

Participatory Culture in the Village Development Planning Process in Maros Regency

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Abstract

This research aims to examine community participation in the village development planning process in Maros Regency, as well as identifying factors that support and hinder this participation. The research method used is descriptive qualitative research with data collection techniques in the form of in-depth interviews with stakeholders, participatory observation and document analysis. The research results show that community participation in village development in Maros Regency occurs in various forms, including attendance at village meetings, contribution of personnel and resources in development projects, and involvement in working groups or committees. Factors that support participation include inclusive and transparent village leadership, support from local government and NGOs, and community awareness and motivation. However, community participation also faces several obstacles, such as a lack of information and effective communication between the village government and the community, distrust of village officials, and economic constraints that prevent the community from having the time and energy to be actively involved.

Keywords: Community Participation, Village Development Planning, Participatory Culture, Inclusive Leadership, Maros Regency

1. Introduction

Community participation in village development is one of the fundamental elements for achieving sustainable and inclusive development. The concept of community participation emphasizes the importance of active involvement of village residents in various stages of development, starting from decision making, planning, implementation, to program evaluation (Fadil, 2013). With this participation, communities not only become objects of development, but also become subjects who have the rights and responsibilities to determine the direction and priorities of development in their region. Effective participation can increase the community's sense of ownership and responsibility for development results, so that the programs implemented are more in line with local needs and potential (Muslim, 2007). In addition, community involvement in every stage of development can encourage transparency and accountability, reduce the risk of corruption and misuse of funds, and increase the efficiency of resource use.

Maros Regency, which is located in South Sulawesi Province, is an area that has great potential for village development. This region is known for its natural wealth, including the Rammang-

Rammang karst area which is one of the leading tourist destinations. Apart from that, Maros has fertile agricultural land, which supports the agricultural and plantation sectors as the main support for the community's economy. This district is also rich in other natural resources such as fisheries and forestry which play an important role in the local economy. However, behind this great potential, Maros Regency faces various challenges in village development. These challenges include development disparities between villages, where some villages are still lagging behind in terms of access to basic facilities such as education, health and infrastructure (Nasution & Hasibuan, 2023). Apart from that, environmental issues such as land degradation and decline in the quality of natural resources due to unsustainable exploitation are also significant challenges. The level of community participation in planning and implementing development in several villages is still low, which can affect the effectiveness and relevance of development programs implemented (Bulele et al., 2015).

The selection of Maros Regency as the location for this research was based on several strategic reasons. First, Maros Regency is a good representation of an area with great potential but facing significant challenges in village development. This provides an opportunity to explore how participatory culture can be applied and optimized in diverse and dynamic contexts. Second, the diversity of village conditions in Maros, both geographically, socially and economically, allows this research to gain more comprehensive insight into the factors that influence community participation in various situations. Third, Maros has demonstrated a number of local initiatives and government programs that are starting to integrate participatory approaches in development, so this research can examine the effectiveness of these initiatives and provide recommendations for future improvements. Support from the local government and openness of the Maros community to research are also important factors that support the implementation of this study.

By considering the importance of community participation and the specific conditions of Maros Regency, it is hoped that this research can make a significant contribution to understanding and developing a participatory culture in the village development planning process. It is hoped that the results of this research will not only be useful for Maros Regency, but can also be a reference for other regions that face similar challenges in participatory and sustainable village development. This research aims to produce practical recommendations that can be implemented to increase community participation and maximize the benefits of village development programs, so as to create independent, prosperous and competitive villages.

2. Methods

This research uses descriptive qualitative research which aims to describe in depth the phenomenon of community participation in the village development planning process in Maros Regency. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the social and cultural context and dynamics of community participation from a rich and detailed perspective. This approach also allows for in-depth data mining through direct interaction with research subjects, thereby providing a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence community participation. The data collection technique in this research involved several methods, including in-depth interviews with stakeholders and participant observation. In-depth interviews were conducted with various stakeholders such as village officials, community leaders, community group members and village residents. The data analysis technique in this research involves thematic analysis, where data from interviews and observations is coded and grouped into main themes relevant to the research. This process involved several stages, including data transcription, in-depth reading, initial coding, and theme

development.

3. Results and Discussion

Description of Forms of Community Participation

This research found that community participation in village development in Maros Regency occurs in various forms reflecting different levels of involvement. In general, these forms of participation can be categorized as consultative participation, active participation, and participation in monitoring and evaluation. Consultative participation usually occurs through community presence at village meetings. Village deliberations are the main forum where village residents can express their aspirations, discuss and jointly determine development priorities. In this forum, the public is invited to provide input regarding development plans and programs that will be implemented. This participation model ensures that the community's voice is heard, even though it does not always directly influence the final decision.

Active participation involves direct involvement of citizens in the implementation of development projects. Concrete examples of this participation include the contribution of labor in the construction of infrastructure such as village roads, irrigation, bridges and other public facilities. The community works together, donating their time and energy in a spirit of mutual cooperation. This spirit of mutual cooperation is still strong in several villages in Maros, where cooperation between residents is the basis for project implementation. This active participation not only promotes efficient project implementation, but also strengthens social ties between village residents.

Participation in the form of working groups or committees formed to supervise and implement development programs. This group usually consists of community representatives selected based on their beliefs and abilities. Their duties include monitoring project implementation, ensuring transparency and accountability in the use of village funds, as well as providing reports and evaluations to the village government and the wider community. Through this working group, the community has a more significant role in ensuring that development programs run according to plan and meet local needs. Participation in monitoring and evaluation is also important to ensure project sustainability and long-term success. These working groups often serve as a liaison between communities and village governments, ensuring that each stage of development receives appropriate support and oversight. They also play a role in disseminating information and building awareness among the public regarding the importance of active and sustainable participation.

The level of community participation varies from one village to another, which is influenced by several main factors (Tumbel, 2017; Sawerah et al., 2016). Village leadership plays a crucial role in encouraging or inhibiting community participation. Village heads who are inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the needs of their residents tend to be more successful in encouraging active participation. On the other hand, authoritarian or non-transparent leadership can reduce people's motivation to get involved (Sumual et al., 2024). Public awareness is also a determining factor in participation levels. In villages where awareness of the importance of participation is high, residents are more likely to be actively involved in various development activities. Education and empowerment programs that raise awareness are critical in encouraging community participation.

The existence of a structured participation mechanism also plays an important role. Villages that have clear systems and procedures for community participation, such as a regular schedule of

village meetings and active working groups, tend to show higher levels of participation and are more organized. Community participation in Maros Regency in village development shows a rich variety, from consultation to direct implementation and monitoring of projects. The success of this participation is greatly influenced by the quality of leadership, public awareness, and the structure of existing participation mechanisms.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors for Participation

Community participation in village development in Maros Regency is supported by various factors that enable active involvement of residents in the development process. One of the main factors is inclusive and transparent village leadership. Village heads who are able to involve the community in decision making in an open and accountable manner can increase citizen trust and participation. Apart from that, support from local governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is also very important. Training and empowerment programs organized by local governments and NGOs provide residents with the knowledge and skills they need to participate effectively in village development. Community awareness and motivation to get involved is also a significant supporting factor (Yusup, 2018). Communities who have an understanding of the importance of participation tend to be more enthusiastic about contributing to various village development activities.

However, community participation also faces several significant barriers. One of the main obstacles is the lack of information and effective communication between the village government and the community. Uneven information regarding development plans often makes people feel uninvolved or unimportant in the process. Distrust of village officials due to bad past experiences, such as cases of corruption or abuse of authority, also acts as an obstacle to participation. This distrust can reduce people's motivation to engage in development activities because they feel that their efforts will not produce real change. Apart from that, economic constraints are also a significant obstacle. People who are busy with daily work to make ends meet often do not have the time and energy to be actively involved in village development activities.

Previous research supports these findings and provides additional insight into the factors that influence community participation in development. A study by Mansuri and Rao (2013) shows that successful empowerment programs are often supported by strong local leadership and the existence of clear participation mechanisms. Research by Hadi (2015) also shows that transparency in managing village funds increases community trust and participation. Overall, this research emphasizes the importance of a combination of inclusive leadership, appropriate external support, and increased community awareness to encourage participation in village development. Barriers such as lack of information, distrust, and economic constraints must be overcome through better communication strategies, increased transparency, and programs that support community economic empowerment. The results of this research are not only relevant for Maros Regency but can also be a reference for other regions that face similar challenges in encouraging community participation in village development.

The Impact of Participatory Culture on Village Development

Participatory culture has a significant positive impact on village development in Maros Regency. First, community participation increases the sense of ownership and responsibility for the development projects being implemented. This is reflected in the better maintenance and sustainability of facilities built with community participation compared to projects implemented

without community participation. Second, community participation also encourages transparency and accountability in the management of village funds, thereby reducing the risk of corruption and misuse of funds. Previous studies also support these findings. For example, research by Mansuri & Rao (2013) shows that community participation in development can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of development programs, as well as strengthen social networks and community cohesion. In addition, research by Adi et al. (2003) indicate that community participation can increase local capacity and strengthen social capital, which in turn supports sustainable development.

However, this positive impact can only be realized if participation is carried out in an inclusive and representative manner, involving all levels of society without discrimination. In several villages, it was found that participation was still dominated by certain groups, such as community leaders or groups that had close relationships with village officials. For this reason, it is important for the village government to ensure that the existing participation mechanisms truly provide space for all residents to contribute and participate actively. A participatory culture in the village development planning process in Maros Regency has great potential to improve the quality and sustainability of development. However, to achieve optimal participation, ongoing efforts are needed to strengthen community capacity, improve communication and transparency, and overcome various existing obstacles

4. Conclusion

Community participation is very important in village development in Maros Regency. This shows that when village residents are actively involved in the development planning and implementation process, the results are better and more sustainable. Several things that support participation are friendly and open village leadership, support from local government and other institutions, and residents' awareness of the importance of being involved. However, there are also several problems that hinder it, such as lack of clear information, lack of trust in the village government, and residents' busy economic activities. To increase participation, village governments must be more open and transparent in communication with residents. Local governments and other institutions also need to provide support and training to village residents. Better and more equitable communication is also needed to ensure that all citizens feel heard and valued. By addressing these issues and strengthening support, community participation can be the key to building better and more prosperous villages. This research provides important insights for understanding how community participation can be increased in Maros Regency and other areas.

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