



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND THE CREATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the role of community development on the success of national development. By using qualitative study, this study reveals that community development has many benefits in supporting the success of development in terms of increasing active participation in every process of development, increasing the quality of development planning based on the results of relevant studies of identification of fundamental needs of community, and ecological effects toward environment, and increasing the independence of the public to continue to promote forms of culture and local wisdom. Finally, the results reveal that community development is capable of enhancing the role and function of local institutions in the community institutionalization in order to realize the concept of local community based development.

Key words: community development, participation, social justice.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Community development is development efforts undertaken by the state in order to prosper its citizens (Bradshaw, 2007). The basic modal in successful implementation of the development in society is conduciveness, collaborativeness, compromises, realistic and having a sense of empathy and participatory (Fawcett et al, 1995). Interest in community development is divided into aspects of intermediate goals between the creation of full participation of citizens and the embodiment of community integration and self-capabilities. The scope of community development includes community service, empowerment, and public relations.

The application of the concept of community development in the national development system requires the active participation of society, both individually and collectively. The concept of participatory development is a process of empowerment of the community capable of identifying individual and social needs as a basis for development planning. The concept of participatory development contains three important elements in terms of increasing the role of the community in planning, implementation of development, utilization of development

outcomes, and evaluation of the development process; setting the orientation of community understanding of the role and function, and; the role of government as a facilitator (Nikkhah & Redzuan, 2009).

In general, community development is the developmental activity for community carried out in systematic, planned and directed manners to create broader public access to achieve the higher social, and economic conditions (Budimanta & Rudito 2008; Craig & Mayo, 1995). Community development is also referred to as the process of strengthening the active and sustainable communities based on the principles of social justice, participation and equal cooperation. Hence, community development express the values of justice, equality, accountability, opportunity, choice of participation, collaboration, and learning sustainability (Suharto, 2010; Florin, & Wandersman, 1984).

Community development in national context is development efforts undertaken by the state in the framework of the welfare of the population. The implementation of the concept of sustainable community development is being demanded by people to increase the level of prosperity. This is certainly not independent from some determinants, such as responsibility in the service of the state organizers functioning as driver of development, as well as sociological factors and mentality of the people who are the target of the ultimate goal of development.

The basic capital of successful implementation of development in society is a conducive, collaborative, compromising, realistic, empathetic and participative society. The good mental condition of society will greatly influence the implementation of government policy. The community will respond positively and critically to all stimuli or development implementation plans that will be run by the government, which in turn all parties will benefit each other for the welfare of the nation. Thus, this paper attempts to describe some objectives, scope, and obstacles in the concept of community development.

2. OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Empowering individuals and groups through capacity building, including the awareness, knowledge and skills, is required to change the quality of individual and social life (Avoseh, 2001; Zakus & Lysack, 1998). The capacity building is related to the strengthening of economic and political aspects through the formation of social groups mostly based on a common agenda (Budimanta, 2003). The goals in community development are divided into the intermediate objectives of raising full citizens' participation and the ultimate goal of realizing the ability and integration of communities to build themselves (Wibhawa, 2010)

3. SCOPES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

There are three basic scopes of community development programs. First, to increase the level of community service, to meet the interests of society or public interest, such as the construction of public facilities, among others, development or improvement of means of transportation / roads, educational facilities, etc. Second, to empower the community, formed in programs related to providing wider access to the community to support their independence, such as the development or strengthening of community self-help groups, empowerment of local communities, professional organizations and capacity building efforts based on utilization of local resources (Bhattacharyya, 2004; Swain, & Wallentin, 2009). Third, to create the public or community relations, related to the development of understanding through communication and information to the parties, such as public consultation, counseling and so on.

4. FACTORS INHIBITING THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Some of the obstacles that occur in the implementation of the empowerment program can come both from individuals within the community and from social systems. First, traditional community attitudes which still maintain the tradition and hold strict view that tradition can not be changed in absolute terms, can result in social change inhibition in society. This is because people are not willing to accept innovation from outside. In fact, innovation is one factor that can encourage the expected changes in a society. This happens due to lack of relationship with the other communities which resulted in lack of information about the contemporary development, especially concerning the development of science and technology (see, for example in Korten & Korten, 1972).

Second, less open to renewal and less participation. Traditional societies usually lack adequate access to information, so they are less able to accept new things coming from outside and tend to retain the prevailing habits of the community. This will lead to a lack of community participation that will ultimately compromise the process of social change. Third, the existence of dependency. The dependence of a community on others (for example on social companions) causes the process of "self-reliance" of the community takes a longer time.

Fourth, lack of confidence. Unconfidence makes a community unconvinced with its ability so that it is difficult to bring out their potential. This makes it difficult for people to develop because they do not want to grow in accordance with the potential it has.

Five, compliance with certain norms and sacred values. Norms are closely related to the habits of a community. Norms are unwritten rules but binding members of the community. On the one hand, norms can support change efforts but on the other hand norms can be a barrier to reform. The process of change will work if it does not clash with the values considered sacral by the community. For example, in many areas, support for women running for leadership is felt to be very lacking because the general public still thinks that leaders are men as taught by religion or in accordance with the patriarchal system.

Sixth, Interest groups. Interest groups can be an obstacle in community empowerment efforts (Botes & Van Rensburg, 2000). For example, efforts to empower farmers in a village can not be implemented because there are certain interest groups that intend to buy agricultural land to establish a textile company. These interest groups will try first to get the farmland into their hands. Seventh, the rejection of outsiders. Suspicion and feeling disturbed against strangers will also be an inhibiting factor to community development. Hence, social worker or social accompanist who will facilitate the empowerment program will certainly experience constraints and need a considerable amount of time before it can be accepted into a community. In addition, this suspicion and disruption caused the community to be reluctant to participate in activities organized by "foreigners" who facilitated empowerment programs in their areas.

The existence of some of these obstacles makes no excuse to say that actions to empower the community can not be done. Community empowerment requires a long period of time and is not temporary, but must be implemented on an ongoing basis. While many factors may be an impediment to community empowerment, it must be admitted that there are many successful empowerment programs and achieving the stated objectives. Successful implementation of community empowerment will contribute to development.

5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CREATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Community development has a positive correlation with the development of sustainable social justice. Community development can be interpreted as an effort to raise awareness, develop reasoning power and skills of local people so that they are independently able to exploit the potential and the opportunity to manage the development program for the improvement of the quality of live sustainably. In that sense, there are several points of mind, partly regarding the acceptance of help and support from outsiders. The presence of outsiders is not to take over the responsibility of improving the quality of life of the communities that are the target of the activity. Therefore, their presence should not create a dependency situation, but foster community self-reliance development programs according to their needs. The intended self-understanding does not mean rejecting or no longer requiring outside help and support, but having the ability to bid on any help / support offered by outsiders. Development programs pursued independently by the community are not temporary, but must be sustainable for an indefinite period.

Referring to these explanations, then every community development activities should be based on the work philosophy, such as (1) helping the community to help itself, (2) continually strive to improve the quality of life in the broadest sense in terms of physical, social, economic, mental / spiritual beings, (3) maintain harmony and balance, both among fellow citizens, between society and the environment, and between citizens with the state (Hart, 2013).

The application of the concept of community development in the national development system not only requires a number of development actors that should continue to be reproduced, but also requires various types of technical skills development. The number of actors that much increase the chances of the emergence of the development of society which guarantees the sustainability of the development process. Various types of technical skills will improve the quality of the process and the results of development itself. In line with the demands of the growing needs, it is demanded the professional development actors (Chavis, & Wandersman, 1990).

The concept of participatory development is a process of empowerment to the community so that people are able to identify their own needs or needs of community groups as a basis for development planning. Therefore, the concept of participatory development contains three important elements, namely (1) enhancement role of community in planning, implementation development, utilization the development results, and evaluation of the development process, (2) orientation the community understanding on their role in development, and (3) increase the role government as facilitator.

Participation encourages every citizen to exercise the right to express opinions in the decision-making process that concerns the public interest, either directly or indirectly. Community participation can be realized as the people have trust in the government. This trust will grow if people get services and equal opportunities. The differentiation of treatment or injustice on whatever grounds can foster jealousy and encourage social conflicts in society (Minkler, Vásquez, Tajik, & Petersen, 2008). Through participatory development, communities are expected to capable of conducting critical assessment toward social and economic progress, as well as of identifying areas that need to be improved, (2) capable of determining community vision in the future, (3) capable of taking a role in planning for the community future without give it away to expert or power groups (Checkoway, 1995), (4) capable of collecting community resources for realizing collective aims, (5) capable of

generating experience in states, analyzing situation and identifying the right and realistic strategy, (6) capable of working on basic equation among members, (7) capable of accomplishing the community and village self-help projects as they do not solely depend on outside help, which will also become an inhibiting factor of dependence, (8) capable of awakening a close and integrative relationship among community members.

To realizing good governance should be created development activities program that is truly based on the fundamental values needed by all levels of society. Communities need to be organized in groups led by local institutions, purposively aimed to accommodate and to strengthen local institutions in each policy formulation and implementation. The local groups are expected to formulate the common and effective wishes of their members into existing public spaces, namely institutions related to the problem of fulfilling the needs of local communities.

Hence, the role of government is also being demanded, such as in allocating development funds. The funds firstly need to be rolled out to the community to alleviate poverty (Bradshaw, 2007). The fund is a stimulant or a trigger for the community to independently work together to solve the problems that cause poverty cycle. To reduce poverty the government needs to break the cycle with capital injections (big push-investment theory) (Ellerman, 2007; Roy & Heuty, 2005). Development budget will be more effective if managed and used directly by a group of society to build its area, even it will be able to provide stimulus for society to seek additional fund if the budget of government is not enough. The community will voluntarily work together to collect their own funds by giving each other a contribution in accordance with the mutual agreement, because the design of the development activities is really needed by the community.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study conclude some of the benefits of community development to help improve the community service, community empowerment, and community relations. Community development will support development success in terms of increased active participation of community in every process of development, in which they are not only the object but also the subject of development. Moreover, the community participation will increase the quality of development planning based on potential resource and ecological impact studies. The participation is also expected to have impact on increasing community independence, with the character of maintaining the cultural and local wisdom, to stimulate development pattern characterized as independent and self sufficient. The most important, this study has also provided the reasoning of the relationship between active participation of community and the creation of social justice. This is driven by the fact that participation will encourage every citizen to exercise the right to express opinions in the decision-making process that concerns the public interest, and to not accept the differentiation of treatment or social injustice.

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