

APPLICATION OF PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION BY WOMEN LEADERS IN PROTECTING FORESTS IN EAST SUMBA (CASE STUDY OF THE SUMBA SAVANNA COMMUNITY IN DEMONSTRATION)

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Abstract. Sumba's forests provide water, food security, indigenous and cultural roots, habitat for endemic flora and fauna, and a setting for Marapu ritual beliefs. In 2017, a sugar company suddenly seized customary community land, one of which was the land of the Praing Umalulu indigenous people in Umalulu District, East Sumba Regency, NTT. The large role of forests in the lives of indigenous peoples in East Sumba made a woman lead a women's solidarity movement and establish the Sabana Sumba community to fight the sugar company. This resistance action could not be separated from the communication built by its organizer, Rambu Dai Mami. The purpose of this study was to find out how the application of participatory communication by women leaders in protecting forests in East Sumba through case studies in the Sabana Sumba community in demonstrations. The focus of this research uses a qualitative descriptive approach and is analyzed on the application of four participatory communication indicators: heteroglossia, dialogical, polyphony, and carnival. The techniques used for data are interviews and documentation. Data analysis used Miles and Huberman's interactive model for data analysis. The results of the research are the application of participatory communication by women leaders in protecting forests in East Sumba through case studies in the Sabana Sumba community in demonstrations that have been carried out and have succeeded in getting indigenous people to move to take demonstrations against sugar companies. The heteroglossia indicator shows socialization through discussions regarding the impacts of land and environmental changes from several angles, such as economic, social, and cultural factors that complement each other there. Dialogical indicators show success in making indigenous women and the leaders of the 33 kabihu in Praing Umalulu aware and moving against them with demonstrations. The polyphony indicator shows that there are no differences of opinion, but there have been attempts at weakening from the sugar factory companies, but this has actually made the indigenous peoples stronger and more solid. Carnival indicators show that when Sabana Sumba leaders socialize, they create a welcoming environment with humor, there are snacks and drinks such as coffee or tea, and there are also betel nuts to eat together both during socialization and during demonstrations that are obtained independently from the community.

Keywords: communication; women; Sumba

I. INTRODUCTION

Forests play a crucial role in the lives of those who live close to them. According to Law Number 41 of 1999, "a forest is an ecosystem unit in the form of a stretch of land containing biological natural resources that cannot be separated from one another and are dominated by trees in their natural environment." Humans are also an essential part of existence in the forests. One of the important things is some of the oxygen we breathe because of the well-maintained forest. In Indonesia, forests play a significant role in attempts to safeguard indigenous peoples, culture, food and clothing sources, tourism, healthcare, research and educational places, and traditional wisdom. It can be said that forests are part of the identity of the Indonesian nation. Quoting detik.com [7] "Indonesia is a country with the third-largest tropical rainforest in the world and, of course, in the entire Asian region. Indonesia's rain forests are scattered in the regions of Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua, to be precise, on the large islands of Indonesia. According to FSC Indonesia, the diversity of flora and fauna in Indonesia's rain forests is higher than that of South America and Africa. However, it is rarely

heard of and known to many people, even in Indonesia itself, that Sumba also has forests that are highly guarded and vital for its people. Forests on Sumba are a source of water, food security, traditional and cultural roots, and a place for the ritual beliefs of Marapu adherents. When you hear the word Sumba, the first thing that comes to mind for the public is vast landscapes and savannas, beautiful waterfalls, attractive beaches, and unique weaving with its images and philosophy. In fact, Sumba has a protected forest with a rich biodiversity that is essential for all of its inhabitants. 6.8%, or 75,373 ha, of East Sumba's land area is designated as protected forest, according to the 2020 NTT Forestry Service. Data from the Widya Nusantara Expedition (E-WIN) in 2016 by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), which has since been merged into a research organization at the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN), show that Sumba has four different types of ecosystems: lower montane rain forest, lowland rain forest, meadows, and sandy beaches. Unquestionably, the four of them have a unique variety of different vegetation.

In 2017, a sugar company suddenly seized land from indigenous peoples, one of which was the land of the Praing

Umalulu indigenous people in Umalulu District, East Sumba Regency, NTT. The large role of forests in the lives of indigenous peoples in East Sumba made Rambu Dai Mami establish a women's solidarity movement to protect land and forests. This movement was founded under the name Sabana Sumba. This researcher's initial visit to East Sumba made researchers aware of the existence of a forest that is still being defended and overseen by a woman. She was the one who asked other women and her entire community to take care of their lands and forests because, in their eyes, it was women who were most intimately connected to the forest. whereas Sumba still has a high level of patriarchy. According to the Waingapu.com website [9], "the concept of patriarchy is really quite deeply rooted in Sumba society. The distribution of tasks among Sumba men and Sumba women reveals that men are more dominant. Men are involved in every significant choice in family and social life. Every significant choice in family and social life is always made by men. This problem keeps getting worse and worse. Few Sumbanese women are familiar with what contemporary feminists refer to as "gender equality." Women from Sumba are still dozing off inside sealed information packages. Therefore, basic understanding is still few and far between. But despite this, she is not afraid to fight. They dared to defy the stereotype that women should only perform domestic duties and be quiet. They are willing to engage in conflict not just for domestic and culinary issues but also for the sake of the future generation's existence.

This movement is inextricably linked to the communication Rambu Dai Mami established. As a result of the background information provided above, the issue statement for this study is to investigate, using case studies in the Sabana Sumba community in demonstrations, how women leaders are implementing participatory communication to protect forests in East Sumba. In this research, the theory used is participatory communication theory. Participatory communication was first introduced by Paulo Freire, an American intellectual, in a seminar in Latin America in 1978. Freire coined the concept of participatory communication, namely that every individual has the same right to voice his aspirations, both in groups and individually (Muchtart [1]). Participatory communication patterns eventually arrive at a development process that involves all elements without exception. Not only limited to formulating but also able to evaluate performance and decision-making (Rahim [2]). So that research focuses on how participatory communication by women leaders protects forests in East Sumba, researchers focus on measuring indicators using Servaes' theory (in Rahim [2]), classifying four indicators of participatory communication that encourage empowerment. The indicators are as follows:

1. Heteroglossia, showing the fact that development systems are always based on different groups and communities with variations in economic, social, and cultural factors that complement each other;
2. Dialogical, transactional communication, the sender and receiver of messages interact with each other for a certain period until they reach the meaning of sharing;
3. Polyphony, the highest form of dialogue, voices that are not united become open and do not close one another; and
4. The last is carnival, which, in development communication, brings together all the variants of all

rituals such as legends, comics, festivals, games, parodies, and entertainment.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach, which in this study uses a qualitative approach in which it describes a qualitative descriptive study model. The focus of this research looks at the communication of women leaders in the Sabana Sumba community and identifies them through indicators based on a participatory communication approach by Servaes (in Rahim [2]), namely: heteroglossia, dialogic, polyphony, and carnival in demonstrations against sugar factory companies that have entered the community land area. The types and sources are as follows:

Primary Data

Primary data through in-depth interviews (in-depth interviews) obtained through informants by conducting direct interviews guided by questions that are in accordance with the research focus. The key informants for this research are the leaders and representatives of the Sabana Sumba community members:

- a. Founders and Leaders of the Sabana Sumba Community: Rambu Dai Mami;
- b. The leader of one of the biggest Kabihu (clan), namely Kabihu Palai Malamba: Adolof Umbu Teul, because these leaders became a bridge for messages to the people in his kabihu;
- c. Women members representing women: Rambu Ngana Hala Tana, the perspective of women members;
- d. Young women's representatives: Feliana Liki Lokat, from the perspective of members of young women

Secondary Data

Data was obtained from a second source, namely through documentation from the Sabana Sumba community. Data collection techniques include interviews and documentation collection. The data analysis technique uses the qualitative descriptive data method from Miles and Huberman (in Sugiyono [3]) and includes three components, namely: data reduction (data reduction), data presentation (data display), and conclusion drawing or verification. Technically, for data originating from interviews and documentation, the data analysis process is carried out by reviewing and understanding the contents of the interview results before translating them into sentences that will be explained in the research. The collected and translated data and documentation will then be presented in a photo with a description.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A sugar company began operating in East Sumba in 2017. Some suppliers offer them lower prices, but not all indigenous peoples have access to this information. There was also land that had not bought and allowed by the people, but which was suddenly acknowledged by the company as having been purchased. The company then entered the

property using heavy machinery, constructed ponds and reservoirs, and shut off the community's life-giving springs.

In response to this, one of the women, Rambu Dai Mami, an East Sumba social and environmental activist, founded the Sabana Sumba community. Sabana Sumba is a collective action of support for Sumba, who defends the rights of the locals by working to preserve nature and its resources and calling attention to the abuses that the community there is subjected to. Rambu Dai Mami finds it difficult to communicate informally and to advocate for the environment because of the patriarchal culture that is persisting in East Sumba, but this does not lessen her passion or effort to oppose and battle the sugar company. She asked the indigenous Praing Umalulu women and people of East Sumba to join the Sabana Sumba community in the fight against the sugar industry. How did Sabana Sumba leaders spread the word about the value of the Praing Umalulu traditional territory and ask people to join the fight against the sugar company? Researchers will use the participatory communication indicators below to examine how Sabana Sumba leaders used communication:

Participatory Communication Indicator of the Heteroglossia Concept

Shows that concepts in a development system will always be based on different groups, communities, or individuals with a variety of economic, social, and cultural factors that complement each other (Servaes in Rahim [2]). The construction of a factory by a sugar manufacturing company on the land of the Praing Umalulu indigenous people in Lai Roka will not be separated from individuals and community groups with different backgrounds, social status, and cultural and customary factors of Praing Umalulu itself. In the heteroglossia indicator, the diversity of members of the indigenous community is very visible among the 33 kabihu (clans) and groups in the Praing Umalulu indigenous people. The Praing Umalulu indigenous people group came from Praing Umalulu Village, which was eventually called and known as the Praing Umalulu indigenous people. In each kabihu there are various economic and social variations, namely farmers, fishermen, breeders, entrepreneurs, civil servants, temporary (contract) employees, young people, women, parents, small children, and so on. The cultural factor is important because the land of the Praing Umalulu indigenous people in Lai Roka is a tribute to the existence of the community in the Praing Umalulu region. This land is also used for cultural rituals of the Marapu belief. In the Marapu belief culture, the Praing Umalulu indigenous people pray for prosperity, fertility of crops in gardens or fields, protection of livestock, green grass and trees, clear water, and other prayers. Then there are the ancestral sites, a place to look for food when crops fail; when shepherds or breeders are herding in the forest, there is food that can be eaten right away to stave off hunger; there are also medicinal plants or pharmacies for the lives of indigenous peoples; natural dyes for woven fabrics; and many more. Apart from that, the local wisdom here is also very much felt; they have always implemented the behavior of daily life that upholds customary rules for their daily lives and the management of nature. For example, if they

are going to take a food source such as tubers or wood to make a house in the forest, they perform a ritual asking for instructions and permission from their ancestors through the Marapu culture. Then, if someone violates these customary regulations, they will be punished by the custom, and they believe they will also receive direct punishment from their ancestors.

Social considerations for the Praing Umalulu Kabihu indigenous people: If they don't fight for thousands of hectares of land today, everyone in the community will have to participate in the mass family planning (KB) program going forward because there won't be any land for their grandchildren. The indigenous Praing Umalulu people are aware of this yet nonetheless desire to carry on their family's tradition of having children. Some of this customary land is for posterity and the next generation, which cannot be controlled by other people. The indigenous people of Praing Umalulu and East Sumba are worried that if water is lost in the next ten years as a result of forest and land clearing and springs dry up, their source of life would also be destroyed. This will have an impact on their descendants and social life. This is because if the spring is filled up or closed by the company, all the indigenous people of Sumba will be affected, not the company. The communication against the sugar company through demonstrations conducted by Sabana Sumba leaders to indigenous peoples in Praing Umalulu is in line with the theory of participatory communication of the heteroglossia concept, namely socializing through discussion or chat regarding the impacts of land and environmental change from several perspectives such as economic, social, local wisdom, and cultural factors that complement each other there.

Participatory Communication Indicator of Dialogical Concept

The interaction between the speaker and the audience as a whole is referred to as dialogue. Knowing and respecting the speaker or other voice as a subject—rather than just as a tool for communication—is the intention (Servaes in Rahim [2]). Rambu Dai Mami, the founder and head of Sabana Sumba, also made communication (dialogical) efforts in the case of resistance by the sugar company through demonstrations on the territory of the Praing Umalulu indigenous people in Lai Roka. In Sumba, where patriarchal culture is still high, communication with indigenous peoples is a challenge for women leaders like Rambu Dai Mami, but because there is a common goal among the Praing Umalulu indigenous people, she managed to speak out and invite 33 kabihu in Praing Umalulu to fight together. Due to the indigenous people's limited legal understanding, only one or two women first dared to join the socializing and communication to challenge the sugar company. They believe that when they engage in anti-police and anti-government activities, such as a protest against a sugar company that already has a license from the police and the local government, it will negatively affect them; for instance, it will cause them trouble or lead to them being accused of committing a crime. Additionally, the government is divine for helping them.

Rambu Dai Mami, the Sabana Sumba community's leader, works to spread the message that people shouldn't be afraid of the government or the police through outreach, conversations, or by personally visiting 33 kabihu leaders, engaging in conversation, and sharing information with the mothers in the kitchen when there are events or activities. They should be told that fighting by demonstration is not a mistake or a crime since their children and grandchildren, not the government or the police, will be the ones to get punishment later if they remain silent and allow sugar companies to forcibly steal their land. Children and grandchildren are going to punish their grandparents, parents, and other ancestors for allowing the Praing Umalulu customary land to be stolen by force or sold to the sugar company. She also conveys the idea that women are capable of doing the same things as men, so there is no need to worry about being perceived to be unusual or strange by others. Apart from that, another effort that the Sabana Sumba community leader made was to vocally warn people of extreme events if they were silent. For example, if the land was not taken care of, one of the things he often reminded them of was that the water source would run out. As women, they were the first to be affected because they needed it in the kitchen. Water and cleanliness of vital organs—women need clean water for bathing and so on; providing coffee for husbands also needs water; gardens and fields also need water; livestock also needs to drink water; if the source of water disappears, then water is lost; women will face many crises. Her goal is to invite them to be moved so that women have the courage to get involved and be at the forefront. The Sabana Sumba community leader believes that when he talks or invites indigenous peoples, there is an element of privilege, so she is also respected, despite the difficulties in getting them to fight against sugar companies. This is because, by chance, she belongs to the Palai Malamba kabihu, which is one of the major kabihu in Praing Umalulu, so her voice can be heard more than that of other indigenous women.

According to the women's representatives, Rambu Dai Dami's dialogue efforts opened their eyes and made them start to think that Rambu Dai Mami and other women could and should fight together. Meanwhile, according to a young female representative, she felt that the figure of Rambu Dai Mami was not only respected but also an inspiration to her and other young women. They feel that, apart from being able to fight for themselves now, they can also fight for their future. Then, according to Adolof Umbu Teul, the representative of Kabihu Palai Malamba, who is one of the 33 kabihu in Praing Umalulu, the invitation and communication made by Rambu Dai Mami as the leader of the Sabana Sumba community made the kabihu leaders rethink that even though it is women who are speaking and fighting at the forefront, as kabihu leaders it is appropriate to support and assist in this effort because it is for the customary land of Praing Umalulu, which is problematic or wants to be forcibly controlled by companies located around the village, and the ownership is communal of 33 kabihu. Apart from that, Rambu Dai Mami is also respected because she can motivate others to move

together and because she dares to speak in front of many people; this is still very rarely done by women in our village.

The communication efforts carried out by Sabana Sumba leaders have applied the participatory theory of the dialogical concept and succeeded in making indigenous women and the leaders of the 33 kabihu in Praing Umalulu aware. In the end, many women and indigenous people of various ages, from children to grandparents, were involved in the resistance..



Figure 1: Documentation while socializing and discussing with kabihu representatives in Praing Umalulu



Figure 2: Documentation of Rambu Dai Mami with male indigenous people during demonstrations on customary land that is being fought for.

Participatory Communication Indicator of Polyphony Concept

Polyphony, according to Servaes (in Rahim [2]), is the ideal form of dialogue. The various voices will complement one another rather than compete with one another. A perfect example of participatory communication is polyphony, in which the various voices' differences or diversity are realized collectively and reinforced by one another. Rambu Dai Mami, the head of the Sabana Sumba community, acknowledged that there had never been a disagreement of opinion when working to oppose the sugar company that attempted to forcefully take over Praing Umalulu's ancestral land. However, there were attempts to weaken or frighten those who supported the sugar company, and he informed them that they had not committed a crime but were fighting for their own customary land. There

were rumors that Rambu Dai Mami would be arrested, which made some people hesitate to continue the struggle because the brave female leader had already been arrested, but thankfully this never happened because of the support of the family, the kabihu in Praing Umalulu, and the kabihu in other villages besides Praing Umalulu. This makes them even stronger. Women and young women's representatives acknowledged that they never voiced opposing views or spoke against what the Sabana Sumba community leader said. Even having a female role model like Rambu Dai Mami, who is courageous and has inspired them, makes them feel appreciative. Women may improve by sharing a lot of knowledge and realizing that they are stronger together. However, it is undeniable that because there were efforts to weaken the sugar companies, there were some who hesitated to fight because they were afraid that Rambu's brother would be arrested or they themselves would be imprisoned.

The representative of one of the 33 kabihu leaders, kabihu Palai Malamba, added that they never thought that there was a difference of opinion among themselves as kabihu leaders. Only a small number of kabihu members expressed uncertainty and worry, particularly when rumors of Rambu Dai Mami's imprisonment circulated. Thankfully, this never happened as there was a lot of support from leaders of the kabihu and other indigenous peoples in addition to those who had doubts and concerns. The absence of these arrests has increased the indigenous Praing Umalulu people's self-assurance and fighting spirit. They are becoming more conscious of the fact that if they fight for the truth and for their children and grandchildren, they will also receive a lot of assistance from nature and their ancestors. They no longer need to worry about being labeled as criminals for opposing the police or other government officials who support the sugar company since they are more and more convinced that what they are doing is the right thing. According to the research above, despite the fact that there was never a disagreement of opinion when the leader of Sabana Sumba, Rambu Dai Mami, spoke with the indigenous Praing Umalulu people, there were attempts to weaken it by inciting the indigenous peoples. However, thankfully, the company's attempts to weaken indigenous peoples have not caused them to become divided or form various ideas; rather, they have strengthened and solidified.



Figure 3: Documentation of indigenous men also demonstrating and speaking out through the writing on the posters



Figure 4: Documentation of the demonstration on the customary land of Praing Umalulu which already has heavy equipment from a sugar company

Participatory Communication Indicator of Carnival Concept

Carnival indicators focus on activities that are carried out informally and interspersed with humor. Every member of the community is encouraged to be able to participate in the carnival freely, outside of being labeled serious and authoritative (Seraes in Rahim [2]). In every socialization activity, discussion, or casual chat carried out by the Sabana Sumba leader, she tries to create a comfortable environment, and what she says can be trusted by all indigenous peoples. Apart from voicing calls for resistance, she is also willing to listen to the complaints of indigenous women and other indigenous peoples so that she understands what they need and expect. Apart from that, Rambu Dai Mami is also sincere in helping traditional women fight for their rights outside of the fight against the sugar company. This made traditional women trust and appreciate Rambu Dai Mami even more. When there is an event or activity, usually the women prepare a lot of things in the kitchen. In the kitchen, Rambu Dai Mami also always tries to chat casually and relate to the kitchen the impact that will occur if you don't fight for the customary land of Praing Umalulu. The Praing Umalulu indigenous people's socialization activities and discussions while they are getting ready for their demonstration are also complemented by the availability of betel nuts, coffee, cigarettes, tea, and snacks, as well as by dining together and humorous inserts. Additionally, indigenous peoples perform a Marapu belief ritual to ask their ancestors for approval, protection, and triumph. Each kabihu leader also encourages his followers to join the resistance on behalf of their ancestral lands, offspring, and grandchildren; they or their followers also provide food or beverages during gatherings or demonstrations; the provision of transportation is also a form of self-help based on local customs; and there are even lawyers available to assist with advocacy.

As a result of the previously discussed study, participatory communication of the carnival concept has also been applied, for example, when there are outreach activities for demonstrations, the Sabana Sumba leader creates a pleasant environment and can be trusted by all indigenous peoples. When there are other social events, engage in casual conversation with mothers or women. Then there are self-help indigenous peoples, such as those who provide snacks to eat together during socialization or demonstrations, such as cigarettes, coffee or tea, betel nuts, and humorous chat-added.



Figure 6: Eating together at demonstration place



Figure 7: Documentation of the ritual process of the Marapu belief to ask for permission, protection and victory in fighting for the Praing Umalulu customary land

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that the application of participatory communication by women leaders in guarding in East Sumba through case studies in the Sabana Sumba forest community in demonstrations has been carried out and succeeded in getting indigenous peoples to take part in demonstrations against sugar companies. The application of the four indicators in participatory communication can be explained as follows: Participatory Communication of Heteroglossia Concept The communication against the sugar company through a demonstration by the Sabana Sumba leader to the Praing Umalulu indigenous people is in line with the theory of participatory communication of the concept of heteroglossia, namely socializing through discussion or chat regarding the impacts of land and environmental change from several perspectives such as economic, social, local wisdom, and other factors of culture that complement each other there.

Participatory Communication of Dialogical Concept. The communication efforts carried out by Sabana Sumba leaders have applied the participatory theory of the dialogical concept and succeeded in making indigenous women and the leaders of the 33 kabihu in Praing Umalulu aware. In the end, many women and indigenous people of various ages, from children to grandparents, were involved in the resistance. Participatory Communication of Polyphony Concept. Even though Rambu Dai Mami, the leader of Sabana Sumba, never had a disagreement with the indigenous peoples, there were attempts to undermine it by inciting them. However, thankfully, the company's attempts to weaken indigenous peoples have not caused them to become divided or develop different opinions; rather, they have strengthened and unified. Participatory Communications of Carnival Concept. Participatory communication of the carnival concept has also been implemented, such as when there are activities for outreach to demonstrations, the Sabana Sumba leader creates a comfortable environment with inserts of humor, and what she says can be trusted by all indigenous peoples. Talking casually with mothers or women when there are other traditional events. Then there are self-help indigenous peoples, such as those who give cigarettes, coffee or tea, betel nuts, and snacks to eat together during outreach and demonstrations.

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