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**CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE DECENTRALIZED  
GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF SURATTHANI PROVINCIAL  
ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION**



**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA  
2016**

**CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE DECENTRALIZED GOVERNANCE:  
THE CASE OF SURATTHANI PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIVE  
ORGANIZATION**



**A Thesis submitted to the Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of Government  
in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy  
Universiti Utara Malaysia**

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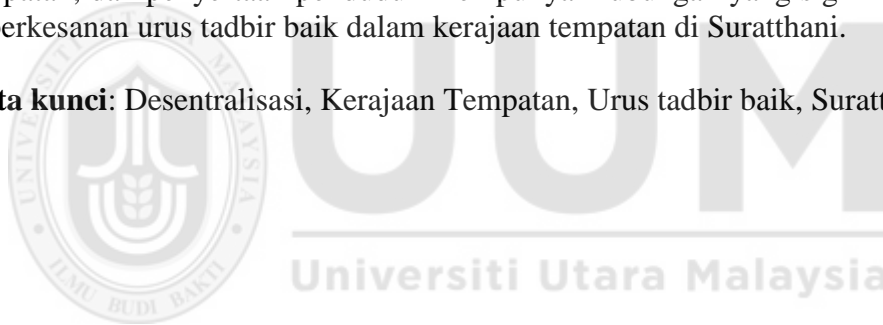
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## Abstrak

Tiga isu utama yang dihadapi oleh Wilayah Suratthani ialah pertama, konflik di antara kerajaan pusat dan kerajaan tempatan; kedua, pengaruh ahli politik tempatan dalam pentadbiran kerajaan tempatan, dan ketiga, tahap penyertaan awam yang rendah. Sehubungan dengan itu, kajian ini dilakukan bagi mengkaji sejauh mana ketiga-tiga faktor di atas mempengaruhi urus tadbir baik kerajaan tempatan di Suratthani. Kajian ini menggabungkan kaedah kuantitatif melalui pengedaran borang soal selidik dan kaedah kualitatif dengan mengadakan temu bual. Responden kajian terdiri daripada pegawai kerajaan pusat, pentadbir kerajaan tempatan, ahli-ahli politik, pemimpin masyarakat dan ketua-ketua isi rumah di Suratthani PAO. Ujian-t dan ANOVA digunakan untuk menguji perbezaan antara kumpulan. Analisis korelasi Pearson digunakan untuk menguji perhubungan di antara pemboleh ubah bebas dan pemboleh ubah bersandar. Regresi linear dan analisis regresi hierarki digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis. Hasil dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa hubungan di antara kerajaan pusat dan kerajaan tempatan, pengaruh ahli politik tempatan, dan penyertaan penduduk mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan terhadap keberkesanan urus tadbir baik dalam kerajaan tempatan di Suratthani.

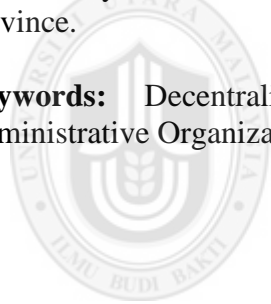
**Kata kunci:** Desentralisasi, Kerajaan Tempatan, Urus tadbir baik, Suratthani



## Abstract

There are three critical issues facing Suratthani province: first, conflict between central and local government; second, influence of local politicians on the affairs of local government; and third, lack of citizen empowerment. This study, therefore, aims to examine the extent to which those three issues influence the decentralized governance in Suratthani PAO. This research integrates both quantitative method through questionnaire survey data and qualitative method through interviews. The respondents for this study consist of officials and staff of central government, the PAO administrators, PAO members, community leaders and household heads. The independent t-test and ANOVA were used to test the differences between groups. Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. Linear regression and hierarchical regression analysis were used as the appropriate statistical tools to test the hypotheses. The results show that the relationship between central government and local government, influence of local politicians, and citizen participation significantly affect the effectiveness of the decentralized governance in Suratthani province.

**Keywords:** Decentralization, Local Government, Governance, Provincial Administrative Organization, Suratthani



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## Glossary of Terms

BMT	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
DLA	Department of Local Administration
LAO	Local Administrative Organization
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NCD	National Decentralization Committee
PCA	Pattaya City Administration
PAO	Provincial Administrative Organization
SAO	Sub-district Administrative Organization
TAO	Tambon Administrative Organizations



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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Decentralized governance is an alternative replacement to centralistic government style in developing countries. It has been widely adopted to be one of the main features of governance reform. It is referred to as the systematic and rational dispersal of power, authority and responsibility from the top to the lower levels or from the national to the local governments. While, the central government keeps the powers, authority and responsibility by finance the local governments have to be borne by local authorities. If decentralization is inappropriately designed or introduced without local people participation and credit, it might consequently bring about macroeconomic instability, declining service levels, heightened conflicts, corruption, and collapse of the safety networking (Olsen, 2007).

Moreover, decentralization as a strategy towards democratizing the political system especially the local governments has been an enduring issue in the landscape of public administration practice. The key challenges to decentralization are, to name a few, the balance between responsibilities and resources, accountability and capacity, and incentives provisions for the implementation of decentralization in order to match decentralization arrangements. Nevertheless, decentralization allows the local governments to decide on issue that concerns them directly.

After a long time of democratic movement, decentralization, as a global phenomenon, becomes an increasingly important trend in Southeast Asia.



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