



The Community Participation in Infrastructure Development in Penda Muntei Village, Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency

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Abstract

Infrastructure development is one of the main priorities in efforts to improve community welfare in Indonesia, especially in rural areas. In line with this, the implementation of infrastructure development does not solely depend on government policy regulations but also requires the active involvement of the community in every process. Community participation serves as a medium to ensure that infrastructure development aligns with the needs of the community while also ensuring sustainable and effective efforts. This research employs a qualitative method with descriptive analysis and utilizes data collection techniques, including observation, interviews, documentation, and triangulation. The study was conducted in Penda Muntei Village, Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency. The research applies the concept of community participation using four indicators: participation in planning, participation in implementation, participation in maintenance, and participation in evaluation. Based on the research findings, community participation in infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village is considered sufficiently participatory in terms of the planning and implementation indicators. However, the maintenance and evaluation indicators show less active or less participatory involvement.



INTRODUCTION

As a projection in the development process in Indonesia, it must have an essence that correlates with various important characteristics regarding the impacts that will arise in the future. Every development activity must prioritize the concept of "Pareto Superior," which aims to create benefits for all parties, especially the community, rather than "Pareto Optimal," which may result in sacrificing others. Fundamentally, the main goal of development is to achieve prosperity and welfare for Indonesian citizens. Community participation in development plays a strategic role in gaining public support.

The role of the community in development emphasizes their position as active subjects rather than mere objects. Community participation serves as a medium of communication, aimed at gathering information for government decision-making. Additionally, it acts as an instrument for dispute resolution, enabling communities to mediate conflicts by reaching consensus through the exchange of opinions.

Infrastructure development is one of the primary priorities in efforts to improve community welfare in Indonesia, particularly in rural areas. Conceptually, well-developed infrastructure can optimize various aspects such as economic, social, and cultural activities, while also providing broader access to basic services such as education, healthcare, and transportation. In its implementation, infrastructure development does not solely rely on government policies but also requires the active involvement of the community in every process. Community participation ensures that infrastructure development is not only aligned with the community's needs but also achieves sustainable and effective outcomes. Infrastructure development, as explained, is a

deliberate effort or series of efforts aimed at creating growth and change to build facilities and infrastructure that serve as the main supports for a development process. It emphasizes the importance of infrastructure in providing positive impacts, such as:

1. Reducing regional isolation and improving interregional connectivity.
2. Enhancing economic activity and supporting the smooth functioning of the regional economy.
3. Facilitating access to the latest technological advancements.

Penda Muntei Village, located in Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency, has a population of 593 people. The main livelihoods of the residents include farming, zircon and gold mining, and manual labor, which support the local economy. The majority of the community spends their time working from morning until evening. However, the community's level of education is still relatively low.

The educational level in Penda Muntei Village is predominantly at the junior high school level or equivalent. Although there has been a shift in the community's perception regarding the importance of education, encouraging younger generations to pursue higher education, this change has not been evenly distributed. Many residents still face educational backwardness, which significantly impacts their role and participation in the development process.

Village-level infrastructure development is a key factor in achieving community welfare and driving regional economic growth. Penda Muntei Village is currently striving to optimize infrastructure development to improve the quality of life for its residents. Infrastructure in the village includes roads, playgrounds, places of worship, sports facilities, clean water management systems, and sanitation, among others. Despite these efforts, the village government has been involving the community in the development process through participation mechanisms such as communal work (*gotong royong*), outreach programs, and other contributions.

Preliminary observations in the research identified several issues related to community participation in infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village, which faces various challenges. Factors such as low educational levels, limited access to information, and economic constraints are the main obstacles in promoting infrastructure development in the village. These challenges hinder efforts to enhance participation effectiveness and maximize the benefits of development projects.

Another issue is the abandonment of infrastructure facilities, with many previous projects left neglected or damaged due to a lack of maintenance. This highlights the need for community participation in the implementation and sustainability of infrastructure projects.

Another concern is the limited accessibility provided to the community for active participation in all stages of the development process, from planning to evaluation. One form of accessibility provided by the Penda Muntei Village government is through the implementation of Village Development Planning Deliberations (*Musrenbangdes*). This platform aims to enhance community participation in preparing national and regional development plans. However, the village government has expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of input and aspirations from the local community during these meetings, as they are often attended only by village officials.

Community participation is crucial to the success of development, as it ensures that projects are tailored to the community's needs and promote sustainable welfare improvements. Without community involvement, development processes may lead to disparities and misaligned outcomes that fail to meet the targeted goals and expectations of the residents of Penda Muntei Village.

From the background and identified issues, this research focuses on the phenomenon of community participation in infrastructure development. Therefore, the researcher has chosen the title, "Community Participation in Infrastructure Development in Penda Muntei Village, Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency".

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding Community Participation

According to Dewi et al. (2013), community participation is defined as a right possessed by the community to contribute to decision-making in the development process stages, from initial planning, implementation, supervision, to environmental preservation. Here, the community is not merely viewed as recipients of facilities or benefits but as active subjects in sustainable development.

Community participation is a voluntary contribution from the community in decision-making processes and program implementation, where they enjoy the benefits of these programs and are involved in program evaluation to improve their welfare (Mulyadi, 2019).

From these perspectives, it can be concluded that community participation is the involvement or role of all layers of society in supporting, creating, and implementing various program components or policies that yield benefits and improve the welfare of the community.

Objectives of Community Participation

Community participation serves several critical purposes, including:

1. Assisting in making more relevant and responsive decisions.
2. Enhancing transparency and accountability.
3. Optimizing community empowerment.
4. Building trust between the government and citizens.
5. Improving public services through feedback and suggestions from the community.
6. Encouraging innovation and collaborative solutions from various community groups.

Forms of Community Participation

According to Cohen and Uphoff, as cited in Mulyadi (2019), participation can be categorized into four forms:

1. Participation in Planning: Involves the community in decision-making through development planning, such as attending village development meetings, providing opinions and suggestions, and participating in decision-making processes.

2. **Participation in Implementation:** Reflects the involvement of citizens in village development through contributions in labor, funds, or materials.
3. **Participation in Maintenance:** Includes activities where the community contributes to positive outcomes for both the government and society, such as maintaining cleanliness in homes and the environment or participating in neighborhood security maintenance.
4. **Participation in Evaluation:** Represents community involvement in monitoring and assessing the implementation of planned outcomes, including providing critiques and suggestions to evaluate ongoing development.

Understanding Infrastructure

According to Grigg, as cited in Kondoatie (2005) and Abdillah (2020), infrastructure refers to physical systems that provide transportation, irrigation, drainage, buildings, and other public facilities needed to meet the basic human needs in social and economic contexts. Infrastructure is also defined as basic facilities and systems required to support community activities and economic and social growth. These include physical facilities, such as roads, bridges, buildings, and electricity supply, as well as non-physical facilities, such as public services. From these definitions, it can be concluded that infrastructure encompasses both physical and non-physical public facilities optimized for development as a medium to meet the economic and social needs of the local community.

Concept of Infrastructure Development

The concept of infrastructure development emphasizes planning, construction, and management mechanisms for basic facilities that support the economic and social activities of society. The infrastructure matrix may include various sectors, such as transportation (roads, bridges, airports, etc.) and public utilities (electricity, clean water, telecommunications networks, etc.).

The main objectives of infrastructure development are:

- Improving the quality of life of the community.
- Optimizing the flow of goods and services.
- Promoting sustainable economic growth.
- Strengthening interregional connectivity.
- Enhancing accessibility to public services.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework serves as the foundation for understanding the role of community participation and infrastructure development, focusing on their interconnectedness and impact on improving the welfare and connectivity of local communities. Village Infrastructure Development Participation, according to Cohen and Uphoff as cited in Mulyadi (2019):

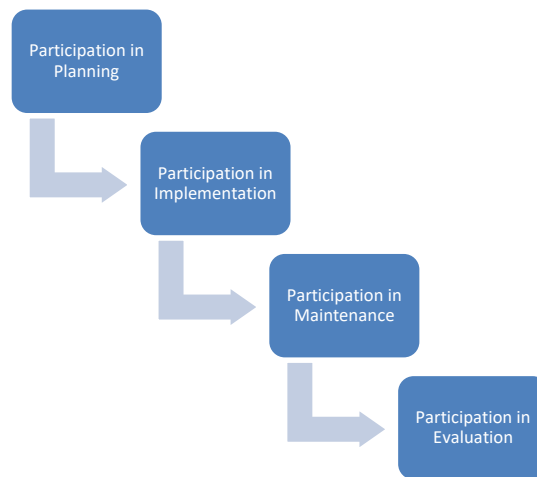


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Research

METHOD

The appropriate type of research for this study is qualitative research with analysis using a descriptive method approach. According to Sugiyono (2020:9), qualitative research is a research method based on philosophy and used to study conditions (experiments) where the researcher acts as the instrument, employs data collection techniques, and performs qualitative analysis with an emphasis on meaning. Meanwhile, the descriptive method approach, as explained by Sugiyono (2020:29), functions to describe or illustrate the research object based on the data obtained. The data collection techniques in this research, based on Sugiyono (2020:105), consist of four sources: interviews, observation, documentation, and triangulation (combining the three techniques).

The qualitative descriptive approach in this research aims to describe and explain how community participation is involved in infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village, Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency. This research was conducted in Penda Muntei Village, an administrative village in Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency, over a period of five months, from July to November 2024. It involved several informants, including the Village Head, the Village Secretary, and several local residents of Penda Muntei Village.

The chosen research title and location were selected because Penda Muntei Village offers accessible information and is not an isolated area. This study applies the concept of community participation theory by Cohen and Uphoff, as cited in Mulyadi (2019), which identifies four forms of community participation:

1. Participation in planning
2. Participation in implementation
3. Participation in maintenance
4. Participation in evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Overview of Penda Muntei Village

Penda Muntei Village is one of the definitive or parent local villages located in Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency. Initially, Penda Muntei Village was not as separate as it is now, as many residents chose to move closer to the main road due to the easy access to the subdistrict capital via land transportation. The population of Penda Muntei Village is 593, with livelihoods primarily consisting of small-scale mining, farming, and manual labor.

Geographically, Penda Muntei Village covers an area of approximately 6.84 hectares, with the following boundaries at Table 1.

Table 1. Respondents' Age

Age	N	%
23	1	6.3
24	1	6.3
26	2	12.5
27	3	18.8
28	1	6.3
29	1	6.3
30	1	6.3
32	1	6.3
36	1	6.3
39	2	12.5
48	1	6.3
54	1	6.3
Total	16	100

Source: Processed Data, 2024

The distance from Penda Muntei Village to the Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict Office is approximately 18 km, to the regency capital about 310 km, and to the provincial capital of Central Kalimantan in Palangka Raya around 170 km. The village's relatively remote location from the regency capital requires significant attention and monitoring of its development to ensure its progress. Community participation is crucial to providing input and aspirations to optimize targeted development in Penda Muntei Village, ultimately improving the standard of living and welfare of its residents.

Community Participation in Infrastructure Planning in Penda Muntei Village

Community participation in the planning process is essential for sustainable development and meeting community needs in line with established mechanisms and expectations. In the case of Penda Muntei Village, active involvement in the planning stages is critical to ensuring the smooth progress and achievement of development goals.

Interviews with key informants revealed the following insights:

- Sri Widodo, the Village Head, stated:

“In the development planning process in Penda Muntei Village, we, the village government, grant the community the right to participate by providing suggestions and aspirations for village development, prioritizing project scales, and discussing budget capacity to optimize development implementation. We prioritize openness and accountability.”

- Narto, Head of RT 02, added:

“In the planning process for Penda Muntei Village, I, as the RT head, strive to involve our community by organizing meetings to gather suggestions and proposals. However, every year, we see a decline in community enthusiasm to attend compared to previous years.”

Observations and interviews suggest that community participation in infrastructure planning is reasonably active. Residents actively contribute during RT meetings by expressing their suggestions and aspirations, which are then forwarded to the Village Development Planning Meeting (Musrenbangdes) for discussion and agreement on the Village Development Work Plan (RPKDes).

Community Participation in Infrastructure Implementation in Penda Muntei Village

Village infrastructure development is a strategic effort to support economic growth and community welfare. Implementation receives funding through village funds regulated by Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages. Community participation plays a vital role in the successful implementation of infrastructure projects, although challenges such as low awareness, limited education, and lack of project transparency often hinder this process.

The study found that participation during implementation is relatively active but not optimal. Observations show that the community contributes primarily through physical labor, aligned with their roles as manual laborers. The Village Government introduced the Cash-for-Work Village Program (PKTD), which provides daily wages to residents involved in construction projects based on their expertise.

Community Participation in Infrastructure Maintenance in Penda Muntei Village

Effective infrastructure maintenance requires active community participation to foster a sense of ownership and responsibility for public facilities. However, findings reveal limited involvement from residents in maintaining existing infrastructure. Observations show abandoned or poorly maintained facilities, primarily due to the community's focus on their daily work as farmers and miners.

Some residents believe that maintenance responsibilities fall solely on the Village Government, relying on village funds. This perception indicates the need for awareness campaigns about the importance of community involvement in infrastructure maintenance.

Community Participation in Infrastructure Evaluation in Penda Muntei Village

Evaluation is a critical stage in assessing the success and sustainability of infrastructure projects. However, the study found that community participation in evaluation is minimal. Many residents are indifferent, failing to provide feedback or suggestions for future improvements. This lack of engagement is attributed to low education levels and a limited understanding of evaluation processes. Although the Village Government provides platforms for feedback, such as public forums, these opportunities are not utilized effectively by the community.

Challenges Hindering Community Participation in Infrastructure Development

The study identified several barriers to community participation:

1. **Low Education Levels:** Limited education prevents residents from understanding the mechanisms and stages of infrastructure development, making it difficult to provide constructive input.
2. **Work-Related Constraints:** The majority of residents work as farmers or miners, leaving little time for active involvement in planning, implementation, maintenance, or evaluation.

Efforts to address these challenges include raising awareness, improving education, and aligning meeting schedules with the community's availability to enhance participation and ensure sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes the level of community participation in infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village, Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency. Based on the findings and a compilation of Cohen and Uphoff's theory of community participation as cited in Mulyadi (2019:25), which identifies four forms of community participation, the results are as follows:

1. Community participation in planning infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village is relatively participatory.
2. Community participation in the implementation of infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village is participatory but not yet fully optimal.
3. Community participation in the maintenance of infrastructure in Penda Muntei Village is less active or less participatory.
4. Community participation in the evaluation of infrastructure development in Penda Muntei Village remains low or less participatory.

Recommendations to Enhance Community Participation in Infrastructure Development in Penda Muntei Village, Kapuas Tengah Subdistrict, Kapuas Regency:

1. Implement a persuasive approach by the village government to raise awareness, strengthen understanding, and change attitudes or perceptions about the importance of participation in various community aspects, including infrastructure development.
2. Provide educational activities, training, or focus group discussions (FGDs) to inform the community about the significance, benefits, and mechanisms of active involvement in village development stages.
3. Create spaces and opportunities for community interaction and collaboration through social media channels or specific forums such as farmer groups, business groups, mining worker groups, or other organizations in the village.
4. Strengthen the institutional framework at the village level to act as a mediator for accommodating community aspirations and suggestions.
5. Continue involving the community in the implementation process by fostering togetherness and optimizing their roles through the Cash-for-Work Village Program (PKTD) as a means of participation and enhancing the welfare of local residents.

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