

-RESEARCH ARTICLE-

LOCAL PUBLIC POLICY EFFECTIVENESS: POLICY IMPLEMENTATION, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, AND REGULATORY CAPACITY TO IMPROVE LOCAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Jopinus Saragih

Universitas Efarina, Medan, Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-7674-054X>

Email: jopinuss@gmail.com

Reza Nurul Ichsan

Universitas Pembinaan Masyarakat Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3113-2861>

Email: rezaichsan31@gmail.com

Saiful Anwar Matondang

Universitas Islam Sumatera Utara, Medan, Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2820-5772>

Email: saiful.matondang@fkip.uisu.ac.id

Bahdin Nur Tanjung

Universitas Efarina, Medan, Indonesia

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9062-0777>

Email: bahdin@utnd.ac.id

—Abstract—

The efficacy of public policy constitutes a central strategic concern in local governance, as it is intrinsically associated with developmental achievements and the enhancement of regional economic outcomes. The present research investigates the impact of intergovernmental collaboration and regulatory capacity on public policy effectiveness and the economic performance of Pematangsiantar City, positioning policy implementation quality as a mediating construct. A quantitative research design

Citation (APA): Saragih, J., Ichsan, R. N., Matondang, S. A., Tanjung, B. N. (2025). Local Public Policy Effectiveness: Policy Implementation, Intergovernmental Cooperation, and Regulatory Capacity to Improve Local Economic Performance. *International Journal of Economics and Finance Studies*, 17(04), 263-286. doi: 10.34109/ijefs.202517412

was adopted, employing a structured survey administered to state civil servants within the Pematangsiantar City Government. Using purposive sampling, 200 respondents were selected. The collected data were examined through Structural Equation Modelling using Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The empirical findings indicate that intergovernmental collaboration and regulatory capacity exert statistically significant and positive effects on policy implementation quality, public policy effectiveness, and regional economic performance. Furthermore, implementation quality significantly contributes to strengthening policy effectiveness and enhancing local economic outcomes. It also functions as a mediating mechanism through which collaboration and regulatory capacity influence both public policy effectiveness and economic performance. These results demonstrate that the effects of collaboration and regulatory capacity operate not only directly but also indirectly through improvements in implementation quality. The study underscores that successful public policy and improved regional economic performance at the municipal level depend substantially on the alignment of intergovernmental collaboration, sufficient regulatory capacity, and robust implementation quality. The findings offer practical implications for reinforcing local governance structures to promote sustainable regional economic development.

Keywords: Intergovernmental Collaboration; Regulatory Capacity; Quality of Policy implementation; Public Policy Effectiveness; Local Economic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Regional economic development constitutes a fundamental component of national development, aimed at achieving sustained improvements in societal welfare. Under the regional autonomy framework, local governments are granted extensive authority to design and execute public policies aligned with regional needs and contextual characteristics. At the local level, public policy serves as a strategic mechanism to stimulate economic expansion, address socio-economic challenges, and safeguard regional economic stability (Ghimire, 2024). From a theoretical standpoint, public policy is conceptualised as a series of governmental decisions and actions intended to resolve collective problems (Aiyede, 2023). Policy success is not solely contingent upon sound formulation, but more critically upon effective implementation (Sager & Gofen, 2022). Public policy effectiveness denotes the extent to which established objectives are realised and tangible societal benefits are generated (Berman, 2022).

Conceptually, policy effectiveness is strongly shaped by implementation processes. The policy implementation framework advanced by Van Meter and Van Horn underscores that policy outcomes depend significantly on the precision of objectives, adequacy of resources, inter-organisational communication, and prevailing socio-economic conditions (Muhammad et al., 2025). Within this analytical perspective,

implementation quality functions as a pivotal construct linking structural determinants of policy to the outcomes ultimately achieved. Beyond implementation quality, intergovernmental collaboration represents another critical determinant of policy effectiveness. Intergovernmental relations theory asserts that the execution of public policies, particularly those concerning regional economic management, necessitates coordination among central, provincial, and municipal authorities (Saputra & Angriani, 2023). Such collaboration becomes indispensable when policies transcend jurisdictional boundaries, thereby requiring synchronised programmes, coordinated actions, and clearly delineated institutional responsibilities to ensure effective delivery.

Regulatory capacity also plays a decisive role in shaping policy outcomes. This concept refers to the ability of local authorities to formulate, enact, and enforce regulations that facilitate policy execution (Darling, 2022). Regulations that are coherent, consistent, and adaptable enhance legal certainty for implementers and economic stakeholders, while simultaneously fostering a supportive business environment. Conversely, deficiencies in regulatory capacity may obstruct implementation processes and weaken overall policy effectiveness (Akang, 2024). Public policy effectiveness is closely interconnected with regional economic performance, which reflects a region's capability to generate economic growth, elevate societal welfare, and maintain macroeconomic stability (Chen & Huo, 2022). Accordingly, policy effectiveness is positioned both as a primary dependent construct and as a determinant of regional economic performance. This implies that local economic outcomes are shaped not only by structural policy factors but also by the degree to which implemented policies achieve their intended objectives.

Pematangsiantar City, a strategic urban centre within North Sumatra Province, performs a significant function as a commercial and service hub. Over the past two years, the city has encountered substantial economic pressures, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent recovery phase. These circumstances have compelled local authorities to intensify intergovernmental coordination, strengthen regulatory capacity, and enhance implementation quality to ensure that enacted policies yield optimal economic effects. A comprehensive appraisal of Pematangsiantar City's socio-economic conditions requires the integration of multiple development indicators. Regional economic performance cannot be evaluated exclusively through aggregate growth metrics; it must also incorporate poverty rates, unemployment levels, inflation trends, and broader welfare indicators. This multidimensional perspective is essential because favourable macroeconomic performance does not automatically translate into equitable socio-economic improvements.

The 2020–2025 period represents a critical phase for the city, encompassing both the disruption caused by the COVID-19 crisis and the ensuing economic recovery. During

this interval, local authorities faced the dual challenge of sustaining economic stability while protecting vulnerable populations and revitalising local economic activity. Analysing socio-economic indicators during this timeframe is therefore essential to assess the responsiveness of public policies to evolving economic pressures. Poverty and unemployment rates capture the direct welfare and labour market consequences of economic policies. Inflation reflects regional price stability and purchasing power, both of which are vital for development sustainability. Aggregate economic growth illustrates overall economic dynamism, while the Human Development Index and per capita expenditure offer broader insights into living standards and societal well-being.

On this basis, [Table 1](#) presents key socio-economic indicators for Pematangsiantar City during 2020–2025, including poverty, unemployment, inflation, economic growth, and welfare measures. These data provide an empirical foundation for assessing regional economic conditions and serve as a basis for examining how intergovernmental collaboration, regulatory capacity, and implementation quality contribute to enhancing public policy effectiveness and regional economic performance.

Table 1: Social and Economic Indicators of Pematangsiantar City for the Period 2020–2025

Year	Percentage of Poor Population (%)	Number of Poor Population (Thousand People)	Open Unemployment Rate (%)	Inflation (%)	Economic Growth (%)	Human Development Index (HDI)	Expenditure Per Capita (IDR/year)
2020	9.12	23.40	10.85	1.78	-1.12	75.30	11.100.000
2021	8.52	22.18	11.00	2.01	3.02	75.89	11.720.000
2022	7.88	20.53	9.36	3.01	3.47	76.25	12.140.000
2023	7.24	19.10	8.95	2.96	4.22	76.82	12.680.000
2024	7.20	18.90	8.60	3.21	4.10	77.10	13.150.000
2025	7.00	18.50	8.20	3.80	4.35	77.45	13.600.000

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2025

[Table 1](#) summarises the trajectory of key socio-economic indicators in Pematangsiantar City between 2020 and 2025, encompassing poverty incidence, unemployment levels, inflation trends, economic growth, and broader welfare measures. Following the severe economic contraction experienced in 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis, the city demonstrated a gradual recovery pattern. This rebound is reflected in the acceleration of economic growth alongside improvements in welfare-related metrics, including rising Human Development Index scores and higher per capita expenditure. Nevertheless, reductions in poverty and unemployment progressed at a modest pace, while inflation exhibited an upward tendency towards the end of the observation period, thereby posing risks to household purchasing power. These patterns reveal a structural disparity between aggregate

macroeconomic recovery and the equitable enhancement of socio-economic conditions, suggesting that implemented public policies have yet to achieve fully inclusive and sustainable local economic development outcomes in Pematangsiantar City.

Prior scholarship highlights the critical role of intergovernmental collaboration in addressing policy issues that transcend administrative boundaries, such as public service provision, environmental governance, and regional economic development (Hamilton et al., 2021; Zhong & Shang, 2025). Empirical evidence indicates that inadequate coordination across governmental tiers may generate policy fragmentation, duplicative programmes, and regulatory inconsistency, ultimately undermining policy effectiveness. However, much of the existing literature concentrates on macro-level or cross-border settings and frequently treats intergovernmental collaboration as an isolated determinant, without sufficiently unpacking the internal mechanisms through which collaborative arrangements are translated into measurable policy outcomes at the municipal level.

Similarly, research on regulatory capacity underscores the importance of governmental competence in designing regulations that are coherent, consistent, adaptable, and operationally feasible as a prerequisite for effective policy implementation (Akpobome, 2024; Salvador & Sancho, 2021). Studies further reveal that vague, inconsistent, or poorly aligned regulations often obstruct implementation processes, even where policy design is conceptually robust. Despite these insights, regulatory capacity is commonly conceptualised as exerting a direct influence on policy effectiveness, with limited analytical attention devoted to intermediary mechanisms that clarify how regulatory frameworks are operationalised within local administrative practice.

The policy implementation literature consistently affirms that policy success depends not merely on sound formulation but fundamentally on the quality of implementation, which operationalises normative objectives into concrete societal outcomes (Bullock et al., 2021; Hill & Varone, 2021). High-quality implementation is characterised by procedural clarity, resource sufficiency, implementer commitment, and effective coordination and supervisory systems (Tanasiichuk et al., 2023). Conversely, deficiencies in implementation may attenuate or entirely offset the intended impact of public interventions (Völker, 2023). Notwithstanding this recognition, most empirical investigations either position implementation quality as an independent predictor or treat it as an outcome variable, rather than explicitly modelling it as a mediating construct linking institutional determinants to policy and economic results.

Accordingly, a discernible gap persists within the public policy literature. There remains limited empirical work that concurrently examines the effects of intergovernmental collaboration and regulatory capacity on public policy effectiveness

and regional economic performance while incorporating implementation quality as a mediating mechanism. Furthermore, integrative analyses of these dimensions within the Indonesian local government context, particularly at the municipal level, remain scarce. This study addresses this deficiency by constructing and testing a causal framework that evaluates how intergovernmental collaboration and regulatory capacity influence public policy effectiveness and local economic performance through the mediating role of implementation quality in Pematangsiantar City.

The article is organised into four principal sections. The first section introduces the study, presenting its contextual background, theoretical grounding, and research objectives. The second section details the methodological framework, including research design, instrument construction, data collection procedures, and analytical techniques. The third section reports and discusses the empirical findings. The final section outlines conclusions, practical and policy implications, study limitations, and directions for future research.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative methodology with an explanatory research design to empirically test causal relationships among the proposed variables. An explanatory quantitative design is appropriate for examining theoretically derived hypotheses and identifying cause-and-effect associations through statistical modelling techniques (Sekaran, 2020). The selection of a quantitative approach is grounded in the study's emphasis on objective measurement of relationships among latent constructs using numerical indicators and inferential statistical procedures.

The proposed model evaluates the effects of intergovernmental collaboration (X_1) and regulatory capacity (X_2) on public policy effectiveness (Y_1), with quality of policy implementation (Z) specified as a mediating variable. Furthermore, the model assesses the impact of public policy effectiveness (Y_1) on local economic performance (Y_2). Accordingly, a hierarchical causal framework is applied to enable simultaneous estimation of both direct and indirect relationships, consistent with contemporary public policy and governance research (Capano et al., 2025; Gomide et al., 2018). The empirical context of the research is the Pematangsiantar City Government, particularly focusing on policy formulation, coordination, and implementation processes related to regional economic development. The population comprises all State Civil Apparatus employed within the municipal administration. Based on official data from the Regional Civil Service and Human Resources Development Agency, the total population amounts to 5,005 personnel, including 4,303 Civil Servants and 702 Government Employees under contractual arrangements.

The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 7 percent to ensure proportional representation and statistical adequacy for SEM-PLS

analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2022; Slovin, 1960). The calculation generated a minimum requirement of 196 respondents. This number was rounded to 200 to enhance statistical stability, anticipate incomplete questionnaires or extreme values, and satisfy recommended thresholds for SEM-PLS estimation. SEM-PLS was selected due to its suitability for analysing complex structural relationships involving multiple latent variables, its effectiveness with moderate sample sizes, and its flexibility regarding multivariate normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2021; Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire developed from established theoretical and empirical foundations. All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, a widely accepted instrument in governance and public policy research for capturing perceptions in a consistent and reliable manner (Sekaran, 2020). The analytical process proceeded in two stages: first, assessment of the measurement model, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability; second, evaluation of the structural model, encompassing the examination of direct effects, indirect effects, and mediation relationships in accordance with established SEM-PLS procedures (Sarstedt et al., 2022).

Table 2: Population Data and Research Sample

Components	Remarks	Number
Population (N)	Number of State Civil Apparatus in Pematangsiantar City (Civil Servants & Government Employees with Employment Agreements)	5.005
Population Details	Civil Servants	4.303
	Civil Servants with Employment Agreements	702
Sampling Techniques	Targeted Sampling (Civil Servants Involved in Policy Formulation, Coordination, and Implementation)	—
Sample Size (n)	Slovin Formula, $e = 7\% \Rightarrow n \approx 196$, Rounded	200

Source: Processed secondary data, 2025.

The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with the following respondent criteria:

1. State Civil Apparatus who are directly involved in policy formulation;
2. State Civil Apparatus involved in coordination across regional apparatus organizations;
3. State Civil Apparatus involved in the implementation and evaluation of public policies.

The adoption of this sampling technique was intended to ensure that selected respondents possessed adequate knowledge and practical experience relevant to the examined variables. Data were obtained through a structured, closed-ended questionnaire developed in accordance with the operational indicators of each construct. All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was administered through both direct distribution and online platforms

during the designated data collection period. Prior to completion, participants were informed of the study's objectives and assured that all responses would remain confidential. The collected data were utilised exclusively for academic research purposes.

Table 3: Operational Definition of Research Variables

No	Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators	Measurement Scale
1	Intergovernmental Collaboration (X1)	Intergovernmental collaboration refers to the level of cooperation, coordination, and synergy between units and levels of government in the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating public policies within the Pematangsiantar Regional Government.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program synchronization between government agencies 2. Regional apparatus organizations 3. Policy planning integration 4. Alignment of policy objectives between agencies 5. Communication and inter-agency cooperation mechanisms <p>Sources: (Shen et al., 2025; Sørensen & Torfing, 2021).</p>	Likert Scale 1–5
2	Regulatory Capacity (X2)	Regulatory capacity is the ability of local governments to formulate, determine, and enforce regulations that are clear, consistent, adaptive, and can be implemented operationally in support of public policies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarity of policy rules 2. Consistency and coherence of regulations 3. The ability of regulations to adapt to local conditions. 4. Regulatory operational feasibility 5. Legal certainty in policy implementation <p>Sources: (Capano et al., 2025; Gomide et al., 2018)</p>	Likert Scale 1–5
3	Quality of Policy Implementation (Z)	The quality of policy implementation refers to the level of effectiveness of policy implementation, which is reflected in clear procedures, adequate resource availability, competence and commitment of implementers, coordination, and effective monitoring mechanisms.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clarity of implementation procedures 2. Availability of implementation resources 3. Competence and commitment of policy implementers 4. Coordination between implementing actors 5. Monitoring and evaluation mechanism 6. Consistency between planning and implementation <p>Sources: (Bullock et al., 2021; Hill & Varone, 2021)</p>	Likert Scale 1–5
4	Public Policy Effectiveness (Y1)	Public policy effectiveness refers to the extent to which public policy objectives are achieved, which is measured based on the achievement of targets, policy outcomes, impact, efficiency, and perceived benefits for government and community	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Achievement of policy targets 2. Accuracy of policy outcomes 3. Impact on government performance 4. Benefits of the policy for society 5. Efficiency of policy implementation 6. Sustainability of policy outcomes <p>Sources: (Capano et al., 2025) (Irtysheva, 2022)</p>	Likert Scale 1–5

No	Variable	Operational Definition	Indicators	Measurement Scale
		performance.		
5	Local Economic Performance (Y ₂)	<p>Local Economic Performance is the level of success of regional economic development achieved through the implementation of public policies, which is reflected in the ability of local governments to encourage economic growth, improve community welfare, create job opportunities, reduce poverty, and maintain regional economic stability</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic growth 2. Poverty reduction 3. Job creation 4. Economic stability 5. Improved well-being <p>Sources: (Zhu et al., 2022)</p>	

The research instrument was constructed through a sequence of systematic methodological procedures. At the initial stage, variable indicators were identified through an extensive review of theoretical frameworks and prior empirical studies. Indicators of intergovernmental collaboration were derived from the collaborative governance framework advanced by [Sørensen and Torfing \(2021\)](#) and further refined through empirical insights emphasising coordination and institutional synergy across public organisations ([Shen et al., 2025](#)). Regulatory capacity indicators were developed with reference to the concepts of state capacity and policy capacity articulated by [Gomide et al. \(2018\)](#), complemented by more recent theoretical advancements ([Capano et al., 2025](#)). Indicators measuring the quality of policy implementation were adapted from implementation scholarship that highlights the interaction among actors, institutional environments, and operational mechanisms ([Bullock et al., 2021](#); [Hill & Varone, 2021](#)). Meanwhile, measures of public policy effectiveness and local economic performance were formulated based on regional development policy frameworks and evaluation approaches proposed in earlier studies ([Capano et al., 2025](#); [Irtysheva, 2022](#); [Zhu et al., 2022](#)). All indicators were carefully aligned with the research objectives and the specific empirical setting to ensure conceptual soundness and analytical appropriateness of the instrument.

In the second stage, the established indicators were operationalised into questionnaire statements using a Likert-scale format to enable consistent and quantitative assessment of respondents' perceptions. The third stage involved contextual adaptation of the instrument to reflect the administrative characteristics and governance dynamics of the Pematangsiantar City Government, ensuring that each item corresponded to prevailing local policy and governance practices. In the fourth stage, the instrument underwent empirical evaluation employing SEM-PLS through assessment of the measurement model, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability. SEM-PLS was selected because of its suitability for

analysing complex structural frameworks comprising multiple latent constructs with reflective indicators, as well as its methodological flexibility given the absence of strict multivariate normality requirements. The analytical procedure was conducted in two principal phases, namely:

1. Evaluation of measurement models (validity and reliability of constructs),
2. Evaluation of structural models (testing of causal relationships, direct and indirect influences, and mediating roles of policy implementation quality).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Within a research framework employing PLS-SEM, an indicator is regarded as satisfying convergent validity requirements when its loading factor reaches or exceeds the threshold of 0.70. The empirical results of the loading factor estimations for the present model are illustrated in the PLS diagram shown in [Figure 1](#) and summarised in [Table 4](#). [Figure 1](#) displays the estimation output of the SEM-PLS framework applied to examine the structural interconnections among intergovernmental collaboration, regulatory capacity, quality of policy implementation, public policy effectiveness, and local economic performance in Pematangsiantar City. The reported estimations indicate that all indicator loading values exceed the prescribed minimum threshold. This outcome confirms that each measurement item demonstrates adequate convergent validity and satisfactory reliability in reflecting its respective latent construct.

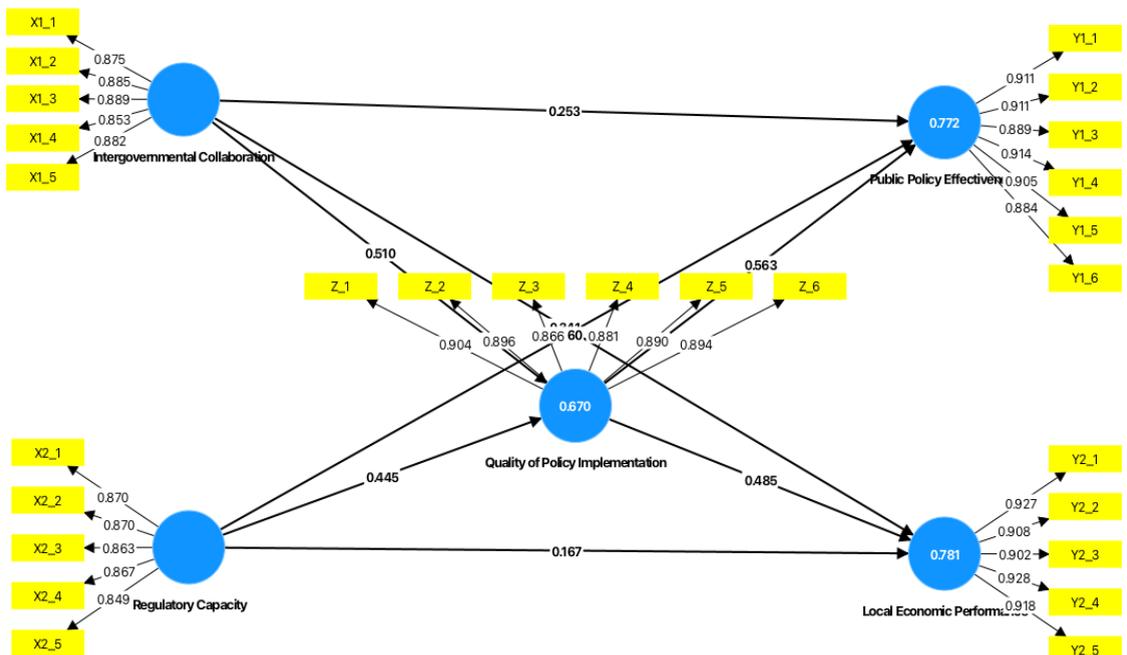


Figure 1: Structure Model and External Load Factor Test Results

Table 4 presents the loading factor values of each indicator in relation to their respective latent constructs within the SEM-PLS model. All indicators across the constructs of intergovernmental collaboration, regulatory capacity, quality of policy implementation, public policy effectiveness, and local economic performance exhibit loadings exceeding 0.70, thereby satisfying the criteria for convergent validity. These results confirm that each indicator reliably represents its intended construct and demonstrates consistency, indicating that the measurement model is appropriate for subsequent structural analysis.

Table 4: External Loading Factor Test Results

	Intergovernmental Collaboration	Local Economic Performance	Public Policy Effectiveness	Quality of Policy Implementation	Regulatory Capacity
X1 1	0.875				
X1 2	0.885				
X1 3	0.889				
X1 4	0.853				
X1 5	0.882				
X2 1					0.870
X2 2					0.870
X2 3					0.863
X2 4					0.867
X2 5					0.849
Y1 1			0.911		
Y1 2			0.911		
Y1 3			0.889		
Y1 4			0.914		
Y1 5			0.905		
Y1 6			0.884		
Y2 1		0.927			
Y2 2		0.908			
Y2 3		0.902			
Y2 4		0.928			
Y2 5		0.918			
Z 1				0.904	
Z 2				0.896	
Z 3				0.866	
Z 4				0.881	
Z 5				0.890	
Z 6				0.894	

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025.

Table 5 presents the outcomes of the construct validity and reliability assessment for all variables included in the research model. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values (rho_a and rho_c) for each construct exceeded the 0.70 threshold, demonstrating that the measurement instrument possesses strong reliability. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs surpassed the

minimum criterion of 0.50, thereby satisfying the requirements for convergent validity. Collectively, these results indicate that all constructs in the study are both valid and reliable, confirming their suitability for subsequent SEM-PLS structural model analysis.

Table 5: Construct Validity and Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (rho a)	Composite Reliability (rho c)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Intergovernmental Collaboration	0.925	0.925	0.943	0.769
Local Economic Performance	0.952	0.953	0.963	0.840
Public Policy Effectiveness	0.954	0.955	0.963	0.814
Quality of Policy Implementation	0.947	0.947	0.957	0.789
Regulatory Capacity	0.915	0.917	0.936	0.746

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

A direct influence hypothesis is a proposition that describes the cause-and-effect relationship between two variables without the involvement of a mediating variable. In this study, it represents the direct effect of independent variables on dependent variables, as determined by statistical analysis. Testing of direct hypotheses is conducted to ascertain whether an independent variable exerts a significant impact on a dependent variable in the absence of intermediary factors, with the results presented in Table 6. Table 6 presents the results of the path coefficient analysis, indicating the direct effects among variables within the SEM-PLS model. The analysis demonstrates that all examined relationships are positive and statistically significant, as evidenced by T-statistic values exceeding 1.96 and p-values below 0.05, confirming empirical support for the proposed structural model.

Intergovernmental collaboration exerts a significant positive effect on local economic performance, with a path coefficient of 0.341, suggesting that higher levels of intergovernmental coordination are associated with improved regional economic outcomes. Additionally, collaboration significantly influences public policy effectiveness, with a coefficient of 0.253, indicating that effective cooperation and coordination among government agencies directly enhance policy outcomes. The effect of intergovernmental collaboration on the quality of policy implementation is the strongest observed, with a coefficient of 0.510. This underscores that robust collaboration among government bodies is a critical determinant of the effectiveness of policy execution at the regional level. In turn, quality of policy implementation positively affects local economic performance (coefficient = 0.485) and public policy effectiveness (coefficient = 0.563), confirming that successful policy outcomes are largely contingent upon effective implementation.

Regulatory capacity also demonstrates positive and significant direct effects on all endogenous constructs. It influences local economic performance (coefficient =

0.167), public policy effectiveness (coefficient = 0.160), and has a substantial impact on the quality of policy implementation (coefficient = 0.445), highlighting its pivotal role in supporting policy execution and outcomes. Following the assessment of direct effects, indirect effect analysis was conducted to examine whether independent variables exert influence on dependent variables via mediating constructs. This mediation analysis provides insight into the mechanisms through which independent variables affect outcomes, offering a more nuanced understanding of the causal processes underlying the research model.

Table 6: Line Coefficient (Direct Effect)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Intergovernmental Collaboration -> Local Economic Performance	0.341	0.343	0.052	6.565	0.000
Intergovernmental Collaboration -> Public Policy Effectiveness	0.253	0.255	0.050	5.069	0.000
Intergovernmental Collaboration -> Quality of Policy Implementation	0.510	0.511	0.046	10.977	0.000
Quality of Policy Implementation -> Local Economic Performance	0.485	0.482	0.055	8.768	0.000
Quality of Policy Implementation -> Public Policy Effectiveness	0.563	0.561	0.061	9.256	0.000
Regulatory Capacity -> Local Economic Performance	0.167	0.168	0.047	3.580	0.000
Regulatory Capacity -> Public Policy Effectiveness	0.160	0.161	0.049	3.271	0.001
Regulatory Capacity -> Quality of Policy Implementation	0.445	0.445	0.050	8.874	0.000

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

Table 7 presents the results of the indirect effect analysis within the SEM-PLS model, incorporating quality of policy implementation as a mediating variable. The findings indicate that intergovernmental collaboration exerts a positive and significant indirect effect on local economic performance, with a path coefficient of 0.247, T-statistic of 7.095, and p-value of 0.000. This demonstrates that enhanced intergovernmental collaboration contributes to improved regional economic outcomes through its impact on the quality of policy implementation. Similarly, intergovernmental collaboration has a significant indirect effect on public policy effectiveness, evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.287, T-statistic of 7.091, and p-value of 0.000. These results confirm that the quality of policy implementation functions as a critical mechanism mediating the effect of collaboration among government agencies on policy outcomes. Regulatory capacity also shows positive and significant indirect effects. It influences local economic performance indirectly, with a path coefficient of 0.216, T-statistic of 5.868, and p-value of 0.000, indicating that clear, consistent, and adaptive regulations

enhance regional economic performance when executed with high implementation quality. Regulatory capacity further exerts a significant indirect effect on public policy effectiveness, with a path coefficient of 0.251, T-statistic of 6.319, and p-value of 0.000, reinforcing the mediating role of implementation quality in translating regulatory capacity into tangible policy outcomes.

Table 7: Path Coefficients (Indirect Effects)

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV))	P Values
Intergovernmental Collaboration -> Local Economic Performance	0.247	0.246	0.035	7.095	0.000
Intergovernmental Collaboration -> Public Policy Effectiveness	0.287	0.287	0.041	7.091	0.000
Regulatory Capacity -> Local Economic Performance	0.216	0.215	0.037	5.868	0.000
Regulatory Capacity -> Public Policy Effectiveness	0.251	0.249	0.040	6.319	0.000

Source: Primary Data Processed, 2025

DISCUSSION

The Effect of Intergovernmental Collaboration on the Quality of Policy Implementation

The findings of this study indicate that intergovernmental collaboration exerts a positive and significant influence on the quality of policy implementation. This suggests that effective cooperation among various levels and units of government is essential for ensuring that public policies are executed in a coordinated, consistent, and goal-aligned manner. Such collaboration facilitates the harmonization of policy objectives, clarifies roles and responsibilities among actors, and establishes coordination mechanisms capable of reducing uncertainty and mitigating potential conflicts during implementation, particularly within multi-actor and multi-level governance contexts (Ichsan et al., 2024). At the local government level, policy implementation typically involves multiple institutions with diverse interests, resources, and capacities. In the absence of robust and institutionalized collaboration, these conditions may lead to policy fragmentation, overlapping authorities, and weakened operational execution. These results corroborate prior research (Lemerelle, 2022; Manyala, 2021; Shen et al., 2025), which highlights that intergovernmental collaboration significantly enhances implementation quality by improving inter-agency communication, promoting integrative joint planning, and strengthening collective accountability within decentralized governance systems.

The Influence of Intergovernmental Collaboration on Public Policy Effectiveness

Empirical results reveal that intergovernmental collaboration has a positive and significant impact on the effectiveness of public policies. This indicates that public policies are more likely to achieve their intended outcomes when both formulation and implementation are conducted through sustained and coordinated cooperation among government actors. Such collaboration facilitates the integration of diverse policy perspectives, optimizes resource allocation, and enables the management of complex public issues in a comprehensive manner, thereby enhancing the likelihood of fully attaining policy objectives. These findings align with previous research (Grin & Fernandes, 2023; Shen et al., 2025), which highlights that strong intergovernmental relations significantly influence policy outcomes by improving implementation capacity and the effectiveness of resource mobilisation. Furthermore, studies by Zambrano and Avellaneda (2021) and Schleicher and Barros-Plataiu (2023) emphasise the strategic importance of intergovernmental collaboration in overcoming governance fragmentation, particularly in policies that span multiple jurisdictions and involve a range of institutional actors within decentralized governmental systems.

The Influence of Intergovernmental Collaboration on Local Economic Performance

The study's findings indicate that intergovernmental collaboration exerts a positive and significant effect on local economic performance. This suggests that effective cooperation among government agencies directly supports increased regional economic activity, the creation of employment opportunities, and the reinforcement of local economic stability. Through structured and sustained collaboration, local governments can design and implement economic policies that are more integrated, responsive, and tailored to the specific characteristics and needs of their regions. From a theoretical perspective, these results support the collaborative governance framework, which underscores the importance of institutional synergy and cross-sectoral coordination in promoting sustainable local economic development. Prior research has demonstrated that intergovernmental coordination enhances regional institutional capacity to respond to economic fluctuations and challenges, while optimising the utilisation of development opportunities through policy integration and efficient resource allocation (Manyala, 2021; Shen et al., 2025).

The Effect of Regulatory Capacity on the Quality of Policy Implementation

The findings of this study demonstrate that regulatory capacity has a positive and significant impact on the quality of policy implementation. This indicates that the ability of government institutions to formulate regulations that are clear, coherent, consistent, and enforceable is a critical determinant of successful policy execution. A robust regulatory framework provides implementers with precise operational

guidance, reinforces legal certainty, and reduces ambiguity or potential deviations during implementation (Ichsan et al., 2024). These results are consistent with prior research (Capano et al., 2025; Gomide et al., 2018), which emphasises that regulatory capacity constitutes a central component of overall policy capacity. Jurisdictions with strong and institutionalised regulatory systems typically demonstrate higher quality policy implementation, greater compliance among implementing actors, and more sustainable policy outcomes over the medium and long term.

The Influence of Regulatory Capacity on the Effectiveness of Public Policies

The study's findings indicate that regulatory capacity exerts a positive and significant effect on public policy effectiveness. This suggests that coherent, consistent, and adaptive regulations are essential for providing clear guidance during policy implementation, enhancing legal certainty, and reinforcing the legitimacy of policies among implementers and the public. Consequently, regulatory capacity constitutes a fundamental institutional element that determines the degree to which public policies can achieve their objectives effectively and sustainably. These results align with prior research (Capano et al., 2025; Cavalcante & Pereira, 2019), which highlights that overall policy capacity, including regulatory capacity, directly influences government performance and the successful attainment of policy goals. Additionally, Zambrano and Avellaneda (2021) note that weak, inconsistent, or overly complex regulatory frameworks can impede policy effectiveness and disrupt intergovernmental coordination, particularly within decentralized, multi-level governance systems.

The Influence of Regulatory Capacity on Local Economic Performance

The findings of this study indicate that regulatory capacity has a positive and significant impact on local economic performance. This suggests that regulations which foster a supportive business environment, ensure legal certainty, and are straightforward to implement can stimulate regional economic growth. Strong regulatory capacity contributes to a stable economic climate that facilitates and sustains local economic activities. These results support the perspective that regulation functions as a critical institutional mechanism in regional economic development. Previous studies have demonstrated that jurisdictions with robust regulatory frameworks typically exhibit superior economic performance, as they are better able to attract investment and promote productive economic activities (Capano et al., 2025; Gomide et al., 2018).

The Effect of Policy Implementation Quality on Public Policy Effectiveness

The study's findings indicate that the quality of policy implementation has a positive and significant effect on the effectiveness of public policies. This underscores that the implementation phase is a critical stage in the public policy cycle and serves as a primary determinant of whether policy objectives are successfully achieved. High-

quality implementation is characterised by clear operational procedures, adequate and appropriately allocated resources, the competence of implementers, and effective coordination among all actors involved in the policy process. These results align with previous research (Lemerelle, 2022; Manyala, 2021), which suggests that failures in public policy are more often attributable to weaknesses during implementation rather than deficiencies in policy formulation or design. Moreover, studies by Shen et al. (2025) and Adefisoye and Arum (2021) emphasise that effective implementation requires intensive inter-agency coordination and robust institutional capacity to maintain consistency and ensure the sustainability of policy outcomes.

The Effect of Policy Implementation Quality on Local Economic Performance

The study's findings indicate that the quality of policy implementation has a positive and significant impact on local economic performance. This suggests that when public policies are executed effectively and consistently, they can generate tangible outcomes, including enhanced regional economic growth, increased employment opportunities, and improved community welfare. Therefore, the quality of implementation serves as a crucial link between the objectives of economic policies and the actual performance of the local economy. These results reinforce a local economic development perspective that highlights the importance of institutional capacity and high-quality policy execution in promoting inclusive and sustainable growth. Effective implementation ensures that regional economic programs are aligned with strategic goals, managed efficiently, and capable of delivering lasting economic benefits to the community. These findings are consistent with prior studies (Manyala, 2021; Shen et al., 2025), which demonstrate that successful policy implementation substantially contributes to regional economic performance by enhancing local government coordination, accountability, and institutional capacity.

The Indirect Influence of Intergovernmental Collaboration on the Effectiveness of Public Policies through the Quality of Policy Implementation

The study's findings demonstrate that the quality of policy implementation functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between intergovernmental collaboration and public policy effectiveness. This indicates that while collaboration among government actors does not automatically enhance policy outcomes, it exerts a significant influence when it improves the quality of the implementation process. In other words, public policy effectiveness is achieved when collaborative mechanisms are effectively translated into coordinated, consistent, and goal-oriented implementation practices. These results align with previous research (Grin & Fernandes, 2023; Puentes-Poloche et al., 2025; Shen et al., 2025), which highlights that collaborative governance enhances policy outcomes by strengthening implementation processes and actor coordination. Moreover, Zambrano and Avellaneda (2021) note that intergovernmental collaboration lacking sufficient

implementation capacity is less likely to yield effective policies, underscoring the critical role of implementation quality as the mechanism bridging collaboration and policy success.

The Indirect Influence of Intergovernmental Collaboration on Local Economic Performance through the Quality of Policy Implementation

The study's findings indicate that intergovernmental collaboration exerts a significant indirect effect on local economic performance through the quality of policy implementation. This suggests that cooperation among government actors enhances regional economic outcomes only when it is effectively translated into high-quality implementation practices. Consequently, the quality of policy implementation serves as a crucial mechanism linking institutional collaboration to tangible local economic development achievements. These results support existing literature that highlights the importance of implementation mechanisms in transforming institutional collaboration into measurable economic outcomes. Effective intergovernmental cooperation can improve coordination of regional economic policies, optimise resource utilisation, and strengthen implementation capacity, thereby generating positive impacts on local economic performance. These findings are consistent with prior studies ([Ichsan et al., 2024](#); [Shen et al., 2025](#)), which emphasise that the success of intergovernmental collaboration in promoting regional economic development largely depends on the quality of policy implementation.

Indirect Influence of Regulatory Capacity on the Effectiveness of Public Policies through the Quality of Policy Implementation

The study's findings indicate that regulatory capacity exerts a significant indirect effect on public policy effectiveness through the quality of policy implementation. This suggests that robust, coherent, and enforceable regulations not only have a direct impact on policy outcomes but also enhance effectiveness by improving the quality of implementation processes. In this context, the quality of policy implementation functions as a mediating mechanism that explains how regulatory capacity translates into tangible and effective policy results. These results align with previous research ([Capano et al., 2025](#); [Zambrano & Avellaneda, 2021](#)), which emphasises that regulatory capacity is a core element of overall policy capacity and influences policy effectiveness by reinforcing implementation processes and institutional capabilities. Clear and consistent regulations enhance legal certainty, strengthen coordination among implementers, and facilitate more effective and sustainable policy execution.

Indirect Influence of Regulatory Capacity on Local Economic Performance through the Quality of Policy Implementation

The study's findings indicate that regulatory capacity has a significant indirect effect on local economic performance through the quality of policy implementation. This

suggests that robust, coherent, and enforceable regulations generate meaningful economic outcomes only when they are implemented effectively and consistently. Accordingly, the quality of policy implementation serves as a central mediating mechanism that translates regulatory capacity into tangible improvements in regional economic development. Overall, these results confirm that implementation quality is a key mechanism linking regulatory capacity to local economic performance. This aligns with prior research (Capano et al., 2025; Gomide et al., 2018; Setthasuravich & Pukdeewut, 2024), which emphasises that the success of public policies in the context of local economic development is largely determined by the effectiveness of implementation, underpinned by adequate institutional and regulatory capacity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, this study concludes that intergovernmental collaboration and regulatory capacity are crucial factors influencing the quality of policy implementation in Pematangsiantar City. Intergovernmental collaboration strengthens coordination, goal alignment, and synergy among regional apparatus, while regulatory capacity provides a clear legal and procedural foundation for implementation. Together, these factors enhance the quality of policy execution, ensuring that public policies are carried out consistently and effectively at the regional level. The study also demonstrates that high-quality implementation plays a strategic role in improving both public policy effectiveness and local economic performance. Policies executed with clear procedures, adequate resources, and competent, well-coordinated implementers are more likely to achieve objectives and deliver tangible benefits to the community. Thus, policy implementation quality serves not only as a determinant of policy success but also as a bridge linking institutional factors to regional economic outcomes. The study further shows that intergovernmental collaboration and regulatory capacity indirectly influence policy effectiveness and local economic performance through policy implementation quality. These findings indicate that strong collaboration and sound regulations yield greater impact when translated into high-quality implementation. Consequently, the quality of policy implementation functions as a mediating mechanism, strengthening the connection between institutional factors and regional economic performance. Overall, the improvement of Pematangsiantar City's economic performance depends on effective public policies supported by intergovernmental collaboration, robust regulatory capacity, and high-quality implementation. These results suggest that enhancing regional public policies requires not only careful policy formulation but also fostering institutional cooperation, building regulatory capacity, and improving implementation quality to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic development.

PRACTICAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for the Pematangsiantar

City Government. Improving local economic performance and public policy effectiveness cannot rely solely on well-formulated policies, but depends critically on the quality of policy implementation. Therefore, local governments should prioritise strengthening implementation mechanisms by enhancing the capacity of apparatus, ensuring clear operational procedures, and establishing continuous monitoring and evaluation systems. Personnel involved in policy execution must possess adequate technical and managerial competencies to translate policies effectively into concrete actions. The study also highlights the strategic role of intergovernmental collaboration in enhancing both policy implementation quality and local economic outcomes. Practically, this requires strengthening coordination forums across regional apparatus, clarifying institutional roles and responsibilities, and promoting a collaborative work culture. Institutionalised collaboration helps reduce program overlaps, improves resource efficiency, and accelerates the achievement of regional development objectives.

Regarding policy, regulatory capacity provides a critical foundation for effective public policies and economic performance. Local governments should review and improve regulations to ensure they are clear, consistent, adaptive to local contexts, and operationally feasible. Regulation development should consider not only normative compliance but also practical implement ability and its impact on executive and community-level outcomes. Finally, regional economic development policies should be designed in an integrated manner, considering the interplay between intergovernmental collaboration, regulatory capacity, and implementation quality. Local governments are encouraged to embed efforts to strengthen cross-government collaboration and regulatory capacity into bureaucratic reform and governance agendas. By doing so, public policies will be not only administratively effective but also capable of producing tangible improvements in local economic performance and community welfare in a sustainable manner.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research is recommended to broaden the geographical scope to enable comparative analyses across regions with differing administrative and governance characteristics. Such a comparative approach between local governments or governmental levels can provide deeper insights into variations in policy implementation and effectiveness. Additionally, adopting a mixed-methods design that integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches could offer a more comprehensive understanding of implementation dynamics, including contextual factors, leadership practices, and organizational culture, which may not be fully captured through survey data alone. Incorporating additional variables, such as human resource capacity, policy leadership, or stakeholder participation, could further enrich analytical models and enhance understanding of the determinants of public policy effectiveness.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express his sincere gratitude to all parties who have provided support and contributions in the completion of this research. Special appreciation is given to academic advisors for valuable guidance, direction, and feedback during the research process. The author also expressed his appreciation to the Regional Government of Pematangsiantar City, especially local government agencies and civil servants who voluntarily participated as respondents and provided the data and information needed for this research. In addition, the author would like to thank family members and colleagues for their moral support, motivation, and encouragement. Finally, a heartfelt thank you is extended to all individuals and institutions who cannot be mentioned individually, but who directly or indirectly contributed to the successful completion of this research.

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