

# Participatory Communication Based on Inclusive Development in Rural Areas: Phenomenological Study in Kurau District, Tanah Laut Regency, South Kalimantan Province

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**Abstract.** Rural communities that are built with very conservative values and culture have very complex conditions in development. Society as a subject and agent of change in development has a crucial role in achieving sustainable development. The equality paradigm in development must be followed with comprehensive participation from all development subject entities. The aim of this research is to analyze how participatory communication is based on inclusive development in rural communities. The research is a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach in Kurau District, Tanah Laut Regency. The research results show that participatory communication is not yet optimal, there are gaps between actors, role instrumentalization, disorientation in the conceptualization of inclusive development, and negative stigma towards inclusive groups. Optimizing inclusive development in rural areas can be done through outreach, mapping needs, and increasing competence related to the diversity of inclusive groups in rural areas.

**Keywords:** Inclusive development, Participatory Communication, Rural

## 1 Introduction

Indonesia as a developing country with extraordinary potential has great opportunities and opportunities in complex and comprehensive development. Development as a strategic step in improving people's living standards must be in line with the needs of the community as the subject of development. As an entity, equality of position in obtaining access, support and facilities is crucial in developing sustainable prosperity. Achieving equitable and sustainable development is still a crucial achievement that has not been optimal to date [1].

Until 2023, the problem of poverty is still a complex object of resolution, even though it has decreased from the previous year, Indonesia's poverty index is still at 9.36 with the lowest poverty index occupied by Bali Province with an index of 4.25 while the top ranking is Papua Province with an index of 26 .80. Based on this data, it shows that the poverty situation is very unequal between areas with adequate access compared to areas with inclusion. Reviewing the

inequality of conditions that exist in Indonesia can also be seen very clearly through the Gini ratio (BPS, 2023).

Until March 2023, the Gini Ratio in rural areas is 0.313, while the Gini Ratio in urban areas reaches 0.409. The Gini index, also known as the Gini ratio or Gini coefficient, is a measure used to measure income or wealth inequality in a population. The Gini Index measures the extent to which the distribution of income or wealth in a society or country is equal. The higher the Gini index, the higher the level of inequality [2]. Based on this data, it shows that income inequality in urban areas is higher than in rural areas, this means that rural people tend to have similar income capabilities. In summary, this Gini index can see the extent of inequality between rich and poor groups, the higher it is, the more unequal it is.

Poverty and inequality that occur are of course influenced by development subjects who have not participated comprehensively, either because of access, opportunity or control. Complex and sustainable development can be realized with optimal contributions from each development subject entity [3]. So that inclusive development becomes a strategic step in equalizing and equalizing development. Inclusive development is an approach to economic and social development that aims to ensure that the benefits of economic growth and social progress are distributed fairly and equitably to all levels of society, including those who may be marginalized or vulnerable. This is an important concept in sustainable development because it emphasizes social justice, equality and reducing inequalities [4].

In rural communities, inclusion development is very closely related to Inclusion Villages. The program has been launched by the Ministry of Villages, Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration. But literally, this inclusion village is one of the small parts in the scope of inclusion development. A fundamental commonality between inclusive development and inclusion villages is community participation in sustainable social equality.

Regarding inclusive development, it does occur in both rural and urban areas, but limited access makes inclusive development in rural areas slower, this is due to the lack of availability of data on inclusive groups, lack of assistance to inclusive groups and the negative stigma that has developed regarding inclusive groups. So that inclusive development becomes a crucial urgency in equitable development [5].

Inclusive development that is not yet optimal tends to be caused by disorientation in the conceptualization of inclusive development itself, so there is a need for adaptive communication so that inclusive development messages are conveyed optimally [6]. The role of development communication as a strategic step in conveying development messages based on inclusive development. Inclusive rural communities tend to be closed and find it difficult to accept new things, so participatory communication is a step that can be taken to map needs, potential and existing problems to be resolved through inclusive development programs. The aim of this research is to analyze how participatory communication is based on inclusive development in rural communities.

Kurau District is the westernmost administrative area in Tanah Laut Regency. More than adequate to say that it is a rural area. Although most other sub-districts also have villages, the geographical and topography perspective of the Kurau sub-district area is quite representative of the condition of the sub-district which is quite far out of reach due to limited access and

development. In addition, based on field observations, the level of marginalization and exploitation of inclusion groups is also very widespread. So that this study has an important foundation to be carried out.

## **2 Theory and Literature Review**

Inclusive groups often experience a lot of lagging behind in development, this is due to delays in information, lack of focus on inclusivity-based development, and negative stigma from the community's social environment. This situation causes inclusive groups to increasingly be marginalized in their role and participation in development activities. Apart from that, the limited variety of inclusion groups also results in a lack of awareness in implementing inclusive development. Disability groups are one of the inclusive groups that often receive negative stigma related to their ability to be independent [7].

The existence of a discriminatory stigma against disability groups is part of the factual situation of a lack of awareness in inclusive development. Disability groups often lose their role and participation in development, not only because of limitations but also due to ongoing discriminatory bias and stigma. However, this role and participation can be maximized through ongoing assistance to achieve empowerment in inclusion groups [7].

These biases in development and discriminatory stigma are not only felt by disability groups, they are often also accepted by other inclusive groups such as women, the elderly, indigenous communities, and local communities [8]. The discriminatory stigma that emerged was caused by a paradigm of intolerance that continued to develop until there was intervention from the social environment, culture and beliefs [9]. Women in rural environments often become victims of violence, lose their role in development, and even become instrumentalized due to patriarchal culture. Many indigenous communities are limited due to unreachable access and mobility, apart from that, in certain cases there are indigenous communities who "avoid" development intervention from the government [10].

## **3 Research Method**

The research is an exploratory qualitative study with a phenomenological and digital ethnographic study approach. Research activities were carried out in Kurau District, Tanah Laut Regency, South Kalimantan Province from January to May 2023. Data sources used were primary and secondary data through direct observation, interviews, and literature studies through digital ethnography [11]. Testing the validity and validation of data through triangulation of data, time and sources. Data analysis through data collection, data reduction and drawing conclusions [12]. The total number of informants in this study is 13 people consisting of 5 stakeholders as key informants and 8 main informants. All informants have gone through written consent to be the subject and object of the research through ethical clearance in accordance with standards.

## **4 Result and Discussion**

### **4.1 General Conditions**

Kurau District is one of the sub-districts in Tanah Laut Regency which is located 114.583-114.711 East Longitude 3.56309-3.72364 South Latitude. Kurau District also borders directly with other areas, namely in the north it borders with Bumi Makmur District, in the east it borders Bati-bati District and Tambang Lagi District, in the West it borders the Java Sea, and in the South, it borders Takisung District. The total area of Kurau sub-district is 127.00 km which consists of 11 villages. If you compare the area of one Kurau sub-district with other sub-districts in the average sub-district area on the island of Java, Kurau sub-district has an area that is included in the category of quite wide. However, the problem is that there are still many villages that have difficult geographical access, including adequate roads to no roads so that they can only use water mode transportation.

### **4.2 Social Conditions of the Community**

Most people living in Kurau District come from the local community there, namely the Banjar Melayu tribe, as for the other tribes, because of multi-ethnic intermarriage, this gave birth to mixed tribes with Javanese, Sundanese and Madurese tribes. The total population in Kurau District is 13,580 people, consisting of 6,883 men and 6,697 women. The classification of the population in Kurau District based on age is 3,535 people aged 0-14 years, 9,403 people aged 15-64 years and 642 people aged <-65 years. Based on this data, it shows that most of the population in Kurau District is still in the productive age range [13].

The potential educational facilities in Kurau District consist of 14 Elementary/Primary School levels, 6 Middle School/MTs schools, and 3 High School/MA/SMK secondary schools. Access to education from a distance perspective is quite complex, the higher the level of education, it is directly proportional to the distance traveled. There is no public transportation so most people's activities there use private vehicles [13].

The characteristics of people's behavior are quite complex and varied, this is of course influenced by many things such as the internalization process, personal and environmental factors. People who live in coastal areas such as Kurau Village, Handil Negara, and Bawah Layung tend to have characteristics that are loud when speaking and lower *context* in the element of cultural exchange. People who work as fishermen tend to be less interested in developing educational levels. In general, the people there are less concerned with the development of education, children who go to high school usually come from parents who are rich, educated, or from families who are in a structural position. Overall, the people there are quite humanist with a high level of caring.

### **4.3 Participatory Communication**

Communication activities as a medium for conveying information provide strategic space for the success of development messages [14]. In a more complex domain, communication can influence many situations and the reception of information, so that in the development process communication activities become an important instrument. Minor or major errors in communication can influence the response and actions of the recipient of the information, so that communication optimization in program delivery is carried out as much as possible to avoid errors or miscommunication [15].

Communication in development activities is often known as development communication. In principle and concept, it still uses basic communication science. The development communication process used to convey development messages and issues is also often practical but applicable field communication. In the process of development communication activities, quite a lot of strategies are formulated so that development messages increasingly touch on behavior change [16]. As a step to face complex development, inclusiveness-based development is needed, but inclusion groups in certain groups have not been reached optimally [17]. This is caused by access, facilities and infrastructure, and social environmental awareness. Answering this problem so that participatory communication becomes a strategic step so that it can comprehensively and comprehensively map development suggestions based on inclusiveness [15].

In this research, it was found that participatory communication was not optimal, or more precisely, was not running well. In practical terms, inclusive development carried out and claimed by agencies as inclusivity-based development tends to still focus on disability groups only, this is because finding disability groups is easier and the impression of "poorness" from the social environment causes the focus of inclusive development to be divided only on certain groups. Even though disability groups are a group that is often paid attention to in development, their role involvement and participation is not yet participatory. This can be seen from the programs that are designed, most of which do not answer field problems and are not directly proportional to the potential of disability groups [18].

Women are the inclusive group that experiences the most bias in development so inclusiveness-based development should be an adaptive strategy, but participatory communication has not yet worked optimally. Gender inequality, gender bias, and the dual role of women make participatory communication part of a false promise for women. Although women's empowerment through women's farmer groups (KWT) or PKK mostly does not touch women in the "inclusion" category, this is because women who are part of inclusion groups tend to find it very difficult to gain access, either physically, technologically or to opportunities. In Kurau District itself, it is quite easy to find women in the inclusion category, but what is difficult is involving them to contribute and participate in participatory communication because of the lack of awareness, desire and permission from the family, most of which are always profit-based and transactional.

The elderly group with limited work productivity is often not touched at all in development. Most rural jobs that rely on physical work tend to make this group lose their jobs when they are older [15]. As in several villages where the majority do farm as a livelihood, the older they get, the more difficult it is to get work, especially farm laborers, as do fishermen, the risks at sea are more frightening.

Participatory communication that does not run optimally is caused by internal and external factors. Internally influenced by awareness and desire to build an ambitious spirit for change, availability of access, opportunity and control. Meanwhile, external factors include development program design, actor synergy, publicity, and support from the social environment.

#### **4.4 Stigma Against Inclusive Groups**

Stigma against inclusive groups is a negative view or stereotype attached to groups that tend to be considered different or vulnerable by the public. This may include groups such as people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, older people, people with HIV/AIDS, and others who may face discrimination or inequality. This stigma can lead to social, economic and political inequality, and hinder efforts towards a more inclusive society [19].

The negative stigma that arises from this stereotype creates a discriminatory stigma against inclusive groups. Inclusive groups are considered weak, powerless, incompetent, and even troublesome individuals who are designs resulting from this discriminatory stigma. In the end, several groups from the inclusion group received sympathizers because of "feeling pity" [20]. Education based on inclusivity must be the answer to reducing this discriminatory stigma, which places tolerance and a sense of humanity above all else, so that differences in life are mutually supportive [21].

#### **4.5 Gaps Between Actors**

Development as a design for change in improving welfare is a substance that is carried and used as a development ideology by development subjects. Development subjects as development actors have a crucial role in the success and sustainability of development. Inclusive development certainly has a greater number of actors so that increasingly complex situations also give rise to wider gaps. This gap between development actors is caused by suboptimal participatory communication, conflicts of interest, and interventions that arise from certain groups or organizations [22].

In this study it was found that village leaders as decision makers do not have an inclusiveness-based development paradigm, so that aid programs targeting inclusion groups are diverted to relatives of village heads and village administrators, as well as being part of political interests [23]. Blaming each other between development actors and between development agencies has become an ongoing habit. Synergy between actors has not been achieved so that gaps continue to occur. Apart from that, intervention from religious-based community groups also creates hostility between actors, so that the focus of inclusive development is not touched because development is only part of the instrument for ruling and controlling innocent rural communities and inclusion groups who are considered weak and powerless.

#### **4.6 Role Instrumentalization**

The state of society which has empathy and sympathy based on "poor" thinking and irrational skepticism is a constant target for exploiting it for personal or certain group interests. Inclusive groups in development are often the target of imaging and impression management framing during election campaigns [24]. Apart from disability groups, role instrumentalization is also experienced by elderly groups to form a self-image that cares for elderly people. Instrumentalization was also achieved by women's groups with the aim of framing leadership with an understanding of gender equality. In fact, there is nothing wrong if it is placed for its intended purpose, the instrumentalization of this role will still be carried out with fraudulent political aims [25].

Apart from the instrumentalization of the role of inclusive groups in development carried out by politicians, several Non-Governmental Organization or NGO groups also take advantage of "pity" to get injections of program data, although some of these organizations have a standing position for inclusivity-based development, but some others some are misused for personal gain. Completion of the instrumentalization of this role begins with actors who stop using sympathizers with the role of inclusion groups for personal interests. Apart from that, inclusion groups must be more critical so that their role does not experience instrumentalization by certain agencies, groups or communities.

#### **4.7 Disorientation of the Conceptualization of Inclusive Development**

The conceptualization of inclusive development involves an understanding and approach to development that focuses on creating a more just and equitable society, where every individual has equal access to economic, social and political opportunities. Social justice is a key element in inclusive development. This means that all citizens, regardless of their background, have the same rights in terms of access to resources, services and opportunities (Aldanto et al, 2015). Efforts must be made to reduce social inequality. However, nowadays, especially in rural areas with limited mobility, equality is only an issue that has continued to be raised since several decades ago. The support provided tends to be very transactional based.

Inclusive development includes economic growth that not only benefits elite groups, but also more vulnerable or underprivileged groups in society. This means creating economic opportunities, jobs and investment that support the well-being of disadvantaged groups in society. However, this concept does not work at all, inclusion groups are considered not to have equal work productivity so that increasing the welfare of inclusion groups is also difficult to improve [14].

Achieving Equitable Access, this concept includes ensuring that all citizens have equal access to basic services such as education, health care, clean water and adequate housing. Inclusive development seeks to reduce these gaps in access. However, groups in the public have not yet reached this situation, let alone inclusion groups which should be a development priority.

This disorientation in the conceptualization of inclusive development is development activities that apply the concept of inclusivity itself in development indicators. The inclusive development designs found tend to only focus on disability groups, not touching every layer of inclusivity groups. As a form of resolution of this disorientation, strategies such as inclusive education, socialization, needs mapping, and increasing competence related to the diversity of inclusive groups in rural areas are needed [27].

## **5 Conclusion**

Rural communities that are built with very conservative values and culture have very complex conditions in development. Society as a subject and agent of change in development has a crucial role in achieving sustainable development. The equality paradigm in development must be followed with comprehensive participation from all development subject entities. Research shows in Kurau District about inclusive development that participatory communication is not yet optimal, there are gaps between actors, role instrumentalization, disorientation in the conceptualization of inclusive development, and negative stigma towards inclusive groups. This

situation does not mean that the rural people there are exclusive, but they are too accustomed to unequal conditions and marginal conditions, making them always try to accept the situation. In addition, there is a lack of awareness that this inequality also develops from culture and structure in social society. Optimizing inclusive development in rural areas can be done through outreach, mapping needs, and increasing competence related to the diversity of inclusive groups in rural areas.

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