehensively rather than equated solely with the physical goods distributed to beneficiaries. Edward III's implementation perspective emphasizes that resources also encompass competent personnel, information, authority, and other supporting capacities necessary to translate policy decisions into effective action (Herabudin, 2016; Pramono, 2020).

The empirical condition of the resource dimension can be summarized as follows based on observations, interviews, and documentation conducted during the research.

Table 2. Resource Conditions in the Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village

No	Resource Aspect	Research Finding	Interpretation
1	Fishing equipment	Bubu traps and shrimp nets were provided to fishermen	Productive resources were available to support fishing activities.
2	Fishery processing facility	Solar-powered fish drying equipment was provided.	The program supported post-harvest processing capacity.
3	Social protection	BPJS Ketenagakerjaan assistance was provided.	The program addressed fishermen's occupational and social vulnerability.
4	Seasonal assistance	Food assistance was provided during the northern monsoon season.	The program responded to seasonal livelihood constraints.

5	Technical assistance	Technical guidance and post-distribution mentoring remained limited.	Physical resources were not fully supported by adequate human and technical resources.
6	Maintenance and utilization	Some beneficiaries experienced difficulties in effectively utilizing and maintaining equipment.	Follow-up assistance is required to ensure resource sustainability.

Source: Processed by the authors based on field observations, interviews, and documentation (2026)

The table demonstrates that the government has provided a relatively diverse range of resources addressing productive, processing, and social needs. However, the principal weakness lies in the imbalance between the provision of physical resources and the availability of supporting human resources. Assistance can become less effective when beneficiaries do not receive sufficient information concerning operation, maintenance, troubleshooting, and long-term utilization. This finding is consistent with the argument that community empowerment should strengthen community capacity and independence rather than create dependence on externally provided assistance (Dewi & Dadiara, 2022; Pakpahan et al., 2024).

The importance of adequate supporting resources is also demonstrated by previous research concerning fishermen empowerment. Anwar (2018) found that sustainable empowerment requires continuous government assistance and capacity development, while Windasai et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of the local government's role in facilitating and strengthening fishermen communities. Similarly, Bolkiah et al. (2021) demonstrated that the evaluation of fishermen empowerment programs needs to consider whether program resources are actually capable of producing improvements in community welfare. These findings reinforce the present study's observation that the success of the Pengudang program should not be assessed merely from the number or type of assistance distributed, but from the extent to which those resources can be effectively utilized by beneficiaries.

The resource dimension is also closely connected to the sustainability of the empowerment program. Without regular technical assistance, monitoring, and institutional support, physical resources may gradually become underutilized or improperly maintained, reducing their long-term contribution to fishermen's livelihoods. This issue is particularly relevant for equipment that requires technical knowledge, routine maintenance, and adaptation to local operating conditions. Therefore, the government needs to develop a resource strategy that integrates material assistance with trained field facilitators, technical information, maintenance support, and mechanisms through which fishermen can obtain assistance when implementation problems arise.

The resource dimension of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village can be considered implemented but not yet fully optimal. The Bintan Regency Government has demonstrated a substantial commitment to providing productive equipment, fishery-processing facilities, social protection, and seasonal assistance, but the effectiveness of these resources has been constrained by limited technical mentoring and post-distribution supervision. The findings confirm that successful empowerment requires an integrated resource system in which physical assistance is accompanied by adequate human resources, information, technical capacity, and institutional support (Herabudin, 2016; Pramono, 2020). Strengthening these supporting resources would enable fishermen to utilize government assistance more effectively, increase their independence, and transform short-term program inputs into more sustainable improvements in the socio-economic conditions of coastal communities.

Disposition and Bureaucratic Structure in the Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program

The disposition dimension concerns the attitudes, commitment, and willingness of policy implementers and target groups to support the implementation of a government program. In the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village, the findings indicate that officials of the Bintan Regency Department of Fisheries demonstrated a positive commitment to implementing the program through facilitation, education, and motivation for fishermen. The

fishermen also responded positively to the program and demonstrated willingness to participate because they perceived the assistance and empowerment activities as relevant to their livelihoods. This positive disposition constitutes an important supporting factor because effective implementation requires not only formal institutional arrangements but also the willingness of actors to carry out their respective responsibilities.

The commitment of government officials was reflected in their efforts to facilitate the provision of fishing equipment, social protection, capacity-building activities, and other forms of assistance. Their involvement demonstrates that the program was not implemented solely as an administrative obligation but was accompanied by efforts to provide direct support to the fishing community. Nevertheless, the findings also reveal a discrepancy between positive commitment and the intensity of field assistance because the frequency of visits and mentoring remained limited. This condition indicates that positive attitudes among implementers need to be translated into consistent implementation practices so that policy commitments can generate tangible and sustainable outcomes for beneficiaries.

The disposition of fishermen was likewise generally positive, particularly because the program was perceived as providing practical benefits for their livelihoods. Their willingness to participate indicates that the target community did not reject the government intervention and instead viewed it as an opportunity to improve their productive capacity and social protection. Such acceptance is important because community empowerment programs require active participation from beneficiaries rather than passive receipt of assistance. Previous research has demonstrated that government involvement in fishermen empowerment needs to be accompanied by community participation and responsiveness to local conditions so that programs can strengthen community capacity and independence (Ahmad & Afni, 2022; Dewi & Dadiara, 2022).

However, positive disposition among both implementers and beneficiaries does not automatically guarantee optimal program implementation. The research found that fishermen continued to experience difficulties when dealing with technical problems and administrative procedures because field assistance was not sufficiently frequent. This situation demonstrates that commitment must be accompanied by adequate institutional capacity and regular interaction between implementers and beneficiaries. Anwar (2018) similarly emphasizes that sustainable fishermen empowerment requires continuous government assistance, while Rifa'i et al. (2025) demonstrate the importance of community-based approaches in strengthening fishermen's capacity through organized empowerment groups.

The bureaucratic structure represents another important component of policy implementation because it determines the distribution of responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, and procedures through which a program is executed. The findings indicate that coordination among the Bintan Regency Department of Fisheries, Pengudang Village Government, Village Consultative Body, and fishermen groups had generally been established. Each institution performed responsibilities according to its respective authority, with the Department of Fisheries providing technical guidance and program implementation, the village government facilitating local coordination, and fishermen groups participating in program implementation and maintenance. This institutional arrangement demonstrates that the program had established a basic organizational structure capable of connecting government agencies with the beneficiary community.

The empirical findings concerning disposition and bureaucratic structure are summarized in the following table.

Table 3. Analysis of Disposition and Bureaucratic Structure in the Implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program

No	Aspect	Research Finding	Interpretation
1	Implementer commitment	Fisheries officials demonstrated commitment through facilitation, education, and motivation.	Positive implementer disposition supported program implementation.
2	Fishermen response	Fishermen generally welcomed the program and	Positive beneficiary disposition strengthened community

		expressed willingness to participate.	
3	Field assistance	Field visits and mentoring were conducted but remained limited in frequency.	Positive commitment was not yet fully translated into continuous assistance.
4	Institutional coordination	Coordination existed among the Department of Fisheries, village government, Village Consultative Body, and fishermen groups.	Basic inter-institutional coordination supported implementation.
5	Distribution of responsibilities	Each institution performed functions according to its respective authority.	The program had a recognizable bureaucratic structure.
6	Monitoring and evaluation	Post-distribution monitoring and evaluation remained limited.	Institutional control and accountability require strengthening.

Source: Processed by the authors based on field observations, interviews, and documentation (2026)

The table indicates that both disposition and bureaucratic structure functioned as supporting factors, although neither dimension had reached an optimal level. Positive attitudes among officials and fishermen created a favorable environment for implementation, while coordination among institutions provided an organizational basis for delivering the program. Nevertheless, limited field mentoring and monitoring weakened the practical effectiveness of these strengths. This finding reinforces the argument that successful policy implementation requires not only institutional commitment but also organizational mechanisms capable of ensuring that commitments are consistently translated into action (Herabudin, 2016; Pramono, 2020).

The limitations in monitoring and evaluation are particularly important because they influence the sustainability and accountability of the empowerment program. The study found that supervision after the distribution of assistance remained relatively limited, including administrative assistance for elderly fishermen and monitoring of the use of distributed resources. Without systematic monitoring, government institutions may have difficulty identifying whether assistance is being used appropriately, whether beneficiaries encounter implementation problems, and whether program outputs contribute to the intended empowerment objectives. Bolkiah et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of evaluation in assessing fishermen empowerment programs, while Windasai et al. (2021) highlight the strategic role of local government in sustaining empowerment initiatives through institutional support and facilitation.

From a community empowerment perspective, strengthening bureaucratic structure should not mean increasing administrative procedures alone but should involve creating institutional arrangements that facilitate participation, assistance, and accountability. The principles of community empowerment emphasize strengthening people's capacity to manage resources and address their own problems, which requires government institutions to function as facilitators rather than merely distributors of assistance (Pakpahan et al., 2024). Regulation of the Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia Number 12 of 2024 also provides an institutional basis for emphasizing community participation and empowerment in coastal and small-island management. Therefore, coordination between government institutions and fishermen organizations should be strengthened through regular communication forums, clear responsibilities, and participatory monitoring mechanisms.

The disposition and bureaucratic structure dimensions indicate that the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village has a relatively strong institutional foundation but still requires improvement in consistency and supervision. Government officials and fishermen demonstrated positive attitudes toward the program, while coordination among the Department of Fisheries, village government, Village Consultative Body, and fishermen groups had been established. However, limited field mentoring, administrative assistance, and post-distribution monitoring reduced the effectiveness and sustainability of implementation, confirming that

institutional commitment must be accompanied by systematic organizational support (Dessy Tuasamu, 2019; Sumai, 2025). Strengthening these dimensions through regular field assistance, clearer coordination mechanisms, participatory monitoring, and periodic evaluation would enable the program to move beyond the distribution of assistance toward a more sustainable model of fishermen empowerment and local socio-economic development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the implementation of the Fishermen Community Empowerment Program in Pengudang Village, Teluk Sebung District, Bintan Regency, in 2024 has generally been implemented and has provided positive contributions to local fishing communities. Based on George C. Edward III's policy implementation model, the dimensions of communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure were present in the implementation process, although their effectiveness varied. Communication was established through socialization and community meetings but was not conducted continuously, resulting in uneven understanding among fishermen. Resources were provided through fishing equipment, solar-powered fish drying facilities, BPJS Ketenagakerjaan assistance, and seasonal food assistance, but technical mentoring and post-distribution support remained limited.

The study further concludes that positive commitment from government implementers and fishermen, together with coordination among the Department of Fisheries, village government, Village Consultative Body, and fishermen groups, supported program implementation. However, limited field assistance, administrative support, monitoring, and evaluation constrained the sustainability and effectiveness of the program. Therefore, the Bintan Regency Government needs to strengthen continuous communication, increase technical mentoring and field facilitation, clarify inter-institutional coordination, and establish more systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. These improvements are necessary to ensure that empowerment programs move beyond the distribution of assistance toward strengthening fishermen's capacity, independence, and sustainable socio-economic welfare.

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