BRAIN
Business Research and Administration Innovation
August 2026, Volume 3 Number 2, 318–331
Homepage: https://brainjournalpublisher.com/index.php/BRAIN

Beyond Budget Realization: A Descriptive Analysis of Revenue Trends, Revenue Structure, and Expenditure Patterns in Bengkulu Province, Indonesia (2022–2024)

Aditya Sulthony Ahmad Khan[1]*, Tri Cahyo Nugroho[2]
[1,2] Department of Public Administration, Universitas Negeri Makassar
Email: aditya.sulthony@unm.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Assessing regional public finances requires more than examining aggregate budget realization; it also requires attention to revenue sources and expenditure allocation. This study describes revenue realization, revenue composition, and expenditure patterns in Bengkulu Province, Indonesia, during 2022–2025 using document analysis of official budget documents, realization reports, and accountability records. Full-year comparisons cover 2022–2024, with 2021 serving as the baseline for annual growth calculations; 2025 is examined separately using data for 1 January–30 September. Between 2022 and 2024, realized revenue increased by 8.06%, compared with expenditure growth of 3.77%. The province recorded deficits before financing of IDR 72.641 billion in 2022 and IDR 132.401 billion in 2023, followed by a surplus of IDR 51.382 billion in 2024. Transfer revenue remained the largest source, accounting for 63.11–65.40% of total revenue in 2022–2024, while PAD's share decreased from 36.85% to 34.00%. Operating expenditure accounted for 76.48% of total spending in 2024, while the share of capital expenditure was 13.60%. By 30 September 2025, revenue and expenditure realization had reached 60.58% and 54.00% of their reported budgets, respectively. Capital expenditure had reached 21.93% of its reported budget, compared with 82.65% for transfer expenditure. These descriptive results show that budget realization must be read alongside revenue composition and expenditure allocation; they do not, by themselves, establish spending efficiency, service outcomes, or fiscal sustainability.

Keywords: public finance; regional budget; revenue realization; revenue composition; expenditure patterns; Bengkulu Province.

INTRODUCTION

Regional financial management should not be assessed solely in terms of the government's ability to spend its allocated budget. Equal consideration should be given to how revenue is generated, how expenditure priorities are established, and the extent to which budgetary decisions reflect regional development needs. In this context, the Regional Government Budget *(Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah*, APBD) serves as an important instrument for expressing the fiscal policy choices of regional governments over a fiscal year. Through the APBD, governments determine their sources of financing and allocate public resources to support government operations and public service (Mardiasmo, 2018). Accordingly, an assessment of regional financial conditions should consider the structure of revenue and expenditure rather than relying exclusively on budget realization figures.

The budget realization rate can indicate the extent to which financial plans have been implemented. However, this measure alone does not fully explain the quality of fiscal decisions made by regional governments. A high expenditure realization rate, for example, does not necessarily mean that public funds have been directed towards the most pressing development needs. The same consideration applies to revenue. Revenue target attainment needs to be examined in conjunction with the composition of revenue sources, particularly to determine the extent to which regional governments can finance their needs through Regional Own-Source Revenue (*Pendapatan Asli Daerah*, PAD) and the degree to which they remain dependent on transfers from the central government. Mahmudi (Mahmudi, 2020) identifies financial autonomy, revenue effectiveness, expenditure efficiency, and expenditure composition as important dimensions in assessing regional financial performance. This perspective suggests that budgetary achievements should be interpreted in relation to the underlying fiscal structure.

These issues warrant examination in the context of the Bengkulu Provincial Government during the 2022–2025 period. The data coverage, however, is not identical across all years: the main annual comparisons use full-year figures for 2022–2024, while the available 2025 report covers 1 January–30 September 2025. The 2021 figures are included only as a baseline for calculating annual growth in 2022. On the revenue side, changes in PAD, intergovernmental transfers, and other revenue sources provide a basis for describing the province's revenue structure. Expenditure composition shows how resources are distributed among operating needs, capital investment, unexpected expenditure, and transfers. These aspects need to be examined together, although the aggregate figures alone do not establish whether the resulting allocation improves public services. As Halim (2014) explains, regional financial analysis should consider the relationship between revenue and expenditure to develop a fuller understanding of local governments' fiscal conditions.

Previous studies have examined regional financial conditions through financial ratios and the relationship between revenue sources and government expenditure. For example, Septriani (2023) found that PAD, the General Allocation Fund (*Dana Alokasi Umum*, DAU), and the Special Allocation Fund (*Dana Alokasi Khusus*, DAK) had positive and statistically significant effects on regional expenditure across regencies and municipalities in Bengkulu Province. This finding highlights the relationship between revenue capacity and government spending. Regarding expenditure composition, Riswati (2023) examined the tendency for operating expenditure to dominate capital expenditure, a pattern relevant to the fiscal space available for investment and regional asset formation. Research on revenue realization at regency and municipal levels, such as Simangunsong et al. (2025), provides a related context for understanding subnational finance. However, findings from other provinces and administrative levels should not be generalized automatically to the Bengkulu Provincial Government. The present study complements this literature by bringing revenue trends, revenue composition, expenditure composition, and interim 2025 budget execution together in a descriptive account of provincial-level records, while keeping the interim figures separate from full-year comparisons.

To examine these issues, this study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach using document analysis. This approach is appropriate because the study focuses on tracing changes in revenue and expenditure structures rather than testing causal relationships between variables. Regional Government Budget documents (APBD), Budget Realization Reports (*Laporan Realisasi Anggaran*, LRA), Local Government Financial Statements (*Laporan Keuangan Pemerintah Daerah*, LKPD), and other relevant official publications are used to compare fiscal conditions across years. Nominal figures and percentages are employed to illustrate the observed

changes, while their interpretation takes into account the broader context of regional financial management and findings from previous studies. Information from different official documents is cross-checked to maintain data consistency and minimize the risk of discrepancies in interpreting the reported figures.

Against this background, this study describes revenue realization, revenue composition, and expenditure patterns in the Bengkulu Provincial Government during 2022–2025. It addresses three questions. First, how did regional revenue develop, and how was it structured during the full-year period 2022–2024? Second, how was expenditure allocated during 2022–2024, and what do the available figures for 1 January–30 September 2025 show about interim budget execution across expenditure categories? Third, what additional insights emerge when revenue developments are examined alongside expenditure patterns rather than relying solely on aggregate budget realization rates? The 2021 figures are used only as a baseline for calculating annual growth in 2022.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach and document analysis to examine revenue realization, revenue composition, and expenditure patterns in the Bengkulu Provincial Government during 2022–2025. This approach was selected because the study aims to describe regional financial conditions rather than test causal relationships between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The analysis goes beyond aggregate budget realization rates to examine revenue trends, the composition of revenue sources, expenditure allocation, and changes in spending patterns. Document analysis is appropriate because the required information is recorded in official financial and regulatory documents (Bowen, 2009)

The study relies on secondary data obtained from Regional Government Budget (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah*, APBD) documents, Budget Realization Reports (*Laporan Realisasi Anggaran*, LRA), Local Government Financial Statements (*Laporan Keuangan Pemerintah Daerah*, LKPD), and regional financial publications issued by the Bengkulu Provincial Government and other official institutions. Documents were selected purposively based on their relevance to the research focus, completeness, and comparability across the study period (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data were collected through documentation by identifying, reviewing, and recording information related to regional revenue and expenditure (Bowen, 2009; Sugiyono, 2019).

The data were analyzed descriptively. Revenue and expenditure figures were classified by budget category and compared across the full-year periods available for 2022–2024. The 2021 figures were used as a baseline for calculating the 2022 growth rates. For 2025, the available report covers 1 January–30 September; those interim figures are presented separately and are not compared directly with full-year totals. Tables and narrative descriptions are supported by percentage calculations showing revenue growth, expenditure growth, revenue shares, expenditure shares, and realization rates. Information in official documents was cross-checked to assess consistency across sources (Bowen, 2009)

This study does not test causal relationships or measure expenditure efficiency. It provides a descriptive account of revenue realization, revenue composition, and expenditure patterns in the Bengkulu Provincial Government. Because the 2025 figures cover only the first nine months of the fiscal year, the study distinguishes these interim realization rates from the full-year comparisons for 2022–2024.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Trends in Regional Revenue and Expenditure

The full-year records for the Bengkulu Provincial Government show changes in revenue and expenditure during 2022–2024. Table 1 compares realized revenue, realized expenditure, the surplus or deficit before financing, the expenditure-to-revenue ratio, and annual growth rates. The 2021 figures are included only as a baseline for calculating the 2022 growth rates. The available 2025 data cover the first nine months of the year and are reported separately in Table 4. All monetary values are expressed in billions of Indonesian rupiah (IDR).

Table 1. Realized Revenue and Expenditure of the Bengkulu Provincial Government, 2021–2024 (2021 as the baseline year)

Unit: IDR billion, except for percentages.

Indicator	2021	2022	2023	2024
Realized revenue	3,051.752	2,953.745	2,991.014	3,191.854
Realized expenditure	2,880.225	3,026.386	3,123.415	3,140.472
Surplus/(deficit) before financing	171.527	(72.641)	(132.401)	51.382
Expenditure-to-revenue ratio	94.38%	102.46%	104.43%	98.39%
Annual revenue growth	N/A	−3.21%	1.26%	6.71%
Annual expenditure growth	N/A	5.07%	3.21%	0.55%

Note: 2021 is included only as the baseline for calculating 2022 year-on-year growth. Full-year comparisons cover 2022–2024; the available 2025 interim figures are presented separately in Table 4. Ratios and growth rates are calculated using the underlying figures before rounding.
Source: Authors' calculations based on Bengkulu Provincial Regulation No. 3/2022 (fiscal year 2021), No. 16/2023 (fiscal year 2022), No. 18/2024 (fiscal year 2023), and No. 23/2025 (fiscal year 2024).

As shown in Table 1, realized revenue declined by 3.21% in 2022 to IDR 2,953.745 billion, while realized expenditure increased by 5.07% to IDR 3,026.386 billion. Expenditure therefore exceeded revenue by IDR 72.641 billion, and the expenditure-to-revenue ratio reached 102.46%. The 2021 figures provide the baseline for these growth calculations; the main comparison of annual fiscal trends begins in 2022.

The deficit widened in 2023 as revenue grew by 1.26%, while expenditure increased by 3.21%. Realized revenue reached IDR 2,991.014 billion and expenditure reached IDR 3,123.415 billion. The difference resulted in a deficit before financing of IDR 132.401 billion, while the expenditure-to-revenue ratio rose to 104.43%. In that year, expenditure growth outpaced revenue growth.

The position changed in 2024, when revenue growth accelerated to 6.71% and expenditure growth slowed to 0.55%. Realized revenue reached IDR 3,191.854 billion, compared with expenditure of IDR 3,140.472 billion, producing a surplus before financing of IDR 51.382 billion. The expenditure-to-revenue ratio declined to 98.39%. Across 2022–2024, realized revenue increased by approximately 8.06%, while realized expenditure rose by 3.77%. The difference coincided with a shift from deficits in 2022 and 2023 to a surplus in 2024, but it does not by itself establish improved efficiency or fiscal sustainability.

The 2025 figures are not included in the annual growth calculations because the available report covers only 1 January–30 September 2025, rather than the full fiscal year. The revenue and expenditure realization rates for that period are presented separately in Table 4 and should not be interpreted as final annual outcomes.

Taken together, the full-year figures show that the balance between revenue and expenditure changed over 2022–2024. Revenue grew more rapidly than expenditure over the period, and the annual balance moved from deficits in the first two years to a surplus in 2024. These figures describe the recorded budget position; a broader judgment on fiscal performance would require additional evidence on target attainment, service delivery, and the outcomes of public spending.

Regional Revenue Structure

Regional revenue was classified into three categories: Regional Own-Source Revenue (PAD), transfer revenue, and other legitimate regional revenue. Table 2 reports the nominal value and share of each category from 2021 to 2024. The 2021 figures are included for context and to keep the revenue series consistent with the baseline shown in Table 1; the discussion focuses on changes during 2022–2024.

Table 2. Composition of Realized Revenue of the Bengkulu Provincial Government, 2021–2024

Unit: IDR billion, except for percentages.

Revenue Component	2021	2022	2023	2024
Regional Own-Source Revenue (PAD)	984.420	1,088.416	1,033.850	1,085.298
Share of PAD (%)	32.26	36.85	34.57	34.00
Transfer Revenue	2,066.216	1,864.172	1,955.996	2,070.332
Share of Transfer Revenue (%)	67.71	63.11	65.40	64.86
Other Legitimate Regional Revenue	1.116	1.157	1.169	36.224
Share of Other Revenue (%)	0.04	0.04	0.04	1.13
Total Revenue	3,051.752	2,953.745	2,991.014	3,191.854

Note: Shares are calculated as each category's proportion of total realized revenue. Monetary values are rounded to three decimal places and percentages to two decimal places; minor differences in component totals may reflect rounding.
Source: Authors' calculations based on Bengkulu Provincial Regulation No. 3/2022 (fiscal year 2021), No. 16/2023 (fiscal year 2022), No. 18/2024 (fiscal year 2023), and No. 23/2025 (fiscal year 2024).

Transfer revenue remained the largest source of income for the Bengkulu Provincial Government in 2022–2024. It increased from IDR 1,864.172 billion in 2022 to IDR 2,070.332 billion in 2024, despite a relatively modest rise in 2023. Its share of total revenue followed a similar pattern, increasing from 63.11% in 2022 to 65.40% in 2023 before falling to 64.86% in 2024. The slight decline in the final year did little to change the overall picture: the provincial government continued to rely on transfers for almost two-thirds of its revenue.

PAD moved in a different direction. Revenue from these sources fell from IDR 1,088.416 billion in 2022 to IDR 1,033.850 billion in 2023, then recovered to IDR 1,085.298 billion in 2024. Despite this recovery, PAD's share of total revenue continued to decline, from 36.85% in 2022 to 34.00% in 2024. In other words, the increase in PAD in 2024 was not enough to restore its earlier share of provincial revenue. The figures suggest that, although PAD remained an important source of income, transfer revenue continued to play the more prominent role in financing the provincial budget.

Other legitimate regional revenue contributed very little to total revenue in 2022 and 2023, at IDR 1.157 billion and IDR 1.169 billion, respectively. Its value rose to IDR 36.224 billion in 2024, accounting for 1.13% of total revenue. This was a notable change, although the figures alone do not show what caused the increase. The relevant revenue accounts would need to be examined to identify the sources of this additional income and determine whether the increase is likely to be sustained.

Taken together, the figures show that Bengkulu's revenue structure changed only modestly between 2022 and 2024. Transfer revenue remained dominant, while PAD recovered in nominal terms but accounted for a smaller share of total revenue. The increase in other legitimate regional revenue was more pronounced, yet its overall contribution remained limited. These patterns describe the composition of provincial revenue during the period, but they do not, on their own, establish whether the province has become more or less fiscally autonomous.

Regional Expenditure Structure

To examine how the provincial budget was allocated, regional expenditure was classified into four categories: operating expenditure, capital expenditure, unexpected expenditure, and transfer expenditure. The analysis considers both the nominal value and the proportion of each category relative to total expenditure, providing an overview of changes in the composition of public spending during 2022–2024.

Table 3. Composition of Realized Expenditure of the Bengkulu Provincial Government, 2022–2024

Unit: IDR billion, except for percentages.

Expenditure Component	2022	2023	2024
Operating Expenditure	2,103.881	2,124.120	2,401.947
Share of Operating Expenditure (%)	69.52	68.01	76.48
Capital Expenditure	417.048	586.890	427.114
Share of Capital Expenditure (%)	13.78	18.79	13.60
Unexpected Expenditure	2.689	0.027	0.000
Share of Unexpected Expenditure (%)	0.09	0.00	0.00
Transfer Expenditure	502.766	412.378	311.411
Share of Transfer Expenditure (%)	16.61	13.20	9.92
Total Expenditure	**3,026.386**	**3,123.415**	**3,140.472**

Note: Shares are calculated relative to total realized expenditure. The share of unexpected expenditure is included so all categories are represented. Figures are rounded; minor differences between component sums and totals may reflect rounding. Source: Authors' calculations based on Bengkulu Governor Regulation No. 16/2023 (fiscal year 2022), No. 18/2024 (fiscal year 2023), and No. 23/2025 (fiscal year 2024).

Operating expenditure accounted for the largest share of the Bengkulu Provincial Government's spending throughout the study period. Its realization increased from IDR 2,103.881 billion in 2022 to IDR 2,124.120 billion in 2023, before rising more substantially to IDR 2,401.947 billion in 2024. Its share of total expenditure followed a similar pattern, although it initially declined from 69.52% in 2022 to 68.01% in 2023. By 2024, the share had risen to 76.48%, indicating that a considerably larger proportion of expenditure was allocated to operating activities in the final year.

Capital expenditure followed a different trajectory. It increased from IDR 417.048 billion in 2022 to IDR 586.890 billion in 2023, then fell to IDR 427.114 billion in 2024. Its share of total expenditure consequently declined from 18.79% in 2023 to 13.60% in 2024. This shift occurred

alongside the increase in operating expenditure, indicating a change in the relative composition of spending. However, the figures alone do not establish whether the change affected the quality of public services or the achievement of development outcomes.

Transfer expenditure declined throughout the period, from IDR 502.766 billion in 2022 to IDR 412.378 billion in 2023 and IDR 311.411 billion in 2024. Its contribution to total expenditure decreased accordingly, from 16.61% to 9.92% over the three years. Unexpected expenditure was also relatively small, falling from IDR 2.689 billion in 2022 to approximately IDR 0.027 billion in 2023, with no recorded realization in 2024.

Taken together, the expenditure figures show that the increase in total spending between 2022 and 2024 was accompanied by a growing concentration of expenditure in operating activities. Capital expenditure, by contrast, fluctuated and ended the period below its 2023 level, while transfer expenditure declined in both nominal terms and relative contribution. These changes describe the shifting allocation of the provincial budget, although further analysis would be needed to assess their implications for spending efficiency and development performance.

Budget Realization as of September 2025

The 2025 figures are presented separately because the available consolidated report covers 1 January–30 September 2025. They represent budget execution during the first nine months of the fiscal year, not the final annual outcome. They should therefore not be compared directly with full-year totals for 2022–2024.

Table 4. Revenue and Expenditure Realization of the Bengkulu Provincial Government as of 30 September 2025

Unit: IDR billion, except for percentages.

Component	Budget Reported	Realization as of 30 September 2025	Realization (%)
Total Revenue	2,989.226	1,810.819	60.58
Regional Own-Source Revenue (PAD)	1,231.301	698.710	56.75
Transfer Revenue	1,756.809	1,112.109	63.30
Other Legitimate Regional Revenue	1.116	0.000	0.00
Total Expenditure	3,062.139	1,653.660	54.00
Operating Expenditure	2,116.859	1,337.921	63.20
Capital Expenditure	762.544	167.229	21.93
Unexpected Expenditure	3.061	0.000	0.00
Transfer Expenditure	179.675	148.510	82.65

Source: Authors' calculations based on the Bengkulu Provincial Government's Consolidated Regional Budget Realization Report (LRA Konsolidasi), covering 1 January–30 September 2025.

As of 30 September 2025, realized regional revenue totaled IDR 1,810.819 billion, equivalent to 60.58% of the budget shown in the report. PAD realization was IDR 698.710 billion, or 56.75% of its budget, while transfer revenue reached IDR 1,112.109 billion, or 63.30%. Thus, transfer revenue had a higher realization rate than PAD during the first nine months of the fiscal year.

Regional expenditure realization reached IDR 1,653.660 billion, equivalent to 54.00% of the reported budget. Realization varied across categories: transfer expenditure reached 82.65% of its budget, operating expenditure 63.20%, and capital expenditure 21.93%. The capital expenditure figure represents IDR 167.229 billion out of IDR 762.544 billion budgeted.

Capital expenditure realization was comparatively low at the end of September, but the figures alone do not establish whether this reflected implementation delays, procurement schedules, payment timing, or other factors. The remaining three months could change the annual realization rates. These data are therefore best understood as an interim picture of revenue collection and budget execution, not as final indicators of 2025 annual performance.

Discussion

Changes in Fiscal Position and the Relationship between Revenue and Expenditure

Between 2022 and 2024, regional revenue in Bengkulu Province grew faster than expenditure. Total revenue increased by approximately 8.06%, compared with expenditure growth of 3.77%. The difference was particularly apparent in 2024, when revenue rose by 6.71%, while expenditure increased by only 0.55%. This divergence is reflected in the changing fiscal balance over the period and underscores the importance of examining revenue and expenditure together when assessing regional financial performance (Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020).

In 2022 and 2023, realized expenditure exceeded realized revenue, and the gap widened from IDR 72.641 billion to IDR 132.401 billion. By 2024, revenue exceeded expenditure by IDR 51.382 billion before financing transactions. The shift coincided with faster revenue growth and a smaller increase in expenditure, indicating a more favorable annual budget balance in 2024 (Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025)

The change is important, but the surplus alone does not tell the whole story. As Halim (Halim, 2014) and Mahmudi (2020) explain, regional financial conditions need to be considered in relation to both revenue and expenditure. A government may record a surplus without necessarily delivering public services efficiently, just as a deficit does not automatically indicate poor financial management. In Bengkulu's case, the 2024 surplus establishes that realized revenue was sufficient to cover realized expenditure before financing transactions. Whether this position also reflects better budget management depends on spending target attainment, program implementation, and the outputs and benefits produced. These aspects cannot be established from aggregate financial figures (Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018).

This distinction also matters when interpreting the expenditure-to-revenue ratio. The ratio declined in 2024 as revenue growth outpaced expenditure, reflecting the change from a deficit to a surplus. Yet, a lower ratio should not be taken as conclusive evidence of improved government performance. It needs to be considered alongside the quality of public spending and the extent to which budget allocations support development objectives. Nuraeni, Nurhasanah, and Kosasih (2024), for example, examined the relationship between regional financial independence, PAD effectiveness, and capital expenditure allocation. Their study reinforces the relevance of looking beyond a single financial indicator when examining regional fiscal performance, an approach also reflected in the work of Septriani (2023) and Riswati (2023).

Revenue Structure and the Challenge of Strengthening PAD

Although total regional revenue increased between 2022 and 2024, the share contributed by Regional Own-Source Revenue (PAD) declined. PAD accounted for 36.85% of total revenue in 2022 and 34.00% in 2024. Its nominal value almost recovered by the end of the period, reaching IDR 1,085.298 billion in 2024 compared with IDR 1,088.416 billion in 2022. Transfer revenue increased from IDR 1,864.172 billion to IDR 2,070.332 billion, a rise of approximately 11.06%. The lower PAD share therefore reflects, in part, the growth of transfer revenue while PAD remained close to its 2022 nominal level (Mahmudi, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018; Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025).

This pattern highlights a distinction between revenue growth and changes in revenue composition. Total revenue can rise even when the contribution of locally generated revenue declines, particularly when transfers from the central government increase more rapidly. In Bengkulu, transfer revenue remained the largest component of provincial revenue in all three years. Consequently, growth in total revenue did not translate into a stronger relative contribution from PAD. Looking only at the overall increase in revenue would therefore overlook an important feature of the province's fiscal position: its revenue base continued to rely heavily on transfers (Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020; Septriani, 2023).

Septriani (2023) provides a relevant comparison, reporting that PAD, the General Allocation Fund (DAU), and the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) had positive and statistically significant associations with regional expenditure in regencies and municipalities across Bengkulu Province. This suggests that both locally generated revenue and intergovernmental transfers matter for regional spending. However, those findings should not be applied directly to the provincial government without considering differences in administrative responsibilities, revenue sources, and spending functions. PAD's share of total revenue is useful for describing Bengkulu Province's revenue structure, but it cannot, on its own, establish the extent of fiscal independence (Mahmudi, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018; Republik Indonesia, 2014).

A declining PAD share is therefore not sufficient evidence that the province's fiscal capacity has weakened in every respect. Transfers form part of the intergovernmental fiscal system and help finance public functions assigned to regional governments. At the same time, the ability to generate and mobilize local revenue remains relevant to a government's capacity to finance its own priorities. The issue is not simply whether transfer revenue is large or small, but how the balance between own-source revenue and transfers shapes the province's ability to fund government operations, development, and public services. This interpretation is consistent with the broader approaches to regional financial management discussed by Halim (2014), Mahmudi (2020), and Mardiasmo (2018).

The sharp increase in other legitimate regional revenue in 2024 also deserves closer attention. This category rose from IDR 1.169 billion in 2023 to IDR 36.224 billion in 2024. Although its contribution remained smaller than those of PAD and transfer revenue, the increase affected the overall composition of provincial revenue in the final year. The available aggregate figures do not, however, identify which revenue items accounted for the change or whether the increase is likely to recur. Examining the detailed revenue accounts would help establish whether the rise reflects a continuing source of income or a more specific development in 2024. Such scrutiny is consistent with the use of document analysis to identify, classify, and interpret information within its administrative context (Bowen, 2009; Krippendorff, 2018; Sugiyono, 2019).

The revenue figures for 2022–2024 thus reveal two developments that need to be considered together: total revenue grew, but PAD's contribution declined as transfer revenue

increased. This distinction provides a more useful basis for understanding Bengkulu's fiscal position than revenue growth alone. It also points to the need to examine the composition and sustainability of regional revenue when assessing the province's financial capacity and its ability to support public spending over time (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Bengkulu, 2024; Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018).

Expenditure Patterns and the Implications of Budget Composition

The expenditure data show a clear shift in the Bengkulu Provincial Government's spending pattern between 2022 and 2024. Operating expenditure remained the largest component throughout the period, but its share rose considerably in 2024, reaching 76.48% of total expenditure. Capital expenditure moved in the opposite direction. After accounting for 18.79% of spending in 2023, its share fell to 13.60% in 2024. Transfer expenditure also declined over the three years. Taken together, these changes suggest that the increase in total expenditure in 2024 was accompanied by a shift towards operating costs and away from capital and transfer spending (Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020; Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu, 2023, 2024, 2025a).

The growing share of operating expenditure deserves attention, although it should not automatically be viewed as a sign of unproductive spending. Government operations require funding for personnel, goods and services, and the day-to-day delivery of public services. The size of this expenditure category alone therefore says little about whether the money was well spent. What matters is how the allocated resources support government responsibilities and whether the resulting activities meet the needs of the public (Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018; Riswati, 2023)

The decline in capital expenditure raises a different question. Realization fell from IDR 586.890 billion in 2023 to IDR 427.114 billion in 2024, but this change is not sufficient to conclude that development activity in the province declined. Capital spending often varies with investment priorities, procurement schedules, construction progress, and the timing of project completion. Without information on the types of assets purchased, the physical progress of projects, and the use of completed facilities, the implications of the decline remain uncertain. The expenditure figures reveal a change in allocation, but they do not show what that change meant for development outcomes (Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020; Yin, 2018).

Transfer expenditure declined from IDR 502.766 billion in 2022 to IDR 412.378 billion in 2023 and IDR 311.411 billion in 2024. Its share of total expenditure fell from 16.61% in 2022 to 9.92% in 2024. The reasons for this reduction cannot be established from the aggregate figures. Changes in policy, spending responsibilities, or annual fiscal requirements may be relevant, but these explanations would need to be verified against the corresponding budget documents. The decline is therefore best treated as an observed change in expenditure composition rather than evidence of either better or worse policy performance (Bowen, 2009; Sugiyono, 2019).

Previous studies provide context for these findings. Riswati (2023) reported a pattern in which regional expenditure was concentrated in operating costs, while capital expenditure accounted for a relatively small share. Nuraeni et al. (2024) also examined the relationship between financial independence, PAD effectiveness, and capital expenditure allocation. These studies underline the relevance of examining how public resources are distributed. However, Bengkulu's spending composition alone cannot establish whether the allocation was appropriate or whether it produced the expected development benefits (Direktorat Jenderal Perimbangan Keuangan, 2024; Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020)

For this reason, expenditure composition should be read as evidence of spending priorities, not as a complete measure of expenditure quality. Assessing efficiency would require a comparison between the resources used and the outputs delivered. Assessing effectiveness would require evidence of whether those outputs contributed to the objectives of the relevant programs. Since the present study relies on aggregate budget realization data, it can describe how expenditure changed over time but cannot determine, on that basis alone, how efficiently or effectively the budget was used (Mardiasmo, 2018; Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The Limits of Budget Realization as a Measure of Financial Performance

Budget realization figures are an important source of information about regional government finances. They show how much revenue was collected and how much expenditure was recorded during a given period. Yet, these figures do not explain why the changes occurred or what they meant for public services and development. A fuller assessment requires attention to the sources of revenue, the purposes for which expenditure was allocated, and the results achieved through the use of public funds (Mardiasmo, 2018; Mahmudi, 2020; Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2020).

The experience of Bengkulu Province illustrates this limitation. Between 2022 and 2024, total revenue increased, but PAD accounted for a smaller proportion of the total. Meanwhile, operating expenditure took up a larger share of spending in 2024, as capital expenditure fell from its 2023 level. These developments would be difficult to identify from total revenue and expenditure alone. They show why changes in the overall budget need to be examined alongside the composition of both revenue and expenditure (Halim, 2014; Septriani, 2023; Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu, 2023, 2024, 2025a).

This distinction is consistent with the approach taken by Mahmudi (2020), who examines regional financial performance through several dimensions, including financial independence, revenue effectiveness, expenditure efficiency, and the balance between operating and capital expenditure. Halim (2014) similarly emphasizes the need to consider revenue and expenditure together when assessing regional financial conditions. Applied to Bengkulu, this approach provides a more informative account of fiscal developments than a simple comparison of annual totals. An increase in revenue, for example, does not necessarily indicate greater fiscal independence, just as a decline in capital expenditure does not, on its own, demonstrate weaker development performance.

The 2025 data further illustrate why budget realization must be interpreted in relation to the reporting period. By 30 September 2025, capital expenditure had reached 21.93% of the reported budget, while transfer expenditure had reached 82.65%. These different realization rates show that execution varied across spending categories during the first nine months of the fiscal year. They do not provide a final picture of annual performance and cannot be compared directly with full-year results for 2022–2024 (Bowen, 2009; Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu, 2025b; Sugiyono, 2019).

There is also a practical reason to be cautious when interpreting differences in realization rates. Expenditure does not necessarily occur evenly throughout the year. Some payments are made early, while others depend on procurement, construction progress, the completion of contractual obligations, or the timing of project milestones. The relatively low realization of capital expenditure by September may warrant closer examination, but the percentage alone cannot establish whether projects were delayed or whether spending followed the planned

implementation schedule. Such a judgment would require more detailed budget and program records (Krippendorff, 2018; Mahmudi, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018).

These considerations define the scope of the study. The analysis describes changes in regional revenue, shifts in revenue composition, and patterns of expenditure realization in Bengkulu Province. It does not establish a causal relationship between fiscal structure and the quality of public service delivery. That would require additional evidence on program implementation, service outputs, and development outcomes. The findings should therefore be understood as a descriptive account of the province's fiscal developments during the period examined, rather than a definitive judgment on the efficiency or effectiveness of its financial management (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018).

Synthesis of Findings

The analysis of Bengkulu Province's finances during 2022–2024 reveals three main developments. First, revenue grew faster than expenditure, and the annual fiscal balance moved from deficits in 2022 and 2023 to a surplus in 2024. Second, PAD recovered in nominal terms in 2024, but its share of total revenue declined. Third, operating expenditure accounted for a larger proportion of total spending, while the capital expenditure share fell after peaking in 2023. The 2025 interim report adds a separate observation: by 30 September, realization was 60.58% of the reported revenue budget and 54.00% of the reported expenditure budget. These interim rates are not directly comparable with the full-year figures (Halim, 2014; Mahmudi, 2020; Mardiasmo, 2018; Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu, 2023, 2024, 2025a, 2025b).

These patterns also show why regional financial performance cannot be adequately assessed through a single indicator. Revenue growth needs to be considered alongside the sources contributing to it, just as expenditure realization must be examined in relation to how the budget is allocated and used. A surplus or deficit before financing transactions helps establish whether realized revenue was sufficient to cover realized expenditure, but it does not reveal whether public funds were spent efficiently, whether programs achieved their intended objectives, or whether the expenditure generated tangible benefits for the community (Halim, 2014; Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2020).

The main contribution of this study is an integrated descriptive account of revenue growth, revenue composition, and expenditure patterns in Bengkulu Province. Looking at these dimensions together reveals changes that would be missed by a comparison of annual budget totals alone. The analysis remains limited by the available aggregate financial data: it cannot assess program outputs, target achievement, service quality, or the outcomes of public spending. Future research could combine budget realization data with such indicators to clarify what changing fiscal patterns mean for government performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018)

CONCLUSION

This study examined revenue realization and expenditure patterns in the Bengkulu Provincial Government during 2022–2025, using full-year data for 2022–2024 and interim data for 1 January–30 September 2025. In the full-year comparison, expenditure exceeded revenue in 2022 and 2023, producing deficits before financing of IDR 72.641 billion and IDR 132.401 billion, respectively. In 2024, revenue reached IDR 3,191.854 billion and expenditure reached IDR 3,140.472 billion, resulting in a surplus before financing of IDR 51.382 billion. Revenue grew by 8.06% between 2022 and 2024, compared with expenditure growth of 3.77%. These

figures show a more favorable budget balance in 2024, but do not establish improved spending efficiency or sustainable fiscal management.

Revenue composition helps explain what lay behind the change in total revenue. Transfer revenue remained the largest source, accounting for approximately 63–65% of total revenue during 2022–2024. PAD recovered in nominal terms in 2024 after declining in 2023, but its share of total revenue fell from 36.85% in 2022 to 34.00% in 2024. The increase in total revenue therefore did not correspond to a stronger relative contribution from PAD. Other legitimate regional revenue also rose in 2024, although the aggregate data do not identify which accounts were responsible for the increase.

Operating expenditure remained the largest spending category, accounting for 76.48% of total expenditure in 2024. The share of capital expenditure fell from 18.79% in 2023 to 13.60% in 2024, while transfer expenditure declined in both nominal terms and as a proportion of total expenditure. These figures describe a change in spending composition; they do not show whether the shift improved public services or development outcomes.

The interim figures for 2025 provide a different, limited view of budget execution. By 30 September, regional revenue realization had reached 60.58% of the reported budget and expenditure realization 54.00%. Capital expenditure realization stood at 21.93%, compared with 82.65% for transfer expenditure. Because these are nine-month figures, they should not be interpreted as the final annual results or compared directly with the full-year data for 2022–2024. The contribution of the study is to show how revenue realization, revenue composition, and expenditure allocation provide complementary perspectives beyond aggregate budget realization alone.

The findings should be interpreted within the limits of the study. The analysis covers one provincial government, relies on aggregate administrative financial data, and uses a relatively short time series. It does not directly measure fiscal sustainability, expenditure efficiency, or public service outcomes. The results cannot automatically be generalized to other Indonesian provinces or used to establish causal relationships between revenue structure, expenditure allocation, and government performance. Future research could compare several regions and incorporate indicators of fiscal autonomy, expenditure efficiency, program outputs, and service outcomes to provide a broader assessment of regional fiscal conditions.

REFERENCES

Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Bengkulu. (2024). *Provinsi Bengkulu dalam Angka 2024*. Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Bengkulu.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *9*(2), 27–40. https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Direktorat Jenderal Perimbangan Keuangan. (2024). *Data Realisasi Retribusi Tahun 2023*.

Halim, A. (2014). *Manajemen Keuangan Sektor Publik: Problematika Penerimaan dan Pengeluaran Pemerintah (Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Negara/Daerah)* (Edisi revi). Salemba Empat.

Kementerian Dalam Negeri. (2020). *Peraturan Menteri Dalam Negeri Nomor 77 Tahun 2020 tentang Pedoman Teknis Pengelolaan Keuangan Daerah*. Kementerian Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia.

Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (4th ed.). SAGE

Publications.
Mahmudi. (2020). *Otonomi & Manajemen Keuangan Daerah: Edisi Terbaru* (3rd ed.). UPP STIM YKPN.
Mardiasmo. (2018). *Otonomi dan Manajemen Keuangan Daerah*. Andi.
Nuraeni, S., Nurhasanah, N., & Kosasih. (2024). Pengaruh Rasio Kemandirian Keuangan Daerah dan Rasio Efektivitas Pendapatan Asili Daerah Terhadap Belanja Modal. *Gorontalo Accounting Journal (GAJ)*, *7*(2). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32662/gaj.v7i2.3482
Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu. (2022). *Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (APBD) Provinsi Bengkulu Tahun Anggaran 2022*. Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu.
Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu. (2023). *Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (APBD) Provinsi Bengkulu Tahun Anggaran 2023*. Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu.
Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu. (2024). *Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (APBD) Provinsi Bengkulu Tahun Anggaran 2024*. Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu.
Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu. (2025). *Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah (APBD) Provinsi Bengkulu Tahun Anggaran 2025*. Pemerintah Provinsi Bengkulu.
Riswati, R. (2023). Analisis rasio keserasian belanja dan efektivitas {PAD} pada Pemerintah Kota Bandung tahun anggaran 2020 dan 2021. *Jurnal Ekonomi, Keuangan, Dan Kebijakan Publik*. https://ejournal.ipdn.ac.id/JEKP/article/download/3200/1518
Septriani. (2023). Analisis pengaruh dana perimbangan dan pendapatan asli daerah terhadap belanja daerah kabupaten/kota di Provinsi Bengkulu. *JEMSI (Jurnal Ekonomi, Manajemen, Dan Akuntansi)*, *9*(3), 884–894. https://journal.lembagakita.com/jemsi/article/view/1201
Simangunsong, M., Zamzami, Z., & Parmadi, P. (2025). Analisis realisasi pendapatan daerah pada kabupaten dan kota di provinsi sumatera utara. *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Pembangunan Indonesia*, *3*(4). https://doi.org/10.61132/jepi.v3i4.1943
Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R\&D*. Alfabeta.
Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.