

Communication Convergence of Village Fund Managers for Village Development

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ABSTRACT: The communication convergence in managing rural development, especially managing the ongoing Village Fund program in Indonesia for approximately five years is absolutely necessary to generate great benefits for the community. This study describes the communication process that occurred between managers in managing development in the village. Critical assessment in this study aimed to determine the communication convergence in reducing communication gaps in the management of the Village Fund. Data collection techniques were performed by conducting in-depth interviews and observations. The data were collected qualitatively and analyzed descriptively using Nvivo 12 software. The results showed that communication convergence did not occur entirely in managers where villagers were not involved directly and fully in the process. In order that the Village Fund program truly provides the greatest benefit for the welfare of the community, there must be a strong motivation from all elements of the village community to play an active role in every development process by emphasizing the role of the Three Pillars of village development, i.e., the role of village government institutions, community members and especially the role of the representative body of village.

KEYWORDS : communication, divergence, managers, village fund

I. INTRODUCTION

Social inequality and poverty in rural areas are caused by the real needs of rural communities which are not synchronous with the community's expectations. The results of the development certainly do not have an impact on the welfare of the community, and it causes the number of poor people in rural areas to increase [1]. Disagreement has an impact on the lack of optimal community self-reliance in developing the villages. Low community participation, especially in communicating interactively resulted in the development process that is not going well from planning to evaluation. This is mostly due to the orientation of program policymakers and program recipients, especially village heads, so that many problems are found [2]. Development is hampered and does not have an impact on the welfare of rural communities. This is also due to the village financial management system, especially in handling village development funds that are quite large [3]

The policy of Village Fund program has been implemented from the fiscal year of 2015 to 2017, and the government has allocated a budget sourced from the State Budget or APBN of IDR 127.6 trillion for 74,954 villages in Indonesia. The budget was allocated of IDR 20.7 trillion in the budget year 2015, IDR 46.9 trillion in 2016, and IDR 60 trillion in 2017. According to a research report from Tirto.id, the latent issue of village funds is Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism (KKN), and the use of funds is not based on priorities and ignores community involvement. This problem is very crucial because it involves trillions of funds coming from the State Budget. Funds from the the State Budget or APBN are distributed evenly by 90 percent to all villages in Indonesia and the rest is distributed based on indicators of area, population, poor population and geographical index. In the Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW), there were 62 cases of corruption that inflict a state financial loss IDR 18 billion at the village government level, a new institution that began to be prone to corruption practices, especially after the policy of allocating village funds from the central government and due to the development of the phenomenon of full control over economic resources, i.e., village funds, for the personal

benefit of the village head and his apparatus, by manipulating or completely ignoring the prerequisites of public participation as a means of vertical supervision in village development planning [4]

Data of ICW research in 2014 from 524 district heads showed that there were 318 involved in budget misuse, and until August 2017 there were 110 cases of village funds misuse that were mostly carried out by village officials. There have been 200 cases that have entered the realm of law, and according to records of the Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (or KPK) cases of village funds misuse in 2017 were 110 cases, reached IDR 30 billion and there were 110 cases of misuse carried out by village officials. One of the causes of this deviation is because the process of transparency of information is not communicated in the implementation of development, especially in the village funds management where community participation is increasingly lacking in planning, implementation and supervision aspects. The transparency problem in communication in the government administration still includes transparency of performance, budget and communication policies [5].

Simalungun Regency is the third largest regency in North Sumatra Province after Langkat Regency and Mandailing Natal Regency, with an area of 4,372.50 Km² or 6.12 percent of the total area of North Sumatra Province. Sub-districts (Kecamatan) in Simalungun consist of 31 sub-districts, 386 Nagori (villages) and 27 Kelurahan. All villages since 2015 as many as 386 Nagori or villages have received village fund programs (6). The Simalungun Regency Medium-Term Development Plan or Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah (RPJMD) for 2016-2021 is a five-year planning document that contains the vision and mission as a reference in the framework of planning and implementing development that is carried out systematically and sustainably for the next 5 (five) years by optimizing all the potential of the region. The vision of Simalungun Regency in 2016-2021 is: "The realization of the Simalungun Regency Community that is Independent, Peaceful and Cheerful or *Mandiri, Tenteram dan Berseri* (MANTAB)" [7]. Banuh Raya Village, Pematang Panombean Village and Nagori Bosar Village are the three study location villages that received the Village Fund program in the Panombean Panei Sub-district, Simalungun Regency, which became the research location.

In a study conducted since January 2015 on the Village Fund program, the Indonesia's Corruption Eradication Commission (or KPK) found 14 findings in four aspects, i.e.: (1) regulatory and institutional aspects; (2) governance aspect; (3) supervision aspect; and (4) human resources aspect. On the regulatory and institutional aspects, the KPK found a number of problems including incomplete regulations and technical implementation guidelines needed in village financial management; potential overlapping of authority between the Ministry of Villages and the Directorate General of Village Government Development of the Ministry of Home Affairs; the formula for the distribution of village funds in the government regulation PP No. 22 of 2015 is not sufficiently transparent and is only based on an even distribution basis. Therefore this study aimed to analyze the communication convergence, which is the communication process that occurs between managers who work to reduce gaps between managers in managing village funds so that development benefits for the community welfare can be achieved.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research location

The research location was in the Panombean Panei Sub-district, Simalungun Regency, which consisted of three villages selected by purposive sampling by looking at the progress of each village in managing village fund programs that were more progressive, i.e., Nagori Bosar village, followed by Pematang Panombean village and then Banuh Raya village. This research was conducted for five months from September 2018 to January 2019.

Participants and Procedure

There were 38 informants in the in-depth interviews. These informants consisted of managers at the local government level, staff of the Simalungun Regency Development and Community Empowerment Office, Regency staff, village heads and village officials (Village Secretary, activity implementation team or (TPK), village assistant and village local assistant, Regency empowerment and technical expert staff, village residents and village representative body or (BPD).

The research approach was qualitative with a critical paradigm to investigate how the communication process that occurs between managers in understanding each manager's role in running the village fund program so that it will be found stages of the communication process that are in agreement between the managers.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the communication process that occurred was performed using nVivo 12 software by searching, linking items, coding, querying annotations, and mapping the research data. This research revealed a reality based on a flow of phenomenology that focused on human conscious experience; an effort to understand the process (process knowing) through direct experiences [8]. Operationally, this research was conducted for data that is emic (how people think) by understanding the experience of decision makers about the communication felt by managers of the Village Fund program. The research also attempted to explain experiences in formulating village development models that utilize village funds. Interviews and observations conducted during

the study were carried out directly to the village location which conducted the activities of the village development program that utilized the village fund program. The initial research was to observe directly at the communication events that occurred starting from the initial survey of construction project site or village infrastructure, village discussions, and sub-district discussions.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Law of Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2014 regarding Villages explains that village governments have broad authority in determining program plans so that the regions integrate development policies. The local government from the Regency, i.e., the Community Empowerment Office, gives many directions to the development program that will be implemented in the village, which is adjusted to the Regency Medium-Term Development Plan or RPJMDes, which refers to regional policies.

Not all residents know about the Village Fund program. They only witnessed a number of physical project development activities such as village roads, ditches in their area. According to residents, they were not informed of the activity and they were also not invited to participate because they felt they were only ordinary residents who were rarely involved in village activities. This was in accordance with the opinion of one of the villagers:

"Even if there is development in the village, we can only see and know, and usually those invited are only community leaders or public figure and certain people. Village development activities really need to be continually notified to the community members about what concerns the Village Fund" (SS).

According to the residents' narrative, they also stated there was no socialization and they had never or had not been informed about the Village Fund program. Very minimal socialization about the program caused residents to state that development activities in the village were unknown to them and no discussions (musyawarah) were held in the hamlets (dusun) by involving residents in planning activities for which there were only village development planning discussion or Musyawarah Perencanaan Pembangunan (Musrenbang) activities.

"Never been, ever? Absolutely never existed, the activity of which was never any meeting at all. There was never any such thing as a meeting that there was no socialization, there was no socialization whatsoever except parties, there was none unless there were health socialization, there were many new politics such as the General Election Commissions or Komisi Pemilihan Umum (KPU), many legislative candidates because how dare for this? That village funds do not exist at all in the village discussions, there is none at all, there is only Musrenbang all this time, that is the proposed musrenbang for the building project being built, that is all first" (HE).

"Yes, we must have Musrenbang first, not different, Musrenbang with hamlet meetings is different with Musrenbang for government at the head of the region, if the hamlet meetings for the benefit of the hamlets, there was no, I said no right? Yes, no, have never met at the hamlet meeting? So when it is asked, sometimes people ask me, I do not know. I, as a village representative body (Badan Perwakilan Desa or BPD), are not considered by the people here. It is okay if I say, honestly it is like that as a BPD or village representative (DPRD). The BPD must accommodate the people's aspirations" (KH).

Basically, all activities of utilizing and managing the Village Fund program began with musyawarah discussions starting from the hamlets to the village and up to the sub-district level. Musyawarah is the highest area of authority in the implementation of the program where out of all musyawarah discussions, a community proposal will emerge about the development program to be conducted in the hamlet or village. Activities or processes of implementing development programs in villages in the utilization of Village Funds are continuous communication events between managers and village community members. Communication events are arenas of exchanging information, interactive dialogue and mutual agreements emerged within the elements involved in the event.

The Village Fund managers performed communication activities in every communication event. All elements of the village community should necessarily be involved in communication events that dialogue the shared interests. Communication convergence will occur when all parties involves in the communication process and experiences a mutual understanding of the topic being discussed and agree in making joint decisions for the common interests. The process of utilizing the Village Fund for village development requires interactive dialogue or communication between all managers from various levels of the community element. The lowest element of the community is the villagers. During this communication event, villagers can express their aspirations about what needs are required to be established in support of a more prosperous life. Communication events that occurred among the Village Fund program managers is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Communication Events of Village Fund Program Managers

No	Communication Event														Result		
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	Con	Div	
1	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	5	7	medium
2	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	6	7	medium
3	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	7	6	medium
4	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	6	7	low
5	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	high
6	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	7	high
7	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	5	5	high
8	+	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	6	7	high
9	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	4	9	low
10	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	8	5	high
11	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	9	4	high
12	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	2	11	low
13	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	1	12	low
14	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	4	9	low
Total															72	106	

Note:

- a. Village head
- b. Village secretary
- c. Village Government Staff
- d. Hamlet head
- e. Development and Community Empowerment Office (PMD)
- f. Sub-district head (Camat)
- g. Sub-district Staff
- h. Activity implementation team (TPK)
- i. Expert staff
- j. Village assistant
- k. Village local assistant
- l. Leaders/Public figure
- m. Ordinary residents
- n. Village representative body (BPD)

Figure 1 shows that in every communication event that took place during the management process of the village fund program in Banu Raya village, Sub-district Panombean Panei, it was convergent and divergent. Communication convergence occurred between managers at the village government level and village officials, starting from the communication links and interactions of village governments. Communication links with villagers were lacking because there was no continuous interaction between residents and village government officials. This was due to the less optimal socialization to villagers regarding the village fund program. This is evidenced when the communication event took place, the parties that performed the most communication to communicate the program and in the process of managing the Village Fund program was only the village government, village officials, village assistants and the Activity Implementation Team (TPK) and the staff from the sub-district who more attended village musyawarah meetings. Divergence occurred when residents were not fully involved in the process from program's planning to evaluation, and this was evidenced by the absence of residents' attendance and from the results of interviews with informants stating that musyawarah meetings from hamlets to villages did not involve many ordinary residents including poor people, women and residents with special needs (disabilities).

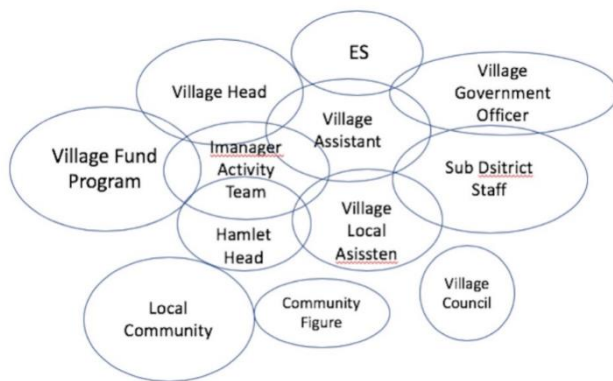


Fig 1. Communication map of village fund program managers.

The communication that took place in the process of managing village funds from the map above shows how communication links between managers. Relationships in communication that has a slice is convergent communication and vice versa when the diagrams only stick together and do not have slices, it is only tangent and no convergent communication occurs. The communication map of village fund managers in Figure 1 shows that communication occurred between managers was dominated by village heads, while the most important interests of the village fund program, who were actually ordinary residents directly benefit from village funds, were far from other elements. It is clear that ordinary residents did not have a close relationship in the development process, especially in terms of communication. The large circle size of each management element shows the greatest importance to the program so it needs to have interactive and continuous communication in order to find an understanding on the program (Fig 2)

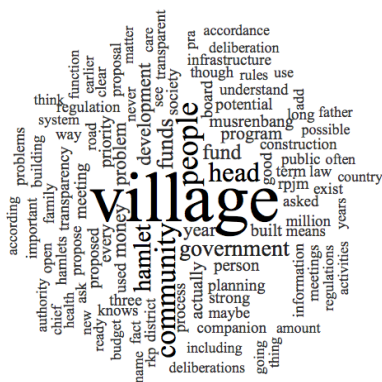


Fig 2. Communication map of village fund using Nvivo

At the village level, village fund program managers consisting of village government, village officials, assistants, village representative bodies (BPD), and ordinary residents should receive the same information about the program, in which all information can flow linearly or reciprocally in a lines of communication that are not obstructed. The communication channels used to convey messages about the Village Fund program must also be available. The convergence model of communications, [9] can be implemented effectively and efficiently in the context of agricultural counseling and other developments. Convergent communication approaches rely on reciprocal or relational communication processes with an emphasis on information and mutual understanding. The convergence model of communication applies the concept of retrospectives (a review as a reference for future strategic planning) in achieving mutual understanding. Program information is shared, so that divergence (differences) in program development becomes convergence (common interests). Mutual agreement with the villagers so that the program can run well according to the needs of the community, raising understanding with the community as a communication strategy so that the Village Fund program can work are established by providing space for villagers who have the ability and willingness to develop the village, and this can lead to the emergence of village cadres. Village cadres are village residents who are considered or have the willingness and capability to support the village to be better.

The big objective of the village fund program is to improve community welfare, community empowerment and reduce poverty in rural areas, so it is very important to inform all managers involved in the program. The importance of the village community itself taking an active part in the process of managing the village fund program is absolute because the real needs of the village community should be built in the village. Villagers understand what is important and urgent or priorities needed to support their lives. Therefore, the village community must be thoroughly informed about any program or activity that will be carried out in the village so that the village government will have a participatory community members. Community participation that continues to present in the development process is a model of good village governance [10]

Interactive communication is in line and pay attention to the principles that apply in the form of convergent communication include: 1) information, 2) uncertainty, 3) convergence of interests 4) mutual understanding, 5) common interests, 6) joint actions, and 7) relationship network or social relations. Information about village fund was not fully understood by villagers, so there was uncertainty in the program in which the proposals submitted were not automatically monitored by residents whether their proposals reach the higher levels [11].

There are many possibilities that can be performed in increasing the participation of village communities in carrying out development, i.e., by seeing or recognizing the structure of the current conditions of the community and the space that can be built so that there is no great distance between the village government and its residents. This can be done by activating elements in the community, groups and forums in the village as well as community and religious leaders. The built space will educate community members to actively participate in promoting their interests in the development. The role of the Village Representative Body (BPD) as a representative of residents is also an inseparable part of this participatory process.

The effective communication model design in the village fund management requires the active role of each element of the community including the village government and the officials to be integrated with the Village Representative Body. The model of the three pillars or three stoves referred to is a strong attachment of the three elements or institutions that exist in the village in running the government.

Actions that can be performed in increasing the participation of rural communities in carrying out development are by looking at or recognizing the current structure of community conditions and the space that can be built so that there is no great distance between the village government and its residents. This can be done by elements' activation in the community, groups and forums in the village as well as community and religious leaders. The built space will educate community members to actively participate in promoting their interests in the development (12). The role of the Village Representative Body (BPD) as a representative of community members is also an inseparable part.

IV. CONCLUSION

Communication in the Village Fund program did not achieve convergence. The low convergence was influenced by the non-arrival of information on the Village Fund to the level of the community members especially in terms of socialization and the lack of community attendance in village musyawarah meetings. Therefore, various obstacles occurred in the implementation of the program, as well as limited information on the program. Convergence can be achieved when collective action is implemented among all managers to reach agreement and mutual understanding in the implementation of the program. An effective communication strategy in the Village Fund program is convergent communication, by maximizing the role of the Village Representative Body (BPD), community members and the village government.

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