



The Importance of Participatory Communication in Development Planning Deliberations for Agritourism Village Enhancement

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Abstract: Previous research has focused on the implementation of Development Planning Deliberation (DPD) as a tool to improve development communication among stakeholders, but few have explored this issue in the context of democratization in rural economies. Success in DPD is often determined by the capacity and competence of human resources in the government sector, public service, administration, and socioeconomic empowerment. This study examines the use of Development Planning Deliberation as a participatory communication tool in four agritourism villages of Central Java Province, Indonesia. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including a questionnaire survey and a qualitative case study. The research findings show that Development Planning Deliberation fosters democratic decision-making, allowing stakeholders to express their aspirations and make decisions based on community needs and issues. Development Planning Deliberation creates a non-discriminatory culture and promotes decision-making based on mutual agreement. This study provides valuable insights into communication studies, highlighting the strategic characteristics required in the development planning process, particularly in the context of democratisation in rural economies.

Keywords: Deliberation, Development Program, Participatory communication, Rural Community, Stakeholders.

1. Introduction

The implementation of development programs often falls short of achieving its targets and sustainability due to the clash between democratization at the village level and the prevailing elitist patrimonial and structuralist culture (Bin Abubakar, 2021; Huriyah, 2019; Novianto & Wulansari, 2023). This clash results in a lack of participatory involvement from the community, which is relegated to the position of an object of development rather than an engaged civil society stakeholder (Dziubaniuk et al., 2021; Hansson & Ekenberg, 2016).

Research conducted highlights that development programs, which should be a shared responsibility among all stakeholders, do not adequately address the community's problems, needs, and potentials (Sulaiman et al., 2016). Local development is predominantly designed, planned, and executed by a technocratic, top-down government that holds authority in policy regulation and budgeting (Handoko, Sulaiman, & Akbar, 2014). Consequently, development processes lack broad participation, with minimal engagement from civil society stakeholders, small and medium enterprises, farmer groups, and women's organizations (Windiasih et al., 2023). Furthermore, the planned and implemented development fails to fully align with the community's actual problems, needs, and potentialities (Sulaiman et al., 2023). This mechanism for planning and implementing programs is referred to as the Development Planning Deliberation (DPD).

Some development communication operates in a top-down manner, wherein the government designs and executes the development programs (Kahane et al., 2020). In contrast, bottom-up communication involves downstream aspirations or suggestions from participatory civil society groups (Rangarajan et al., 2013). Communication studies in development remain an intriguing focus, particularly regarding the involvement of stakeholders engaged in the development process (Sisto et al., 2018).

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The significance and strategic position of development communication lie in its role within the process of planned economic and social changes, crucial in determining social welfare through democratization and regional autonomy via the DPD operating from the village, subdistrict, regency, and province up to the national level (Baú, 2016; Kaid & Bacha, 2008). Serving as a System of National Development Planning, DPD acts as a platform for actors involved in both national and regional development planning (Daudigeos et al., 2020). Development planning is organized in a systematic, directed, integrated, thorough, and responsive manner to support coordination among development actors, ensuring their involvement and consistency throughout the planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring stages of development (Lisaria et al., 2023; Putri et al., 2023), aimed at optimizing community participation.

The DPD is carried out progressively every year, starting at the village level in January, moving to the subdistrict in February, then the regency in March, and finally the province and national levels in April. This progression helps determine forthcoming development programs for the following year(s). The outcome of DPD is an annual development plan spanning from the village to national levels, implemented by involved stakeholders based on government-established five-year development plans.

Stakeholders are the primary actors determining the planning and execution of development initiatives (Bell et al., 2012). Sustainable development aims to bring about progressive socio-economic changes, foster further development, and enhance community welfare (Lopolito et al., 2015;). Acting as representatives in the DPD, stakeholders maintain communication to encapsulate and advocate for community aspirations. They collectively socialize, implement, monitor, and evaluate development programs (Winowatan & Pricilia Anneke, 2023).

The Development Planning Deliberation (DPD) has not been optimal in enhancing community welfare due to significant influence from local elites, leading to restricted public access to information and limited socialization. Consequently, the community has a poor understanding of the significance of DPD in shaping developmental trajectories (Arifin & Kurniadi, 2024; Mustanir, Yusuf, & Sellang, 2022). This results in limited community support and low engagement in the development process.

As participants in the DPD, stakeholders can enhance community access to information by employing information and communication technology (Yulianto et al., 2020). This approach fosters participatory, transparent, and accountable governance (Weningsih et al., 2022). Infrastructure development, although receiving considerable attention and funding, needs to align with program development. This alignment should optimize local resources, encompassing human, social, economic, cultural, and environmental aspects (Sulaiman et al., 2023). Rural areas often uphold patrimonial cultures that might hinder openness to aspirations, dominated by socioeconomic structures and avoidance of potential conflicts arising from disagreements (Sriyanto, 2014).

Well-planned development involving all parties, including community stakeholders as development subjects, is crucial in achieving democratization through participatory communication strategies (Dendler, 2022). The study employed mixed methods research through a sequential explanatory strategy, with results further expounded through a qualitative case study. The hypothesis posits that stakeholder characteristics, aspirations, and communication media influence the participatory communication process within the Development Planning Deliberation (DPD). Hence, the research aims to address the following questions: (1) How do stakeholder characteristics influence the DPD? (2) What is the impact of stakeholder aspirations in the DPD? and (3) How does communication media influence the DPD? Consequently, this study seeks to analyze participatory communication within the Development Planning Consultation (DPD) as a catalyst for rural economic democratization.

2. Literature Review

Development programs that are planned and implemented are less than optimal in achieving targets and unsustainable because democratization at the village level still clashes with the elitist patrimonial and structuralist culture, resulting in a lack of participatory involvement from the community as a civil society stakeholder, and is still positioned as an object of development.

Additionally, the development program, which should be the element and mutual responsibility of all stakeholders, is not parallel to the problems, needs, and potentials of the community (Ahmad et al., 2023). It is because local development is designed, planned, and implemented by the technocratic, top-down government that holds the authority in policy regulation and budgeting.

As a result, the development is less participatory with low engagement from stakeholders of civil society, small and medium enterprises, farmer groups, and women's organizations. Further, the planned and implemented development is not completely in line with the problems, needs, and potentials of the local community (Wolor et al., 2022). Meanwhile, a mechanism for planning and implementing programs is called the Development Planning Deliberation (DPD).

The development planning is arranged in systematic, directed, integrated, thorough, and responsive manners toward the changes to support coordination between development actors, and ensure involvement and consistency throughout the processes of planning, budgeting, implementing, and monitoring development to optimize community participation.

DPD is carried out gradually every year, from village level in January, a subdistrict in February, regency in March, and province and national in April, in order to determine the forthcoming development program in the following year(s) (Wolor et al., 2022). The result of DPD is an annual development planning from the village through national levels that will be carried out by the involved stakeholders based on five-year development plans established by the government.

The analysis of the Development Planning Deliberation (DPD) utilizes the grand theory approach derived from the paradigms of transactional communication and convergence communication (Littlejohn & Karen, 2009). It focuses on the communication process between participating actors as communicators to exchange information, conduct transactions, create meaning, and achieve mutual understanding in order to reach agreements (Miller-Day & Jackson, 2012). Communication in this context is viewed as a cycle of constructing and interpreting exchanged information among two or more individuals toward convergence (Littlejohn & Karen, 2009; Miller-Day & Jackson, 2012).

Furthermore, the theory of development communication has been applied through the lens of participatory development communication. This approach promotes an egalitarian, emancipatory dialogue as a forum for involved actors to exchange experiences and ideas, potentially altering their knowledge and perspectives (Alakwe & Okpara, 2022). Throughout the development process, all parties, especially the government and the community, engage in reciprocal exchanges of messages or aspirations from the development planning stage through implementation and evaluation (Ilu & Olawale, 2014; Odoom, 2020; Wilkins, 2014). As a form of participatory communication, Development Planning Deliberation (DPD) involves all stakeholders/development actors, such as the government, civil society, and private sectors, in a series of interactions, lobbying, negotiation, or transactions to achieve mutual understanding and agreement regarding development planning formulated based on mutual problems, interests, and needs (Jain et al., 2022; Lowenstein, 2020; Palacios, 2016; Tian et al., 2023; Treisman et al., 2016; Vicary & Bailey, 2018; Zhao & Derudder, 2018).

Moreover, participatory communication, as a form of development communication, fosters an open, egalitarian, aspirational, and accommodating dialogue from grassroots communities to design, agree upon, and propose bottom-up planning and development implementation (Alakwe & Okpara, 2022). It aims to balance, control, and complement the technocratic, top-down development communication by the government, which holds authority over policies, budgeting, planning, and program implementation (Alakwe & Okpara, 2022; Dendler, 2022; Lemke, 2016; Madsen, 2022; Steeves & Kwami, 2019; Sulaiman & Ahmadi, 2020; Suzina, 2020).

Stakeholders are significantly strategic individuals or actors in development, determining the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development programs (Chai et al., 2018). They are individuals or groups directly or indirectly influencing the process, determination, and implementation of policies (Pellizzoni, 2020). Stakeholders include the government, enterprises, civil society, mass media, interest groups, and opinion leaders (Chai et al., 2018; Eweje et al., 2021; Pellizzoni, 2020; Ramoglou et al., 2023; Usadolo & Caldwell, 2016; Wojewnik-Filipkowska et al., 2021).

Previous findings highlight issues and challenges in DPD implementation. Firstly, DPD often remains a procedural formality dominated by government stakeholders, leading to technocratic and non-participatory development programs that overlook community aspirations (Buhaerah et al., 2017). Secondly, DPD lacks open access to crucial data, including community development priorities and budgets (Chimhowu et al., 2019). Thirdly, although women participate in DPD conferences, they may not feel empowered to voice their opinions and fight for their interests (Damayanti & Syarifuddin, 2020). Fourthly, infrastructure development emerges as the top priority with the most allocated funding, overshadowing programs for social and economic empowerment (Fadli, 2020). Fifthly, DPD outcomes are not openly shared via media, accessible only to the government and participating communities (Nurdin & Alwi, 2019). Lastly, stakeholders often fall short in optimally evaluating development programs, particularly in providing suggestions and improvements (Buhaerah et al., 2017; Chimhowu et al., 2019; Damayanti & Syarifuddin, 2020; Fadli, 2020; Nurdin & Alwi, 2019; Nursalim et al., 2021; Shuling & Jin, 2022).

3. Research Method

The research was conducted using relevant mixed methods through a sequential explanatory strategy, as outlined in (Ho et al., 2021; Leavy, 2017). Initially, quantitative descriptive analysis was primarily applied, followed by a qualitative case study to delve deeper into the issues.

In the first stage, a preliminary study was undertaken to collect data through observations, interviews, and documentation. Subsequently, the collected data were processed to organize, develop, and distribute the questionnaire. The research was conducted in four agritourism villages located in the Central Java Province of Indonesia: Pandansari Village in Paguyangan District of Brebes Regency, Tambi Village in Kejajar District of Wonosobo Regency, Keteleng Village in Blado District of Batang Regency, and Cangkring Village in Sadang District of Kebumen Regency.

In the second stage, a quantitative approach was employed using quota sampling to select samples. Specifically, 30 stakeholders or DPD participants were chosen from each of the four selected agritourism villages mentioned above, totaling 120 participants overall. For the qualitative study, purposive sampling was used to select informants, including stakeholders from the government (Head of the village, village apparatus, and staff of the Regional Development Planning Agency) and civil society (head of neighborhood associations, community associations, religious leaders, business groups, civil organizations, youth leaders, educational institutions, and family welfare empowerment movements).

Descriptive statistical analysis was performed by recalculating and determining the mean value of the research object based on the assessed variables. This analytical strategy was akin to approaches used by Lê and Schmid (2019) and Lester et al. (2022), employing the following formula:

$$RK = \frac{(4 - 1)}{4} = 0.75$$

Note:

RK = Range of criteria

m = The largest scale

n = The smallest scale

K = Scale size

Table 1: The average score of the variables

Rating Index	Behavior Criteria
1.00 - 1.75	Low
1.76 - 2.50	Less
2.51 - 3.25	High
3.26 - 4.00	Very high

Source: By the author

The third stage involved qualitative analysis, utilizing interviews, observations, and documentation to delve deeper into the investigation's results. This stage followed several steps as outlined below: (1) Organize explanations regarding complexity, details, and contextual data. (2) Identify existing categories and associated data. (3) Observe the unique characteristics of each case and conduct cross-case analysis, following the qualitative data analysis traditions of Bishop and Kuula-Luum (2017), Fernández-Ardévol (2016), Kern & Mustasilta (2023), and Yeomans, Daba-Buzoianu, & Ivan (2016).

4. Results and Discussion

The research focused on four agritourism villages in Central Java Province, Indonesia: Pandansari Village in Paguyangan District of Brebes Regency, Tambi Village in Kejajar District of Wonosobo Regency, Keteleng Village in Blado District of Batang Regency, and Cangkring Village in Sadang District of Kebumen Regency. According to the 2022 Statistics Bureau report, these villages are situated at an average elevation of 300 to 1000 meters above sea level.

These agritourism villages possess significant socio-economic potential, including nature tourism, offering fresh and picturesque scenery. They cultivate tea, coffee, and a variety of horticultural products like organic vegetables and fruits, alongside culinary plantations characteristic of mountainous regions. These villages are popular destinations for visitors seeking respite from urban density and air pollution, engaging in camping, nature-related activities, and outbound adventures.

Consequently, the development of these agritourism villages holds strategic importance as a socio-economic asset for the community. It necessitates support from local stakeholders to devise and execute development programs. Essential aspects for achieving democratization in rural areas within the Development Planning Deliberation (DPD) involve a participatory communication approach. This approach engages all stakeholders, particularly the community as a civil society, establishing them as pivotal figures in the development process, starting from planning, implementation, and evaluation. These aspects encompass stakeholder characteristics, mandated aspirations, and the use of participatory communication media, aiming for the collective welfare of the community.

4.1 The Characteristics of DPD Stakeholders

The stakeholders participating in this study were the DPD participants in four agritourism villages in Central Java Province of Indonesia, namely Pandansari Village, Paguyangan District of Brebes Regency, Tambi Village in Kejajar District of Wonosobo Regency, Keteleng Village in Blado District of Batang Regency, and Cangkring Village in Sadang District of Kebumen Regency.

The stakeholders participating in the DPD were 30 people from each location; thus, a total of 120 people consisted of 77 men (64%) and 43 women (33%). The characteristics of the respondents, based on their social status, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Social Status of the Stakeholders

Social status	Quantity		Total	Percentage
	Men	Women		
Farmers	31	17	48	40%
Entrepreneur	21	11	32	27%
Civil servants	17	11	28	23%
Private employees	8	4	12	10%
Total	77	43	120	100%

Source: By the author

Table 2 illustrates the typical characteristics of social status in rural areas, with percentages consisting of 40% (48) farmers, 32 (27%) entrepreneurs, 28 (23%) civil servants, and 12 (10%) private employees. Then, the representation of women is still low compared to the representation of men.

Based on the results of interviews with these informants, particularly the head of the village, the apparatus of the village, subdistrict, and regency, as well as the facilitators, community leaders, and women activists, we concluded that the lack of women's participation in the development communication was attributed to multiple factors. To begin with, male activists outnumbered their female counterparts. Many women were discouraged from voicing and fighting for their cause.

Third, women's representation was limited to family welfare empowerment. Lastly, women were more actively engaged in domestic affairs, such as taking care of their family and children, farming, trading, and farming in rice fields or agricultural land. To increase women's representation as one stakeholder in village DPD, some efforts may include the initiatives of the village government and the head of the neighborhood association to invite and involve more women. In turn, women representatives in the government can more actively engage other women's communities to partake in village DPD.

In fact, women's representation is a vital part of the process of development planning and implementation, particularly to advocate for women's aspirations and the necessities of socio-economic empowerment for families and children, and women themselves. Women's involvement is a form of emancipation, gender equality, and equal human rights to participate in community development as an embodiment of equal, non-discriminative, participatory communication.

As a form of participatory communication, DPD must uphold gender equality by designing social and gender policies to promote social justice and equal rights for all citizens (Margareta & Salahudin, 2021). Also, the development must promote women's empowerment to improve product knowledge and skills, disseminate information about awareness of equal rights and obligations in the development, abolishment of discrimination, and transform the hegemonic patriarchal culture.

This is particularly important because women in rural areas are not given sufficient opportunities to participate in planning and implementing development; they have low knowledge and skills in economic ventures, as well as poor literacy and limited access to information technology media (Triyono & Nuariyani, 2019). In addition, women in rural areas still upheld a permissive culture, meaning they felt unworthy of and discouraged from expressing their opinions and aspirations, tended to be submissive, and believed that having different opinions was taboo.

These women were occupied with domestic affairs like cleaning, grocery shopping, cooking meals for the family, and taking care of their husbands and children (Mínguez, 2012). Socio-economic independence for women was limited to productive skills and work, and they could not actively partake in community institutions (Torri & Martinez, 2014). Therefore, they need more opportunities and socio-economic empowerment so that they can participate and advocate for their aspirations for personal needs, happiness, achievement, and appreciation to partake in socio-economic institutions and development.

The current stakeholders participating in village DPD were dominated by farmers, farm laborers, and traders (Gundersen & Boyer, 2020). They were the active committees or leaders of organizations in rural communities, while the private employees or civil servants were occupied with their jobs at their respective institutions. Regardless of their profession, the stakeholders must own a high capital of care and responsibility for social community services and contribute their time, energy, thoughts, and business capital to activities in the community.

In other words, community conferences must engage the most motivated citizens who are willing to participate instead of those who have a particular social and economic status, like income level and educational background (Kadlec & Friedman, 2020). However, the spirit of deliberation must also give equal opportunities to everyone and abolish inequality in gender, social and economic status, social class, and culture (Rossini et al., 2021).

The characteristics of stakeholders as the actors of participatory communication who partake in village DPD were identified by age, education, organization experience, and past involvement in village and subdistrict DPD (see Table 3).

Table 3: Average scores of stakeholders' characteristics.

Number	Respondent Characteristics	Average Score			
		Pandansari Village	Four Agritourism Villages Tambi Village	Keteleng Village	Cangkring Village
1	Age	2.85	2.78	3.23	2.85
2	Formal Education	2.02	1.98	2.07	2.15
3	Organization Experiences	4.02	2.39	3.53	3.62
4	Past Experiences in DPD	3.05	2.82	3.02	2.74
	Average Score	2.99	2.49	2.96	2.84

Source: Data Processing from Researchers 2023-2024

Table 3 illustrates the average age of stakeholders in Pandansari Village (2,85), Tambi Village (2,78), Keteleng Village (3,23), and Cangkring Village (2,85) based on the ranking index and behavioral criteria in Table 1 was 50-55 years, relatively old but still productive. Then, according to the Regional Planning Agency and Statistics Bureau, the productive age ranges from 18 to 55, so 56+ is no longer productive.

The younger generation could have more opportunities to partake in participatory communication during the process and implementation of DPD outcomes at the regional level. In our studies, only 15% or 18 of all young men (18-45 years old) in four villages were involved. It shows that village or subdistrict government should involve and upskill more young local people as the next cadres of development, so that they gain more awareness and develop responsibilities for their local area in an attempt to achieve sustainable development.

Stakeholders involved in DPD were mostly from non-productive ages than the younger ones because of several reasons. First, the older people were no longer employed in the formal sector, so they had more time and opportunities to actively participate in the social institutions in the community. Similarly, farmers, traders, and entrepreneurs in DPD were mostly the older population of the village. Second, the younger generation was occupied with formal activities, such as studying at universities in other cities or partaking in urbanization to work in formal sectors with fixed office hours; therefore, they no longer lived in the village.

Productive age is an important characteristic for stakeholders of participatory communication because they typically find it easy to accept changes, ideas, innovations, and cosmopolitanism, which in turn improve their productivity (Aw et al., 2020). The younger generation should be given the space to hone their creativity and pour out new ideas with empowerment and assistance from their seniors and the local government. Therefore, the younger generation gained more motivation, inspiration, and competency to contribute to the planning and implementation of the local development program. In this way, the younger generation can produce solutions to overcome unemployment and poverty by opening creative job opportunities and productive and innovative employment supported by the DPD development program.

Additionally, the younger generation could collaborate with their senior counterpart to complement each other and reinforce partnerships (Ismaya et al., 2023; Sugito et al., 2019). It has been reported that older people can pay more attention to the younger ones through a communication forum to enable a persuasive, humanistic, and dialogic approach to encourage younger people to be more productive, creative, and innovative to build mutual commitment (Aw et al., 2020; Ismaya et al., 2023; Sugito et al., 2019; Sulaiman et al., 2019). Regarding formal education background, this research revealed that stakeholders had a low level of education in Pandansari Village (2,02), Tambi Village (1,98), Keteleng Village (2,07), and Cangkring Village (2,15). Most of them graduated from either middle school or high school level.

Low levels of education and profession as a farmer have been the main cause of under-comprehensive and less participatory plans for development programs (Sugito et al., 2019), which should pay more attention to other aspects like education, economy, health empowerment, gender mainstreaming towards women, and expansion of economic entrepreneurship for young people. Considering the current condition that DPD was dominated by the village and the subdistrict government controlled the policy and funding (Sulaiman et al., 2019), DPD needs to have these government and older citizens carry out more participatory communication and provide more opportunities for women and the younger generation in planning and implementing development programs of DPD.

Stakeholders would harness more powerful strategies only when they built a partnership with other parties in multiple sectors; therefore, they can formulate strategic principles and management that is interconnected, mutually trusting, sharing knowledge and information, and engage in the design and decision-making process as a form of collaborative interests to create more optimum values for the organization (Barney & Harrison, 2020;

Freeman et al., 2020; Langrafe et al., 2020). Unfortunately, the low education level was in contrast with the high level of experience in the organization and DPD. The stakeholders showed high experience (5+ years) in a community organization or DPD in three villages, namely Pandansari Village (4,02), Keteleng Village (3,53), and Cangkring Village (3,62), except for Tambi Village (2,39), who was under-experienced in organizations (1-2 years). The average score of experiences in village DPD was in the category of experienced (3-5 years), like in Pandansari Village (3,05), Tambi Village (2,82), Keteleng Village (3.02), dan Cangkring Village (2.74).

In this way, the highly experienced stakeholders in the implementation of village DPD were valuable capital in formulating and determining the development program and democratization through participatory communication (Bridoux & Vishwanathan, 2020). Stakeholders who had more experience could better recognize, understand, and evaluate the process and outcomes of DPD and eventually become the facilitators, instructors, and confidantes for younger stakeholders and women stakeholders to make them an integral part of implementing participatory communication at the local level. Stakeholders have motivations, play important roles, and bear moral responsibility in running their effective strategy of participatory communication to improve social and economic competitiveness to provide sustainable benefits for organizations and the public (Bridoux & Vishwanathan, 2020; Crane, 2020; Krishnan & Ahmad, 2019; Wood et al., 2021). Based on the results and analysis of stakeholders' age, social status, organization experience, and motivation to participate in DPD, a design model could be built to feature the characteristics of stakeholders who could support the participatory communication by designing and implementing the development program in DPD (see Figure 1).

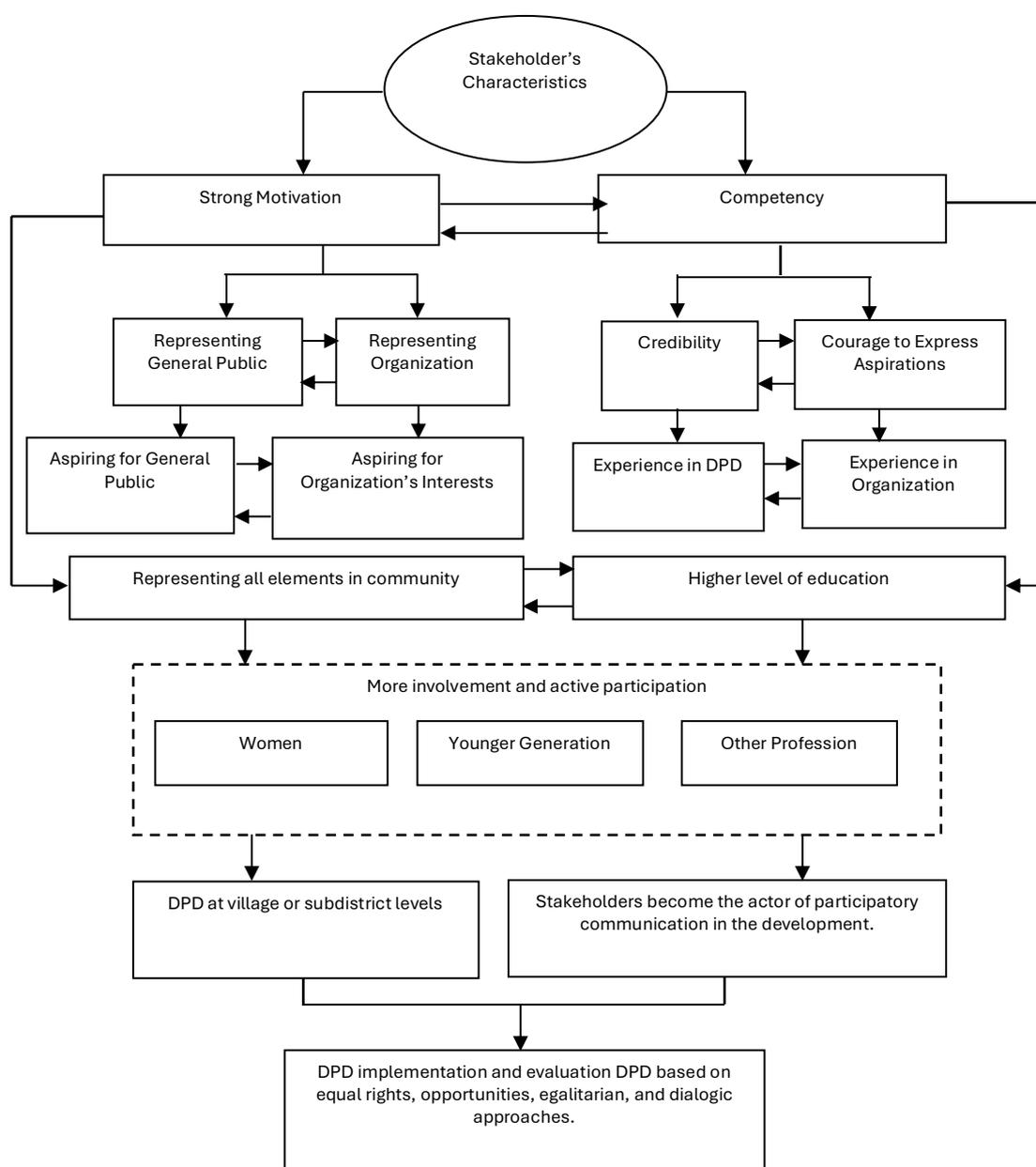


Figure 1: Characteristics of Stakeholders as the Actors of Development Planning Deliberation

4.2 Aspirations of Stakeholders

Stakeholder participation in DPD activities at a local level can be analyzed from indicators of important messages being aspired, either recommendations or rejections of opinions and decisions. The other indicator is the perception towards messages produced by the aspirations proposed in DPD at the local level (see Table 4).

Table 4: Average scores of stakeholders' aspirations.

Number of aspiration messages	Average scores			
	Pandansari Village	Tambi Village	Keteleng Village	Cangkring Village
1 Aspiration message expressed in DPD	3.20	3.12	3.38	3.15
2 Conformity of message outcomes of DPD	3.14	3.05	3.12	3.17
Average score	3.17	3.09	3.25	3.16

Source: Data Processing from Researchers 2023-2024.

Stakeholder participation in DPD activities at a local level can be analyzed through indicators focusing on important messages aspired to, including recommendations or rejections of opinions and decisions. Another indicator is the perception towards messages produced by the aspirations proposed in DPD at the local level (refer to Table 4). Table 4 shows the average score of the number of aspiration messages delivered by the DPD stakeholders across all four research locations: Pandansari Village (3.20), Tambi Village (3.12), Keteleng Village (3.38), and Cangkring Village (3.15). These scores, based on the ranking index and behavioral criteria in Table 1, categorize the messages as important. Stakeholder messages considered important include community economic empowerment programs like counseling and training on institutional management, financial administration of small business groups, cultivation of horticultural crops in home yards and gardens, and post-harvest processing to make banana, cassava, and yam chips.

Furthermore, infrastructure programs such as the construction of new and improved irrigation for rice fields and agricultural fields, community-integrated health service posts, and study groups for children were emphasized. Similar messages were obtained from DPD in Pandansari Village (3.14), Tambi Village (3.05), Keteleng Village (3.12), and Cangkring Village (3.17). The aspired and produced messages at local DPD were aligned, indicating concordance between the messages conveyed by stakeholders and the priority programs resulting from community deliberations at neighborhood and hamlet levels.

Stakeholders advocating for community aspirations in the DPD delivered several democratic messages to convey their participatory communication (Dahan et al., 2013). Firstly, the aspired messages were derived from the community based on previous recommendations for development programs that were not implemented and contained priorities for urgent development programs. Secondly, the aspired messages were aligned with previous DPD outcomes and budget allocations. Lastly, stakeholders in the DPD refused to conform to aspirations that contradicted community needs or only benefited specific groups.

Sustainable development relies on reinforced partnerships between stakeholders, including government, corporates, and civil society (Muthuri et al., 2012). Participatory communication among stakeholders is a strategy to align aspirations and agreements in the development program based on the interests, needs, problems, and resources of the local community (Dahan et al., 2013; Muthuri et al., 2012; Palmer, 2015; Valente, 2012). Stakeholders, as participants and actors of participatory communication in DPD at the local level, have shown that (1) recommendations for development programs in DPD were generally executable; (2) unimplemented programs were considered priorities for the following year's development; (3) in case of unsuitable DPD outcomes or rejected proposed development programs, further forums could engage the Development Planning Agency or initiate dialogues between stakeholders and the local government.

Dynamic participatory communication occurred in local DPD during group discussions about development, where stakeholders enthusiastically discussed infrastructure and physical development, taking most of the conference time (Palmer, 2015). In contrast, discussions about economic, social, cultural, and government topics were shorter and engaged fewer participants. Infrastructure topics included the construction and repair of roads, bridges, drainage, and village or subdistrict borders' gates (Valente, 2012). Infrastructure discussions received the most attention and interest, along with the highest budget allocation, due to two main reasons. First, numerous funding sources were available, including budgetary assistance from central, provincial, and regency levels for village funding, ranging from 3.5 to 5.5 billion IDR per year. Secondly, infrastructure development presented clearer funding requirements and implementation processes.

However, other sectors were overshadowed and involved more ceremonial activities than beneficial community empowerment for economic activities (Kolk & Lenfant, 2012). Government stakeholders have the authority over public policies and budgets to support development planning and implementation (Pardo et al.,

2012). Thus, they need to focus on socio-economic sectors to create more job opportunities, including independent entrepreneurship, resource management, and distribution of community resource products, thus accelerating economic welfare (Kolk & Lenfant, 2012; Pardo et al., 2012; van der Does & Bos, 2021).

While infrastructure development is crucial, non-physical development, particularly socio-economic empowerment, should also receive attention to realize the potential resources for improving living standards and community welfare (Frediani et al., 2014). Local human and resource-centered development features characteristics like openness, inclusivity, and a focus on human development (Fukuda-Parr et al., 2014). It allows individuals to create, access, and utilize various information and knowledge, enabling the community and government to develop potential resources sustainably for improving community welfare (Frediani et al., 2014; Fukuda-Parr et al., 2014; Palmer, 2015). Stakeholders participating in DPD had and proposed their aspirations based on community problems, needs, and potentials, influencing, transforming, or embodying the development program. The stakeholders' struggle to represent their aspirations aligns with participatory communication that is open, dialogic, and egalitarian (refer to Figure 2).

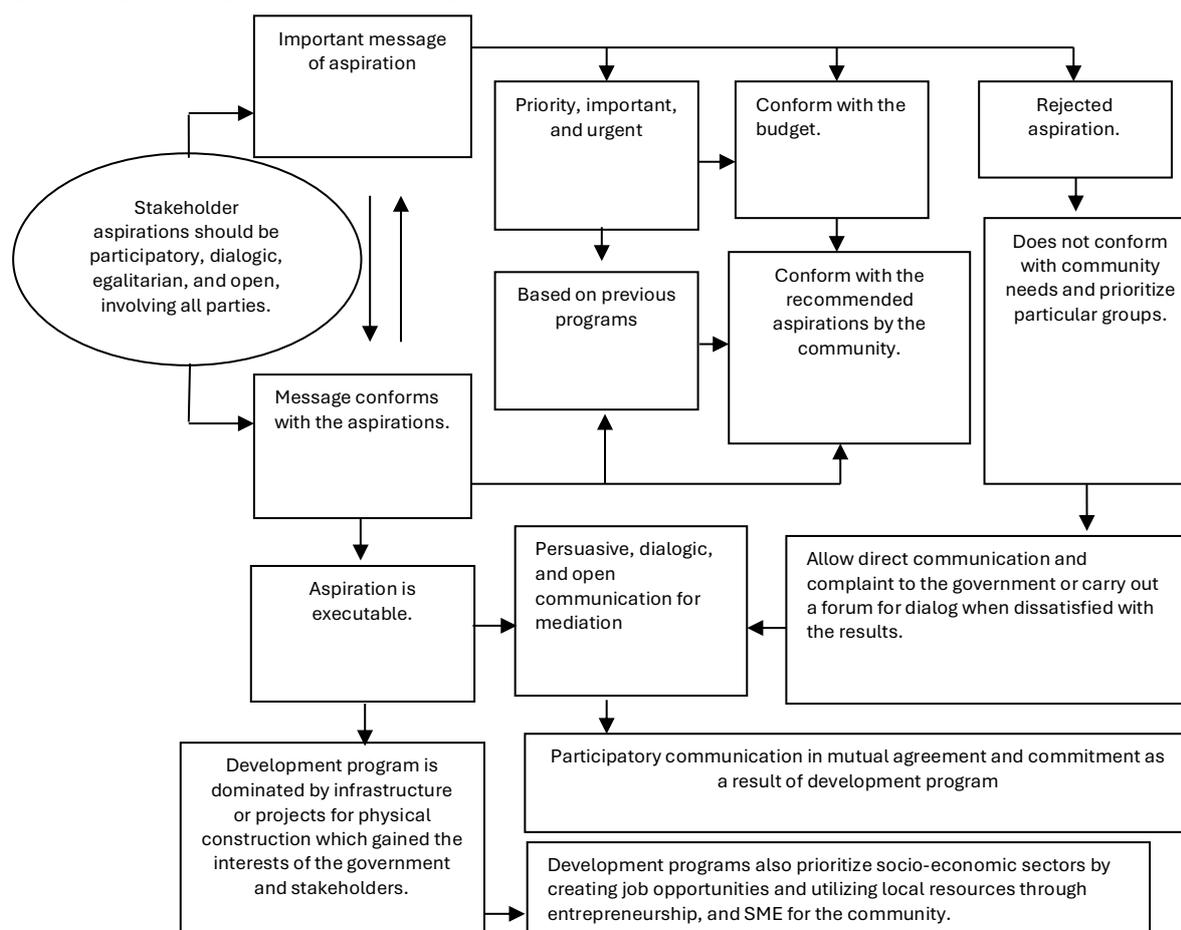


Figure 2: Stakeholders' aspiration for the implementation of participatory communication in DPD.

4.3 Stakeholders' Access to Communication Media

In the process of DPD at the local level, stakeholders utilized various information media, as demonstrated by the indicator measuring the importance of easy access to information media and the intensity of their usage for the process and implementation of DPD outcomes, illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Average Scores based on access to communication media.

No	Information media	Average Scores Four Agritourism Villages			
		Pandansari Village	Tambi Village	Keteleng Village	Cangkring Village
1	The importance of easily accessible information media	3.02	2.97	2.95	2.94
2	Intensity of accessing information media	1.95	1.76	2.02	2.15
	Average	2.49	2.34	2.49	2.55

Source: Data Processing from Researchers 2023-2024

The table reveals that stakeholders participating in the DPD across four research locations—Pandansari Village (3.02), Tambi Village (2.97), Keteleng Village (2.95), and Cangkring Village (2.94)—considered access to information media important based on the ranking index and behavioural criteria in Table 1. Access to information media involved formal invitations from the village government, announcements on billboards and banners in public places, audio announcements on the radio, news coverage in local newspapers, and the local government's website.

The local government's role is crucial in disseminating information and ensuring comprehensive socialization of all pertinent information about DPD implementation, planning, and agreed-upon development program outcomes to the community (Flyverbom et al., 2019). Media owned by the local government, such as the government website, announcement boards, social media, and mass media in collaboration with media editors, can aid in this dissemination (Etter et al., 2018; Flyverbom et al., 2019; Roengtam et al., 2017; van den Berg & Verhoeven, 2017).

However, the intensity of stakeholders accessing information regarding the agenda and outcomes of DPD through communication media was low across all areas: Pandansari Village (1.95), Tambi Village (1.86), Keteleng Village (2.02), and Cangkring Village (2.15). The mentioned media included formal invitation letters, billboards, banners, newspapers, notice boards in government offices, and government websites. Despite acknowledging the importance of highly accessible information media for DPD planning and outcomes, stakeholders did not frequently access this information (Gustavsson, Hallin & Dobers, 2024). This lack of access occurred because the media mentioned above were not optimally utilized by the local government to disseminate information about the DPD process and outcomes (Gudowsky & Bechtold, 2020).

The community's social and economic status often determines an individual's ownership and affordability of using communication media as their information source (Leighter et al., 2020). Additionally, the form of communication media correlates with communication effectiveness (Linke & Zerfass, 2013). More specifically, the various forms of communication media owned and used by the community result in increased information quantity and satisfaction levels derived from activities (Ahlqvist et al., 2010; Gudowsky & Bechtold, 2020; Leighter et al., 2020; Linke & Zerfass, 2013; Mehra & Nickerson, 2019).

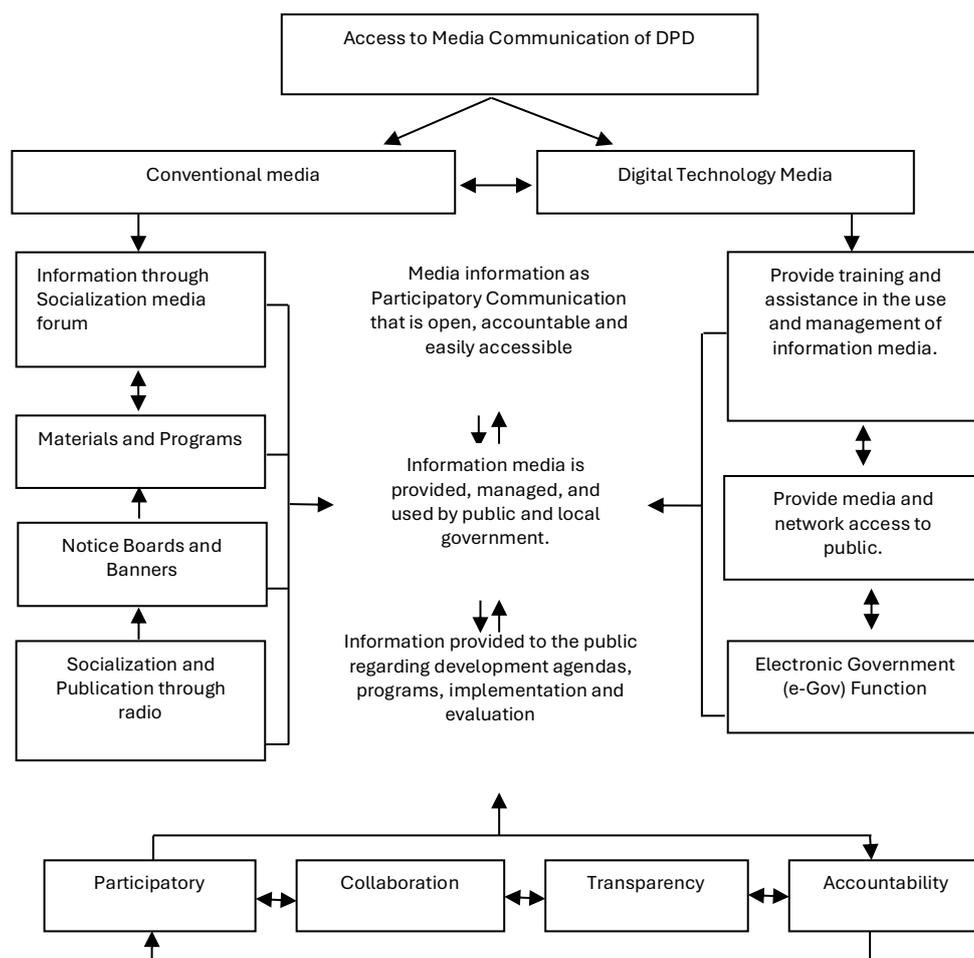


Figure 3: Model of Access to Communication Media of DPD

Stakeholders can utilize conventional information media that are still relevant to the local community, such as notice boards, newspapers, banners, leaflets, and local radio, to disseminate information about the DPD process and outcomes as a form of participatory communication (Huda & Yunas, 2016). However, in this digital

age, government stakeholders have incorporated digital media by creating websites as portals for media information and community aspirations (Jansson & Erlingsson, 2014). These online platforms are available, but rural communities have not maximized their use. Efforts have also begun to adopt technology in information dissemination through village websites, although this requires the community to possess media literacy.

Local governments should synchronize their programs with current challenges and globalization pressures by adopting electronic government strategies or e-Gov. This strategy facilitates communication and partnerships between central, regional, and local governments (G to G). To bolster this, the government can provide public access to data and information (G to P). The capability to provide such services through e-Gov is necessary to embody accountable, participatory, and transparent development characteristics of good governance (Huda & Yunas, 2016; Jansson & Erlingsson, 2014; Rahman, 2015; Sanmukhiya, 2019). As part of participatory communication development, DPD must promote vital elements like empowerment, transparency, accountability, sustainability, participation, efficiency, and effectiveness. Based on the analysis, this study proposes a model for the availability and openness of information access in DPD, as illustrated in Figure 3.

5. Conclusions

Key aspects determining democratization in DPD with a participatory communication approach include stakeholder characteristics, aspirations aligning with community needs, and participatory communication media. Stakeholders serve as development representatives embodying various socio-economic facets in the community, possessing characteristics, organizational experience, and educational status qualifying them for participation in the DPD. Providing more opportunities and empowerment to women and the younger generation, as successors of development, is crucial for fostering a democratic culture in formulating, decision-making, and implementing village development.

Stakeholder aspirations in village DPD predominantly influence infrastructure development rather than the economic, health, and education sectors. Aspirations should also enhance the capacity and competence of human resources, such as improving government service, administration, and socio-economic empowerment, including community art and culture. In the economic sector, development programs focus on empowering entrepreneurs, small to medium enterprises, cultivated farming groups, plantations, and fisheries.

Stakeholders acknowledge the importance of information media in the DPD process and outcomes to realize an open democracy. This involves using participatory and accountable media for communication, including notice boards, official letters, leaflets about development programs, billboards, local newspapers, and radio. Although digital media like websites are available for disseminating DPD information, they have not been extensively accessed by stakeholders involved in the DPD.

Optimizing conventional media, such as using notice boards in government offices and leveraging local media like radio or newspapers, can enhance community engagement in participatory communication and democratic culture. DPD acts as a platform for participatory communication, transforming traditional practices into a democratic culture characterized by aspirations, dialogue, mutual respect, egalitarianism, openness, and decision-making involving all stakeholders as community representatives.

Participatory communication refers to a democratic development communication form characterized by bottom-up approaches, inclusivity, dialogue, and egalitarianism, resulting in agreements and mutual understanding based on the resources, needs, and interests of all parties.

This research's novelty lies in treating participatory communication as a variant of the grand theory of development communication, seldom explored or utilized as an analytical indicator. The results of participatory communication depend on stakeholder characteristics, necessitating adequate education and experience, with a focus on providing more opportunities for the younger generation and women. Stakeholder aspirations must align with local needs, problems, and potential. Media information should be utilized for socialization, transparency, and accountability to the public.

Academic research implications for further studies could include examining development program strategies using SWOT analysis, followed by DPD implementation and evaluation with regression tests. Practically, the research offers recommendations for policymaking processes, especially in developing programs that encourage active participation, address problems, and consider the potential of civil society stakeholders.

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Authors 4 and 5, collecting data, drafting, formatting, and analysing, and authors 6 and 7, drafting, reviewers responding, and methodology.

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