

Abstract

The sister province partnership between the Special Region of Yogyakarta in Indonesia and Kyoto Prefecture in Japan was established in 1985 and is one of Indonesia's longest-running examples of Paradiplomacy. This study evaluates the implementation of the Yogyakarta–Kyoto Sister Province Program during the period 2021 to 2024, with one of the primary focuses being on arts and cultural exchange as stated in the 1985 Memorandum of Understanding. The research uses a qualitative case study approach through document analysis and semi-structured interviews with government stakeholders and experts. McConnell's three realms and five-spectrum framework is also used to evaluate policy success. The findings show that the partnership has maintained continuity through recurring cultural programs, especially the Children's Painting Competition and Art Exchange Program. However, cooperation remained narrow in scope and relied heavily on symbolic events. Institutional coordination was weak, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were absent, public participation was minimal, and program diversification did not take place. Overall, the program is categorized as a conflicted success because it achieved limited cultural outcomes but also lacked in institutional strength and sustainability. The study recommends improving coordination, increasing program diversity, strengthening stakeholder involvement, and developing evaluation systems to ensure the partnership's future continuity.

Keywords: paradiplomacy, sister province, cultural diplomacy, Yogyakarta, Kyoto, policy evaluation