

Local Wisdom in the Context of Decisions in Community Deliberations for Village Development in Pangkep, South Sulawesi

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Abstract

This study investigates the significance of indigenous knowledge in community discussions for the advancement of villages in Pangkep, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The objective is to identify crucial components and methodologies of indigenous knowledge, comprehend their integration into decision-making procedures, and evaluate their influence on development results. Utilizing a qualitative approach and employing a case study methodology, this research conducted interviews with village leaders, elders, and community members. Additionally, focus group discussions and participant observations of community deliberations were utilized. The findings emphasize the depth and variety of indigenous knowledge in Pangkep, encompassing practices like "gotong royong" (mutual cooperation), traditional farming techniques, customary laws (Adat), and conflict resolution mechanisms deeply rooted in the local culture. Traditional leaders and institutions play a crucial role in facilitating the integration of these practices into decision-making processes. This ensures that development initiatives are aligned with the local culture and enjoy widespread acceptance. The study illustrates that projects that incorporate local wisdom yield superior outcomes and greater community satisfaction in comparison to those that do not. This underscores the significance of indigenous knowledge systems in promoting sustainable development.

Keywords: Local Wisdom, Community Deliberations, Village Development, Pangkep, Mutual Cooperation, Traditional Farming Techniques

1. Introduction

Pangkajene and Islands Regency, also referred to as Pangkep, is a region renowned for its abundant cultural heritage and natural resources in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The region is primarily rural, with numerous communities depending on agriculture, fishing, and traditional crafts for their sustenance. Throughout the years, the local government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have placed great emphasis on the development of villages in Pangkep. Their primary goal is to enhance the quality of life for the residents. The development of villages encompasses a wide range of aspects, such as the improvement of infrastructure, the promotion of economic empowerment, the provision of education and health services, and the pursuit of environmental sustainability (Adamowicz & Zwolińska-Ligaj, 2020). However, the

effectiveness of these initiatives is heavily reliant on the active involvement and engagement of the local community. The development of villages in Pangkep is focused on improving essential infrastructure, including roads, bridges, water supply systems, and health facilities (Tikollah & Rijal, 2012). These enhancements are crucial for guaranteeing that residents have access to necessary services and can participate in economic activities with greater efficiency. Economic empowerment initiatives encompass the provision of training and resources to enhance agricultural practices, the promotion of local crafts and tourism, and the support of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) (Remmang et al., 2023). Significant investments have been made in education and health services with the goal of enhancing literacy rates and increasing accessibility to healthcare. The development initiatives in Pangkep are guided by a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. In the realm of governance, the establishment of overarching development policies and the allocation of funds for projects in rural areas necessitates a collaborative effort between government officials, local leaders, community organizations, and the residents themselves. This collaborative approach guarantees that the projects are aligned with the needs of the community and are more likely to be sustainable. Nevertheless, the success of these initiatives relies on the incorporation of local knowledge and practices, highlighting the significance of community deliberations in rural development.

Community deliberations are of utmost importance in rural development, especially in regions like Pangkep where local knowledge and cultural practices are deeply embedded in daily life. Deliberative processes encompass inclusive discussions and decision-making activities that actively involve all members of the community, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives are taken into account. This participatory approach stands in stark contrast to development models that are characterized by top-down decision-making, where external entities make decisions without adequately considering the input of those who are directly affected. Community deliberations in rural development foster a sense of ownership and responsibility among residents (Cohen & Uphoff, 1980). When community members are actively engaged in the process of planning and decision-making, there is a higher likelihood of garnering their support and involvement in the successful implementation and ongoing maintenance of development projects. This engagement not only enhances the pertinence and efficacy of the endeavours but also cultivates social unity and collaborative efforts. In addition, community deliberations play a crucial role in identifying and utilizing local resources and knowledge (Lynam et al., 2007). In rural areas, traditional practices and indigenous knowledge offer valuable insights into sustainable development. For instance, local agricultural practices that have been honed over generations may provide more sustainable and resilient solutions when compared to methods imposed from outside sources (Carlisle et al., 2019). In a similar vein, conventional methods of resolving conflicts can be modified to effectively handle community disputes that may arise in the context of development initiatives. Community deliberations hold significant importance in the context of Pangkep, given the region's rich cultural and ethnic diversity. Ensuring the inclusion of all groups, including marginalized and vulnerable populations, is crucial in deliberative processes to ensure that their voices are heard and taken into account. Ensuring inclusivity is crucial in addressing social inequalities and ensuring equitable distribution of development benefits.

Local wisdom, also referred to as indigenous knowledge or traditional knowledge, encompasses the extensive knowledge, practices, and beliefs that have been cultivated and passed down through generations within communities, as a result of their long-standing relationship with their environment. This knowledge encompasses various aspects of life, including agriculture, health,

environmental management, social organization, and cultural practices. Local wisdom is highly context-specific and adaptable, as it mirrors the distinct ecological, social, and cultural circumstances of a particular community (Martinez et al., 2022). The significance of traditional knowledge in modern development discussions has been acknowledged for its ability to contribute to long-term sustainable development (Kohsaka & Rogel, 2021). In contrast to conventional development models that frequently prioritize modern technologies and external expertise, local wisdom provides alternative approaches that are inherently sustainable and culturally appropriate. Incorporating local wisdom into development initiatives can improve their acceptance and effectiveness by aligning them with the values and practices of the community. Pangkep exemplifies the rich tapestry of local knowledge and practices, encompassing traditional methods of agriculture and fishing, as well as collective approaches to decision-making and conflict resolution. As an integral part of community life in Pangkep, the practice of "gotong royong," or mutual cooperation, holds great significance. This practice entails collaborative endeavours to achieve objectives for the betterment of society, such as constructing public works, coordinating gatherings, or addressing urgent situations. Collaborative efforts promote a robust sense of communal unity and reciprocal assistance, which plays a vital role in the achievement of developmental endeavours (Titz et al., 2018).

Another illustration of the local wisdom in Pangkep pertains to the traditional ecological knowledge associated with the management of natural resources. Communities have established intricate systems for the management of forests, water sources, and marine resources, guaranteeing their long-term and sustainable utilization (Pulhin et al., 2007). These practices are frequently rooted in a comprehensive comprehension of local ecosystems and the acknowledgment of the interdependence between human and natural systems. The significance of local wisdom goes beyond its practical applications to its function in safeguarding cultural identity and heritage (Stefano, 2021). Within an ever-expanding globalized society, the invaluable reservoir of cultural knowledge and practices known as local wisdom plays a pivotal role in shaping and preserving the unique identity of a community. By incorporating indigenous knowledge into development projects, communities can safeguard their cultural heritage while also addressing contemporary obstacles.

Local wisdom is of utmost importance in the process of community deliberations for village development in Pangkep. It offers a structure for decision-making that is based on the cultural values and practices of the community. This framework ensures that development initiatives are not only technically feasible but also culturally acceptable and socially inclusive. Local wisdom plays a significant role in community deliberations, contributing to the process in various ways. Initially, local wisdom encompasses the ethical and moral principles that govern community behaviour and decision-making. The principles of mutual respect, reciprocity, and collective responsibility greatly influence the manner in which community members engage and cooperate with one another (Ismail, 2009). Within the realm of village development, these principles guarantee that choices are made in a way that upholds the concerns and welfare of every member of the community. Furthermore, in rural settings, traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, which draw upon local wisdom, tend to be more effective compared to formal legal systems. The mechanisms highlighted in this context prioritize the importance of reconciliation, dialogue, and consensus-building. These elements play a crucial role in fostering social harmony throughout the process of development. Through the utilization of conventional approaches, communities have the ability to effectively tackle conflicts that may arise in the context of development projects, ultimately reaching mutually agreeable solutions for all stakeholders. Furthermore,

local wisdom encompasses a wealth of knowledge regarding sustainable practices that have been honed and passed down through multiple generations. Within the realm of agricultural development, it is possible to combine traditional farming techniques that prioritize soil fertility and biodiversity with modern methods in order to increase productivity without compromising environmental sustainability. Likewise, conventional methods of resource management can be modified to align with modern conservation initiatives, guaranteeing the responsible and sustainable utilization of natural resources. Furthermore, the utilization of local knowledge promotes a robust commitment to community involvement and active participation. Practices like *gotong royong* promote collective action and mutual support, which are essential for the successful execution of development projects. When individuals within a community develop a strong sense of ownership and responsibility towards projects, they are more inclined to dedicate their time, effort, and resources to ensure the projects' success. Finally, the incorporation of local wisdom into development initiatives guarantees their cultural sensitivity and respect for the traditions and practices of the community. The cultural alignment fosters greater acceptance and legitimacy of the projects, thereby minimizing resistance and promoting cooperation. Additionally, the preservation of the community's cultural heritage is a crucial element of sustainable development.

2. Methods

A qualitative approach was utilized in this research, employing a case study methodology to investigate the significance of local wisdom in community deliberations for village development in Pangkep. A wide range of data collection methods were employed to ensure a thorough comprehension of the subject matter. Interviews were carried out with a wide range of informants, including village leaders, elders, and members of the community. The interviews offered direct insights into the participants' personal experiences and viewpoints regarding the incorporation of local knowledge into discussions on village development. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, which provided the opportunity to delve deeper into specific areas of interest while still maintaining a consistent framework for comparison. Additionally, focus group discussions were conducted with participants of village development meetings. The researcher was able to gather collective views and facilitate the exchange of ideas among community members through these discussions. The focus groups played a crucial role in identifying recurring patterns and variations in viewpoints, emphasizing the collective nature of decision-making and the influence of local knowledge in shaping these processes. The discussions offered an opportunity for participants to contemplate their experiences and express the significance of local knowledge in their development endeavours. Participant observation was a crucial data collection method employed in the research. The researcher actively engaged in community deliberations, closely observing the interactions, discussions, and decision-making processes as they unfolded. The researcher was able to develop a comprehensive understanding of the social dynamics and cultural practices that influenced the deliberations through this immersive approach. By engaging in participant observation, the researcher effectively captured the nuances of non-verbal communication, power dynamics, and the practical implementation of local knowledge in real-life situations. The data collection methods were enhanced by analyzing meeting records and development plans. This analysis offered further context and validation of the information collected through interviews and observations. Through the careful triangulation of data from various sources, this research has established the validity and reliability of its findings. As a result, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the significance of local wisdom in community deliberations for village development in Pangkep.

3. Results and Discussion

Identification of Local Wisdom in Pangkep

The research identified several key elements and practices of local wisdom that play a crucial role in the community deliberations of Pangkep. These include traditional farming techniques, communal work systems like "Gotong Royong" (mutual cooperation), customary laws (adat), and conflict resolution mechanisms rooted in local culture.

"We have always relied on each other; this mutual cooperation is what keeps our village strong."

"Our traditional farming techniques, like crop rotation and natural fertilizers, have been used for generations and are still effective today."

This statement highlights the importance of mutual cooperation (Gotong Royong) as a fundamental aspect of community life in Pangkep. It emphasizes the reliance on collective effort to achieve communal goals. The result of interview reflects the enduring value and effectiveness of traditional farming methods, demonstrating how local wisdom in agriculture contributes to sustainable practices and food security.

focus group discussion results participants emphasized, "Gotong royong is the backbone of our community. Without it, we couldn't achieve half of what we do." The emphasis on gotong royong in the focus group discussions reinforces its significance in facilitating community projects and fostering social cohesion. Another participant noted, "Our customary laws help maintain order and ensure that everyone respects the decisions made during village meetings." This statement underscores the role of customary laws (Adat) in governance and decision-making, ensuring that community actions are aligned with traditional values and norms.

Integration of Local Wisdom in Decision-Making

The processes and mechanisms of incorporating local wisdom into deliberations were observed through several village meetings and development discussions. It was found that traditional leaders and institutions, such as village chiefs (Kepala Desa) and adat councils, played a significant role in guiding the deliberations.

"We always consider our customs when making decisions. It ensures that everyone respects and follows through with what is decided."

"Our role is to ensure that the traditions and values of our ancestors are upheld in all community decisions."

This highlights the integral role of customs in the decision-making process, ensuring that community members adhere to and respect the outcomes of deliberations. The adat council's role in upholding traditional values signifies the importance of cultural continuity and the preservation of heritage in guiding community actions.

Focus group discussion results participants noted, "The presence of adat councils helps resolve conflicts and ensures that projects align with our values." The presence of adat councils is crucial in mediating conflicts and aligning development projects with local values, thereby facilitating smoother implementation and acceptance. Another participant shared, "When our leaders invoke traditional customs, it gives weight to the decisions and ensures everyone abides by them." Invoking traditional customs in decision-making processes lends authority and legitimacy to the

decisions, enhancing compliance and collective commitment.

Impact on Village Development Outcomes

The impact of local wisdom on village development outcomes was evident in several specific projects. For example, the integration of traditional farming techniques in agricultural development projects led to more sustainable practices and improved crop yields.

"Using the methods passed down from our ancestors, we see better results and less damage to the land."

"Projects that respect local wisdom always get more community support and participation."

This statement indicates that traditional farming methods contribute to more sustainable land use and better agricultural outcomes, showcasing the practical benefits of local wisdom. The statement also highlights the correlation between the incorporation of local wisdom and increased community engagement and support, which are critical for the success of development initiatives.

The higher satisfaction levels suggest that development projects aligned with traditional knowledge are more relevant and acceptable to the community, leading to greater involvement. participant highlighted, "Projects that ignore our local wisdom often face resistance and are less effective." This indicates that neglecting local wisdom can result in resistance and lower effectiveness of development projects, underscoring the necessity of integrating indigenous knowledge.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the positive outcomes, the research identified several challenges in integrating local wisdom into modern development practices. These challenges included a lack of formal recognition of local knowledge, generational shifts that threatened the transmission of traditional practices, and the influence of external development models that often overlooked local contexts.

"Our young people are moving away from our traditions, and this worries us."

A community leader suggested:

"If we can educate our youth about the value of our traditions and include these in formal planning, we can achieve much more."

This highlights the concern regarding the generational transmission of traditional practices, indicating a potential risk to the preservation of local wisdom.

This suggests that educating younger generations about the importance of traditions and incorporating these into formal planning can enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of development efforts. Participants pointed out, "External development models often overlook our local contexts, leading to friction and less effective outcomes." This indicates that development models that do not consider local contexts can create conflict and reduce the efficacy of projects, highlighting the need for culturally sensitive approaches. Another participant suggested, "We need more capacity-building efforts to formalize the role of local wisdom in planning. This underscores the necessity for capacity-building initiatives to formalize and integrate local wisdom into planning processes, ensuring its recognition and application in development

projects.

These results underscore the critical role of local wisdom in community deliberations and village development in Pangkep, highlighting both the strengths and challenges of integrating traditional knowledge into modern development practices.

Discussion

The exploration of essential components and methodologies of local wisdom in Pangkep highlights the vastness and variety of indigenous knowledge systems. The practice of "gotong royong" not only promotes community solidarity, but also ensures that development projects benefit from the combined effort and shared responsibility of the community. Conventional agricultural practices and established legal systems offer structures for the long-term preservation of resources and the promotion of societal cohesion. The historical context of these practices underscores their adaptability and resilience, which are essential for tackling current development challenges. Prior research conducted by Pretty et al., (2006) provides support for these findings, illustrating that communities with well-established customs of collective action and local expertise are more adept at effectively managing natural resources in a sustainable manner.

The incorporation of indigenous knowledge into decision-making processes is supported by the significant involvement of traditional leaders and institutions. These actors fulfill the important responsibility of preserving and safeguarding local knowledge. They also play a crucial role in facilitating discussions, ensuring that decisions are made in accordance with the values and traditions of the community. The results indicate that the efficacy of development initiatives is greatly improved when they are in accordance with indigenous knowledge. The alignment of these projects not only provides legitimacy, but also encourages increased community involvement and ownership, which are essential for the long-term sustainability of development efforts. This is consistent with the research conducted by Ostrom (1990), which emphasizes the significance of local institutions and norms in effectively managing common-pool resources.

The positive impact of local wisdom on village development outcomes highlights the practical advantages of incorporating indigenous knowledge into development planning. Projects that incorporated local knowledge, such as the water management initiative, yielded superior outcomes and garnered higher levels of community satisfaction in comparison to projects that did not. This discovery strengthens the assertion that local knowledge systems provide valuable insights and solutions that are frequently disregarded by traditional development approaches. By utilizing the knowledge and expertise of the local community, development projects can enhance their effectiveness and long-term viability. Chambers (1997) highlights the significance of indigenous knowledge systems in comprehending local contexts and promoting sustainable development.

The challenges identified in integrating local wisdom into modern development practices underscore the importance of acknowledging and backing indigenous knowledge systems. By formalizing the role of local wisdom in development planning and establishing platforms for knowledge exchange between generations, we can effectively combat the risk of cultural erosion. In addition, it is crucial for development practitioners and policymakers to have a deep understanding of the local context and give utmost importance to incorporating local wisdom into their strategies. There are significant opportunities to enhance community participation and promote sustainable development through the utilization of local knowledge and wisdom. By

recognizing and integrating indigenous knowledge, communities have the opportunity to establish development pathways that are both culturally appropriate and resilient, allowing them to honor their heritage while effectively tackling contemporary challenges. Berkes et al. (2000) emphasized the importance of traditional ecological knowledge in promoting sustainable development, highlighting its adaptive capacity.

4. Conclusion

The study emphasizes the significant importance of indigenous knowledge in community discussions and the advancement of villages in Pangkep. Practices like "gotong royong," traditional farming techniques, and customary laws play a crucial role in promoting sustainable resource management and fostering social harmony. Integrating these elements into decision-making processes, with the assistance of traditional leaders, improves the effectiveness and community acceptance of development initiatives. In spite of the obstacles posed by changes in generations and the absence of official acknowledgment, this study highlights the significance of safeguarding and utilizing indigenous knowledge to attain sustainable and culturally suitable development results.

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