

# Communication Development Model of Village Government in Empowering Oil Palm Farmers (Study in Seuruway District, Aceh Tamiang Regency)

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## ABSTRACT

Development communication as a branch of communication science has long been used by the world community as a reference in looking at relations and communication between the community and the government. In its classic form, development communication is limited to seeing the relationship between government and society as the object of development. Government communication activities, is an activity that describes the interaction between the community and the government in order to meet their demands and needs. The interaction between the two parties will lead to various communications in their respective ways, which can be formal, or informal and take the form of interpersonal communication, group communication, public communication and mass communication. The concept of development includes the role of communication, especially in designing messages specifically addressed to disadvantaged citizens. For this reason, the role of government development communication is very necessary in raising awareness, generating interest, and willingness to participate in the development process. In empowering oil palm farmers in Seuruway District, Aceh Tamiang Regency, the government needs to pay attention to the communication model used in conveying messages so that the expected effect is in line with expectations. This study tries to understand the communication model of village government development in empowering oil palm farmers. There are two communication models that are very dominant in village government, namely adaptive communication and accommodative communication. Adaptive communication can be seen from the village government's strategy of merging into the identity of residents as communication participants. While accommodative communication is in the form of collective actions of village officials in modifying the way of communicating according to the interests of village residents. Methodologically, this study uses a qualitative approach which will be conducted in the Seuruway District, Aceh Tamiang Regency.

**Keywords:** Communication development, village government, and palm oil

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The oil palm sector is still not able to realize the welfare of farmers and workers in this sector. Poverty in oil palm plantation owners is usually due to uncertain oil prices and weak production productivity levels. Meanwhile, poverty in oil palm workers is due to the low wages received by workers. For permanent employees of the company they only receive wages in accordance with the Regional Minimum Wage (UMR) while those who are daily workers are paid based on their daily achievements without receiving social and health insurance and other facilities. In 2020 the number of poor people in East Aceh reached 62,340 people or 14.08 percent, Aceh Tamiang 38,930 people or 13.08 percent and Langsa City 18,651 people or 10.44 percent (BPS, 2021)

Conceptual development communication is based on communication theory and development theory which mutually support each other. Communication theory is used to bridge the flow of new information (ideas, ideas) between the government and the community and vice versa. While the theory of development is used as a characteristic of the form of change in a directed and progressive manner from one condition to another or from one state to a better state. In other words, through a communication process about development messages can be forwarded and accepted by the public for development purposes (Dilla, 2010: 3).

Various methods and models of development communication carried out in an effort to alleviate poverty do not condense on one form of model that is

relevant for every situation. The transactional communication model that is often used to see the hegemony of the rulers in the communication process often gets opposition from the grassroots community.

Another development communication model that is often used is the circular communication model. Where this communication model focuses on equality between the three parties (society, and government). Both have the same role and status in the communication process. If one party seeks dominance, it will usually cut the communication channel. In the context of contemporary development communication, such a development communication model is considered more accommodating to interested parties. Because the conclusions drawn are satisfactory to all parties and no party is harmed.

In this context, this research was conducted, especially to examine the communication model of village government development in empowering oil palm farmers in Seuruway District, Aceh Tamiang Regency. According to the researcher, this phenomenon is an interesting reality.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Peterson, Quebral (1973) saw communication in development as a pragmatic action so that he formulated "development communication is communication carried out to implement a country's development plan". While a simpler formulation was put forward by Widjaja A.W, Hawab, and Arsyik, they interpret development communication as communication that contains messages about development. Therefore development communication can be said to be an innovation that can be accepted by the community through the communication process.

Development communication has two understanding perspectives, namely understanding in a broad sense and understanding in a narrow sense. In a broad sense, development communication includes the role and function of communication as an activity of exchanging messages reciprocally between the community and the government, starting from the planning, implementation, and evaluation process of development. Meanwhile, development communication in a narrow sense is all efforts, methods and techniques of delivering development ideas and skills that come from the party initiating development to the target community, so that they can understand, accept and participate in development (Dilla, 2010: 116)

## 3. DISCUSSION

### Adaptive Communication Model

The practice of an adaptive communication in village government in Kuala Simpang is based on feedback from the community. The characteristics of a diverse and multicultural society require an adjustment of the communication pattern of the village apparatus in accordance with the community.

1. Characteristics of various communicants based on their social status in society as workers, farmers, laborers, professionals and state apparatus. The characteristics of the communicant can also be assessed from the ethnic identity which is divided into three major ethnic groups; Tamiang, Java and Aceh. And finally the level of people's digital literacy power.
2. Village officials as sources (communicators) position themselves as subordinate passive communication participants, their decisions are based on the will of the public and adjust to the conditions that occurred at that time. It can be said also at this stage the form of communication from the communicant as a response to the characteristics of the communicant. The adaptive behavior of the village apparatus is manifested in several forms of attitude; empathy, norm adjustment, communicative, and participatory.
3. Message governance; messages conveyed to the public are generally related to the public interest (community). while the procedure for delivering the message is very dependent on the context of the message itself. If the mechanism has been stated in the rules above, then the government just has to carry out as ordered. Organizing messages considers several aspects; regulations that have governed it, language selection according to the characteristics of the audience, message effectiveness, avoiding controversial conversations, prioritizing diplomacy and persuasion, and clear information
4. Communication media; Social space is by far the most effective communication medium in transforming messages. The social spaces created in almost all villages are basically spaces that bring people from various backgrounds together. Among these social spaces are recitation halls, meeting halls, houses of worship (Mesjid and Mushala), and through religious rituals and ceremonies there are regular daily, weekly, yearly and seasonal events.

Social space is a free space in which there is unlimited interaction between people. Every citizen can talk about many things and it happens in a non-formal atmosphere

5. Feed back; These stages basically have different positions. In certain cases the public communication behavior of village officials is based on the feedback provided by the communicant through a communication process that has occurred before. Feedback is also a driving force for other communication to occur.

The ability to adapt to various changes that occur in society is an important factor in the success of village government public communication. Not only in grammar, media selection is also considered to be the most important part. As described in the previous discussion, the selection of communication media is highly dependent on the literacy level of the community towards communication media that are currently developing. Some *datok* realize that the development of communication technology can be an instrument to achieve effective public communication, but it can also be a barrier to fostering public trust. The existence of this media seems to be a paradox that has two opposing sides.

This accommodative communication is also an antithesis to one-way communication. One-way communication, the government acts as the giver of action and the community as the recipient of the action. Communication in this form is identical to using the lecture method. The lecture method is basically a oneway communication or communication as an action. This type of communication does not give much life to the atmosphere of dialogue in society.

As expressed by Mulyana (2000:61) "the understanding of communication as a one-way process is actually less appropriate when applied to face-to-face communication." This understanding of one-way communication is referred to as the "source-oriented definition." According to Mulyana, this definition implies communication as all activities that are intentionally carried out by someone to convey stimuli and to evoke responses from others. In this context, communication is considered a deliberate action to convey a message to meet the needs of the messenger such as explaining the subject matter or persuading someone to do something.

Accommodative communication itself provides a great opportunity for two-way communication and even more

(multi-step flow communication). In this type of communication, the village government and the community can play a role together, namely the giver of action and the recipient of the action. Government and society can give and take each other. This communication is better than the first communication (one-way communication), because the activities of the government and the community are relatively the same.

Mulyana (2000:66) says "communication as an interaction is seen as a bit dynamic than communication as a one-way action but this second view still distinguishes the participants as senders and recipients of messages, because it is still source-oriented even though the two roles are considered alternate." So basically the interaction process that takes place in communication is still mechanical and static.

#### 4. CONCLUSSION

The practice of village government communication in Seruwah District, Aceh Tamiang Regency towards oil palm farmers shows a dynamic and adaptive form. The village government communicates openly to explain information that is considered important as well as ordinary information. Social space is often used as a very strategic communication medium. Through this space, people gather at the same time, talk about everything and without distinction of social status. For certain purposes, the village government also uses several communication channels that are affiliated with various technological devices such as WhatsApp groups which include all village communities and village officials. It's just that this technology-based communication does not work effectively for groups of people who are not literate towards technology and are illiterate. Instead, the village government communicates personally in the form of dyadic. Oil palm is an important sector in Seruwah District, there are 1,269 people who are absorbed as workers in this sector with an area of 3,558 ha. This figure shows the potential of oil palm in Aceh Tamiang is very strategic to make Aceh Tamiang a prosperous region.

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