

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

WHY DO REGIONAL ACTORS COMPLY? SUBNATIONAL STRUCTURE
AND COLLECTIVE ACTION IN INDONESIA, 1990-2001

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I KETUT PUTRA ERAWAN

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an effort to explain and understand variation in regional actors' compliance to central authority in Indonesia, a country in which the national government has made determined attempts to unify, homogenize, and dominate. The central thesis of this study is that regional actors' compliance with central authority is shaped directly by their capacity to conduct collective action and is influenced indirectly by regional, social, and economic structures and central penetration policies.

The objectives of this study are: (1) to provide a comprehensive view of the nature of central and regional power relationships in Indonesia along various dimensions of compliance, covering both authoritarian and transitional eras; (2) to provide a new understanding of regional compliance that emphasizes the salience of regional, social, and economic structures, as well as collective action capacity; and (3) to show connections among general theory, methodology, and politics.

The morphogenetic framework that guided the study found more empirical support from the recent years of democratic transition (1998-2001) than from the end of the end of the authoritarian period (1990-1997). A triangulation of various techniques -- multidimensional scaling, path analysis, and process tracing -- lends support to the following conclusions: (1) regional collective action had a direct

impact on regional compliance; (2) the effect of penetration policy on regional compliance was mediated by regional variables (socio-economic structures and collective action); and (3) the impact of regional economic structure was mediated by regional collective action.

A high level of compliance in East Kalimantan was explained by high levels of penetration policy, regional commercialism, and social fragmentation, and a low capacity for conducting collective action. The case of Papua, on the other hand, was an example of low compliance with central authority and a high capacity for regional collective action. The case of West Sumatra manifested the workings of regional social structure, whereas the effects of regional commercialism were most important in Bali. Although the last two cases were marked by moderate levels of compliance, the objectives of collective activism varied, as did their modes of compliance.

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