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Revista de Antropología, Ciencias de la Comunicación y de la Información, Filosofía,
Lingüística y Semiótica, Problemas del Desarrollo, la Ciencia y la Tecnología

Año 34, 2018, Especial N°

15

Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

ISSN 1012-1587/ ISSNc: 2477-9385

Depósito Legal pp 198402ZU45



Universidad del Zulia
Facultad Experimental de Ciencias
Departamento de Ciencias Humanas
Maracaibo - Venezuela

Community Participation in the Primary Education Development in Pulau Pulau Aru Subdistrict

Hobarth Williams Sospelisa¹

¹Department of Social Welfare Science, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Christian University of Indonesia, Jalan OT Pattimaipauw, Ambon, Maluku, Indonesia

info@ores.su

Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify the forms, the participation factors, and the community participation model in primary education development in Pulau Pulau Aru through descriptive and qualitative methods. The results of this study were also considered as novel as it shows the community participation model adapted from the traditional customs values of One Furnace Three Stones and Tagalaya. Local government (subdistrict heads and Education Minister), members of the board (commission of education), the private sector (companies) and the public should work in synergy to improve primary education quality in Pulau Pulau Aru, in general and in particular.

Keyword: Community Participation, Primary Education, Empowerment.

Participación comunitaria en el desarrollo de la educación primaria en el subdistrito de Pulau Pulau Aru

Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es identificar las formas, los factores de participación y el modelo de participación comunitaria en el desarrollo de la educación primaria en Pulau Pulau Aru a través de métodos descriptivos y cualitativos. Los resultados de este estudio también se consideraron novedosos, ya que muestran el modelo de participación comunitaria adaptado a los valores tradicionales de aduana de One Furnace Three Stones y Tagalaya. El gobierno local (jefes de subdistrito y ministro de educación), los miembros de la junta (comisión de educación), el sector privado (empresas) y el público deben trabajar en sinergia para mejorar la calidad de la educación primaria en Pulau Pulau Aru, en general y en particular.

Palabra clave: Participación Comunitaria, Educación Primaria, Empoderamiento.

1. INTRODUCTION

An increase in social welfare can be achieved through the development process (Adi, 2002). One of the important aspects of creating social welfare is educational development. Education as one of the social opportunities which is fundamental in creating the ultimate welfare of all people to live better and decent lives (Amartya, 1999). Access to education as one of the social opportunities is

important not only to achieve a reasonable standard of living, but is also important for the citizens as initial capital for more effective participation in economic, political, cultural activities.

Several experts, Neagley (2008), Sheldon & Epstein (2002), White & Barber (2007), Mortimore (2008), have conducted studies about community participation in education in the context of Social Welfare. According to Neagley (2008), it is essential to involve the community in educational programs and educational activities, especially those that are innovative and that call for public participation. Sheldon and Epstein (2002), White and Barber (2007), Mortimore (2008) are tended to focus on the family contribution to education. The relation between poverty, family environment, and community involvement, supportive cooperation between the family and the community, and parental support are the factors that affect the condition of education in upcountry areas. The studies mentioned above used as a reference in this study, which was conducted in the district of Pulau Pulau Aru as one of the districts that relatively cloistered.

Abe (2001), Suparjan & Suyanto (2003) suggest factors that influence community participation. Mikkelsen (2003) looks at social, cultural, and political factors. Three prerequisite conditions of participation that must be present together: be free to participate, be able to participate, and be willing to participate. The issues that accompany educational development include the inaccessibility of just laws and policies, inequality between regions, and inequality in the

social structure of the economy (Dubois & Miley, 2005). The issue has also been experienced by the people in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict area, Province of Maluku. Moreover, the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict can be categorized as a 3T area (Terluar, Terdepan, Tertinggal) which means outermost, frontier, and underdeveloped area with a low level of community participation in development (primary education). The aim of this study is to define and identify the forms and factors, and to formulate a model of community participation in the development of primary education in the district of Pulau Pulau Aru, Province of Maluku, Indonesia. The improvement of educational services is an important aspect to fulfill education goals requirement. Improvement of education is not only directed at the expansion and equalization of educational opportunities, but also improving the quality of education and its relevance to the needs of the labor market, especially with specialized skills. There is a interesting phenomenon which related to this study:

- a. There are significant social gaps in Pulau Pulau Aru; there is many people success of managing the tourism and economy, but on the other hand there are also many people that lack of education background.
- b. The graduation rate of National Examination of Indonesia or Ujian Nasional (UN) 2013 showed that from 1,537 UN participants from junior high schools in Pulau Pulau Aru, about 30% or 417 students did not pass.

Based on the above, the research questions (research question) proposed are as follows:

1. What participations from the community to improve Pulau Pulau Aru primary education quality?
2. What factors that influence community participation to improve primary education?
3. What is the model of community participation to improving primary education in Pulau Pulau Aru?

2. THEORY

Look at the various definitions of community participation (Bickman et al., 1989). Participation as a form of participation or community involvement in the development program. An understanding of the concept of participation, by grouping into three basic sense, i.e. participation as a contribution; participation as an organization; and participation as empowerment.

Participation as the action of a fact of part-taking. Participation itself has several categories based on its goals: (1) Participation transitive (subject of goal-oriented) or intransitive (subject to participate without a clear purpose); (2) Participation moral (ethically, positive connotation) or immoral (not in accordance with ethics, a negative connotation); (3) Participation was forced (mobilized in the name of participation) or discretionary (voluntary participation); (4)

Participation manipulative (indirectly geared other party for any other purpose) or spontaneous (Rahanema, 1992). Community participation means involvement of ordinary citizens in the affairs of local directly, Midgley clarify public participation with reference to one of the resolutions of the United Nations (UN) in the early 1970s, the creation of opportunities that enables all members of society to contribute and actively influence the development process and participate the development benefits it evenly.

The type or kind of participation is described Bickman et al., (1989), Ife & Frank (2006). Bickman et al., (1989) visualized the full participation, which contributes maximum to the process or program; with minimal participation, with a minimum contribution is also on the program, which was later quoted (Ife & Frank, 2006).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study was qualitative and descriptive. Data were collected from observation, interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and documentation. The informants or respondents were bureaucrats (regents, heads of agencies), members of the board (education committee), principals and teachers, religious leaders, traditional leaders, NGOs, educational leaders, and parents. Data were collected using interviews, observation, focus group discussions, and documentation. Interviews were conducted in the department of education, principals, members of the legislative education committee,

school committee members, observers and parents education. Observations made on activities of community involvement in decision-making and construction of educational facilities. The data analyzed using a Miles and Hubermann model.

The qualitative data analysis was using thematic analysis method, FGDs were held twice; the first was held in Aru with participants from observer education, NGOs, and youth leaders, the second FGD held in the National Education Office with the participants head of department, heads the field and the school principal. FGDs were aimed to obtain data that related to: (a) the collaboration of government, the private sector and society in terms of primary education. (B) the factors that influence community participation in primary education. (C) the values of the social culture that supports community participation in primary education.

4. RESULTS

The forms of community participation in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict are categorized into two: physical and non-physical. Physical participation included financial participation, school fees, voluntary contributions, participation in school facilities and infrastructure development, infrastructure, and volunteer teaching. Non-physical participation consisted of ideas contributions, involvement in internal meetings, and planning. Factors that affected community participation in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict in primary

education can be categorized into internal, personal and external factors. Internal factors included psychological factors in the community which was composed of two groups: people who accept and people who reject the primary education development. Personal factors included age, gender, education background, occupation and income. External factors included the role of local government policies and regulations in improving public participation, social awareness mentoring, education-based NGOs, and educational communities or organizations. In addition, the support from the private sector and from business through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was available as a scholarship fund to support low-income families and to improve educational facilities. Moreover, the increasing moral values in society also contributed to developing community involvement of education.

Community participation in primary education in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict can be defined as the One Furnace Three Stones model and Tagalaya. One Furnace Three Stones represented the synergy of the parties involved in primary education development in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. The three stones represent the three parties involved: (a) local government - the private sector - the public; (b) teacher - pupil - society; (c) religious leaders - traditional leaders - teachers. The three parties work together to develop primary education. One Furnace represents the vision, mission and goals in promoting primary education in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. Tagalaya represents the family participation in providing for their children's education expenses by saving money from their fishing incomes.

Each sector is included in One Furnace Three Stones, such as traditional leaders - religious leaders - educational leaders/teachers who constantly motivated parents to participate and to improve the quality of primary education in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. It reaffirmed the elements of community leaders in order to create a harmonious communication between the government and the community. This brings benefits to the community who want to express and share their ideas. In this case, the government and public figures, both from religion and cultures, can deliberate on the right strategy in order to optimize the potential factors to stimulate participation. There are three public participation types: (1) Not participatory; (2) Quasi-participatory, and (3) Full-participatory. We obtained that public participation in Pulau Pulau Aru is quasi-participatory, it is characterized by:

- a. Pulau Pulau Aru community were involved in the decision-making process relating to the development of primary education. Community participation in the decision-making process is not entirely direct done by the community, but is represented by those who are deemed able to voice demands, needs and expectations of society. Those people are the traditional leaders and religious leaders as one of the informal part of the local elite.
- b. The existence of a partnership between the school and the community (parents, traditional leaders, religious leaders) jointly promote primary education. The partnership eventually gives rise to synergy in promoting the development of primary

education. The synergy formulated into an analogue model of participation Three Stone One Furnace.

c. Direct community involvement and the partnership between the school and the community can reduce the turmoil and potential emerging in the development of primary education.

d. Community involvement in primary education represented by parents, traditional leaders and religious figures, does not require the need for higher education. This broke his opinion by Ife & Frank (2006), that the above three conditions is a pre condition of the formation of public participation that deliberative democracy.

5. DISCUSSION

Community participation in education is the agent for improving the quality of educational services including planning, monitoring and evaluation of educational programs. Public participation can take place in the School Committee or on the Board of Education. Educational autonomy needs to be accepted as an independent process used to manage all the existing resources of the institution. Therefore, education should take place in accordance with the six standard measures of the success of decentralized education: national importance, education quality, management efficiency, equity, community participation, and accountability (Zamroni, 2000). The conditions and the level of participation are still low, especially in developing countries like Nigeria (Abbas & Babajo, 2003), India

(Sripati & Thiruvengadam, 2004; Prabhu, 2006). The low level of public participation occurs as a result of inadequate social welfare. This is the case in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. The relationship between community participation and social welfare results in the fact that the community is not aware and brave enough to express their ideas or aspirations (Hamijoyo, 2003). The chief factors are: the poverty factor, the educational background factor, and the illiteracy factor. This condition was experienced by the community living in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. The isolation and the limited access, the remoteness of the area, and the underdeveloped society led to the lack of educational participation.

One of the social and cultural values that exists in the society is a tradition of cooking on a furnace built from three stones. One Furnace Three Stones became the name for the community participation model in primary education in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. The One Furnace Three Stones model applies to all of the people involved in primary education development. The main sector who take part in the primary education development based on One Furnace Three Stones model are local government - private sector - society (macro level); traditional leaders - religious leaders - educator / teacher (meso level); teacher - student - parents (micro level). Each of these sectors had a different role, but also had a vision, a mission, and the same objective of improving primary education in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict of. The vision, the mission, and the objectives are just like the three supports of the traditional furnace, which is built from three stones.

The frequency of community participation in education has an influence on the optimization of social development (Bickman et al., 1989). Therefore, we need a strategy to increase community participation in primary education, including the decentralization of education and the formation of a school committee and a board of education. The family should be involved and should contribute to the field of education (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002; Mortimore, 2008). Community participation connects the government as the holder of power, authority, and policy with the people, who have civil rights, and with political, and socio-economic communities. Community participation enables the capability to express the need for increased rights to education and greatly increased ability to attract government attention. Therefore, people are expected to be brave and to stop being dominated by government policies about their rights and about decisions on the environment. People should always be involved in decision making and in the implementation of new policies.

Poor community participation in primary education is caused by internal factors and external factors (Neagley, 2008; Abe, 2001; Suparjan & Suyanto, 2003). Internal factors are inherent in themselves and in members of the public. External factors come from outside of the community (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002; Mikkelsen, 2003). Internal factors can be psychological, sociological, economical, and spiritual and they are crucial in this study. On the other hand, external factors place more emphasis on the crucial role of stakeholders in the development of the education sector in addition to the community. The external parties are the government, NGOs, and the private sector.

The relevance of this study was the science of social welfare which was linked to the concept of participation as one of the principles of community empowerment. Participation was also one of the principles in macro-social work practices. In addition, empowering the community was one of the methods and strategies in community-social work practice. In this context, community participation was one part of the community effort to attain empowerment in the midst of the limitations of qualified human resources, natural resources, and economic resources. The concept of participation was to be part of the central issues of social welfare, such as human rights issues; especially the right to education, the enhancement of human capabilities, equitable development, and local knowledge which was related to the model of participation. One of the characteristics of a prosperous community (self-supported community/swadaya), as stated by Ife (1995), is when the community is able to overcome its own problems, that it has the ability and the human resources and natural resources.

Besides offering the model of the One Furnace Three Stones, this study offered the values of philosophy from a traditional source named Tagalaya. Tagalaya is represented as the repository of knowledge and ideas of the community living in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict. Tagalaya also represented the traditional saving of money, which was taught to children in Pulau Pulau Aru. The Tagalaya spirit was manifested by Pulau Pulau Aru adults by saving the profits of the family income to facilitate their children's educational expenses. Tagalaya is a local tradition which represents the family working to save for their children's education fund. The novelty of this study was

related to community participation in primary education and the factors that influence community participation. The results of this study were also considered as novel as it shows the community participation model adapted from the traditional customs values of One Furnace Three Stones and Tagalaya.

6. CONCLUSION

The study showed that public participation in education in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict was physical and non-physical. Physical participation involved the provision of primary education, giving financial support, contributions to employment, up to the provision of facilities. Physical participation by the public was low due to economic and social obstacles. Non-physical participation took the form of expressing ideas and organization. The Typology knowledges involved participation in the form of internal meetings, direct community planning, and appeals to community leaders to participate. Another aspect was the intention and determination of organizations to become more actively involved in increasing educational development in the Pulau Pulau Aru subdistrict.

The factors that affected community participation in the primary education development in the Pulau Pulau Aru were influenced by internal, personal, and external factors. Internal factors consisted of the personal involvement of parents/communities that affected the psychological, sociological, and economic development of

education. Personal factors included the willingness of people to accept changes in personal circumstances such as age, sex, education, and occupation. Both high and low-income families had low participation rates. This was affected by their activities, working time, and psychological factors. They had an awareness that they needed to contribute in order to cover the financial burden. Spiritual elements, religious observance, and the traditional influence of local customs, also contribute to community participation. External factors included the three stakeholders that influence the level of participation: government, NGOs, and the private sector. The government support and contribution still needed to be optimized. However, the influence of non-governmental organizations through educational outreach and community education should be appreciated as a part of the participation.

Local government (subdistrict heads and Education Minister), members of the board (commission of education), the private sector (companies) and the public should work in synergy to improve primary education quality in Pulau Pulau Aru, in general and in particular. The national education budget needs to be increased to allocate funding to the various activities that can improve community participation in educational development. A socialization program should be able to optimize the initiative of organizations, institutions, and groups at the community level who want to contribute together to build participation and education. For the next study, it is necessary to analyze further the participation model of One Furnace Three Stones as a model of

community participation in primary education and learn more about Tagalaya the philosophical saving tradition.

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**UNIVERSIDAD
DEL ZULIA**

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Revista de Ciencias Humanas y Sociales

Año 34, Especial N° 15, 2018

Esta revista fue editada en formato digital por el personal de la Oficina de Publicaciones Científicas de la Facultad Experimental de Ciencias, Universidad del Zulia.

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