



## Application of Participatory Leadership in Optimizing the Potential of the Agricultural Sector

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### ABSTRACT

*This study will explore information about the application of participatory leadership in Gorontalo Regency, namely through the process of community involvement and empowerment in order to maximize the potential of the agricultural sector. Research will be conducted with qualitative methods with data collection techniques through: interviews and literature review. Data obtained regarding agricultural potential in Gorontalo Regency along with the problems and constraints faced are then used to maximize participatory leadership to increase the potential of the agricultural sector.*

*The results of this study explain that Gorontalo District has enormous agricultural potential when viewed from the area of land and the livelihood of its people. For this reason, active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, especially the regional government, is needed. Regional leaders in this case the village head and village head must prioritize community involvement in the agricultural policy making process. From the results of the research conducted, it was found that in the smallest level of government, in this case the village, musrembangdes in fact did not run optimally. As a result the policy was only implemented by the government where only a small proportion of the community were involved in the policy formulation process and tended not to be involved in the implementation process and oversight of its policies. The results of this study will certainly be input for local governments to conduct re-evaluations in the process of community participation and leadership processes so as to be able to support the progress of the regional agricultural sector.*

**Keywords:** *agriculture; participatory leadership*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Participatory leadership is a model introduced in public policy. This model puts the leader factor as a facilitator in policy formulation. In this model policy formulation is carried out in a bottom-up manner where the active participation of all elements to the lowest level becomes a determinant factor. This is done so that policies that will be taken are truly based on the interests of members and can be implemented maximally.

On the other hand, agriculture is the primary sector in the Indonesian economy. The role of the agricultural sector is increasingly strategic because the agricultural sector is able to contribute significantly to foreign exchange and the only economic sector that is able to survive amid the economic crisis (Agricultural Research and Development). With the existence of regional autonomy, the region must be independent in utilizing the potential of the region so that the agricultural sector can make a very significant contribution to the regional economy and improve the welfare of the community.

Gorontalo Regency is one of the regions which currently shows significant economic development. With an area of 5,746.38 Km<sup>2</sup> the agricultural sector is still the mainstay of this area. Land potential in 2014 in Gorontalo Regency reaches 13,959 hectares. Food crops sub-sector which includes rice, corn, cassava, sweet potatoes, peanuts and soybeans, fruits and vegetables is one of the sub-sectors in the agricultural sector. In 2014 the harvested area of paddy rice was 27,657 hectares with a production of 157,644.9 tons, paddy fields with a harvest area of 1,789 hectares producing 6,261 tons. For secondary crops, corn production reaches 117,448 tons. While for other commodities, were in tons: cassava 1,536 tons, sweet potatoes 559 tons, peanuts 919 tons, green beans 23 tons and soybeans 1,036 tons (Kab. Gorontalo in Figures 2015).

By looking at the potential of the agricultural sector, it is certainly important to implement the right policies. This is to maximize the potential of land and agricultural products. In this research the participatory leadership model becomes an alternative policy model that can be applied in order to create a solid, independent agricultural sector that is able to empower every element in it.

Nationally, the contribution of the agricultural sector to the economy declined sharply, from 56.3% in 1962 to only 14.7% in 2011, and even dropped to 13% in 2005 and 2006. In the same period, the industrial sector (manufacturing and nonmanufacturing) experienced a significant increase, from 11.9% to 47.2% of total GDP. However, on the other hand, 2011 data (World Bank, 2013) shows that the agricultural sector still absorbs a relatively high workforce of 35.9% of the total 151.9 million workforce. While the industrial sector absorbed only 20.6%. The remaining 43.5% is absorbed by the service sector. (Hidayat: 2013).

This data shows that even though Gorontalo Regency has great potential in agriculture, the contribution of this sector to GDP is smaller compared to the industrial sector. Furthermore, despite having a large number of workers, the agricultural sector is not seen to show significant development. It is therefore important to implement solutions that emphasize the empowerment of farmers as the main actors in the national agricultural sector.

From the results of the initial analysis there were also problems that would slow the pace of agricultural development in Gorontalo District. These problems arise from natural damage caused by production behavior that is not environmentally friendly to the minimum education of farmers. For example, the lack of knowledge on the use and development of modern agriculture, agricultural politics that are not impartial to the farmers and begin to lose the cultural values and enthusiasm of the farmers. In many cases, farmers are less involved in the process of formulating policies, especially in the determination of budget allocations so that the implementation of the policy is not on target. On

the other hand, an increase in investment in agriculture by PMA and PMDN investors oriented to the export market is generally capital intensive and has a small role in absorbing labor or more creating farm laborers.

Based on this background, it is necessary to have a grand strategy for the development of agriculture through the empowerment of small farmers and the participation of all stakeholders. Through this conception, it is expected to be able to grow the agricultural sector, so that in turn it can become a leading sector for the Indonesian economy.

This study will focus on the concept of participatory leadership as the right model in agricultural management. By focusing on the leadership model and the involvement of all elements in the formulation and implementation of policies, this model is expected to provide more space for empowering farmers. For this reason, in this study several problems will be raised, including: 1) What is the agricultural potential in Gorontalo Regency; 2) What are the problems faced in developing the agricultural sector; 3) How will the participatory leadership model be an ideal concept in optimizing the potential of the agricultural sector in Gorontalo Regency. These questions need to be done to carefully identify the various problems and constraints, and to look for a model that fits the characteristics of the people of Gorontalo Regency.

The pattern of participation management is a pattern commonly used in the management of an organization. This pattern is considered to bring the organization closer to the planned goals by giving more space to each member to actively participate both in planning and implementing a decision. As for this study the pattern of participatory relationships will be analyzed by emphasizing the leadership factors of an organization.

Davis and Newstro, (in Husain 2011: 66) define participation as the mental and emotional involvement of people in group situations that encourage them to contribute to group goals and share responsibility for achieving those goals. In this case each member of the group voluntarily participates in the goals that have been formulated together. In other words the overall participation activity requires a commitment of openness from each element in it. This openness will certainly have a positive impact on organizational development.

Research related to community involvement in public policy has been carried out. One of them is a research entitled "Application Study of Participatory Leadership of Village Heads in the Development of Education in Gorontalo Region," by Walidun Husain. This study tries to summarize the aspects of participatory leadership run by the village head in the formulation and implementation of policies with the education development process. The results of this study show that village heads who implement participatory processes will get great support from the community so that educational development programs run more effectively.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

This research will be conducted using qualitative methods. Data collection through qualitative methods is done through conducting interviews involving community leaders, local university academics, and policy makers. The interview activity was intended to obtain a general description of the agricultural potential of Gorontalo Regency and the application of participatory governance.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Participatory Leadership in Policy Making in Gorontalo District

Gorontalo Regency is one area that shows significant development. based on Gorontalo Regency RPJMD 2016-2021, Vision "Gorontalo District Is Bright to Create a *Madani* Civil Society". Bright terminology as a result of a great, extraordinary work that shows glory and fame that has an impact on the people, namely prosperity and prosperity. While *Madani* terminology is a condition of the region / region with a nuance of the city that upholds civil rights, values, norms and laws which are supported by the mastery of civilized faith, science and technology. Indonesia's Vision 2019 with the vision of Gorontalo District 2021 has strong coherence. This coherence appears in the terminology of Gorontalo district's vision which tends to refer to the Indonesian Vision and is a derivative of the 2019 vision.

In achieving regional vision, of course, it is important to implement policies that are in line with the problems faced. The problems faced by the Gorontalo District Government include poverty, unemployment, and some bureaucratic problems.

The main problem that is urgently needed to be resolved by regional governments in 2016-2021 with the highest percentage of poor people in Gorontalo Province, it is necessary to redesign poverty reduction policies in a more focused, measurable, and holistic direction. Detection results related to the concentration of the poor are in the agricultural sector employment in the food crop sub sector. This is indicated by the farmers' exchange rate of <100. Therefore, policies in this sub-sector need to be developed on real efforts.

Besides poverty, the serious problem faced by Gorontalo Regency is the high unemployment rate > 4%. The problem of unemployment is closely related to access to employment, skills and expertise of job seekers, while access is largely determined by the amount of investment. Investment growth that tends to be small as experienced by the Regency produces an effect on employment. In the future this will be one of the important agenda of Gorontalo Regency policy.

The gini ratio index is quite high. The gap between the rich and the poor illustrated by the Gini index number is very high > 0.45 in 2015. This figure shows the still wide slope between rich and poor in the Regency. Besides that The Human Development Index (HDI) of Gorontalo tends to be low, when compared to the developing regions such as Bone Bolango District, next to Gorontalo City. Gorontalo Regency HDI is only ranked 3rd among districts / cities in Gorontalo. This shows that the government's responsibility in the future is very hard to increase the HDI rate which is a composite of education, health and economic development. The high maternal mortality rate shows that the amount of government responsibility in improving the quality of health services in the regions. Because maternal mortality is one of the main performance indicators of the health sector that drives the government.

As with other regions in Gorontalo Province, Gorontalo District has a relatively small fiscal independence of the region. The measure of independence is seen in the ratio between Regional Original Income and Balancing Funds. The real condition shows that the Regional Original Income is smaller than the regional income originating from the balance fund. In the future, concrete efforts related to income generating through sources of Regional Original Income are one of the focus of policies. Even though on the one hand, the phenomenon of

decentralization in Indonesia has reduced the movement of the government to intensify and extend revenue.

To fulfilled the achievement of the Minimum Service Standards, Government (regional) functions can be classified into 4 groups, namely: service provision, regulation, development, and representation. The function of providing services oriented to the environment and society. Environmental services include, among others, regional roads, street lighting, waste disposal, sewerage, flood prevention, maintenance of parks and recreation areas. In addition, medical and health services are also minimal services besides facilities and education. Almost all of these functions have not shown the achievement of minimum service standards.

If we see from SDGs sector , The SDGs in Gorontalo Regency still have a lot of heavy work. Failure to achieve the SDGs indicator in Gorontalo Regency means that the remaining work that must be completed through the achievements of the SDGs is greater. Because some indicators in the MDGs are not included in the SDGs indicator.

The problem that is serious enough to be an important agenda to be resolved in the coming leadership is implementing Bureaucratic Reform. The focus of reform is on cultural sett, mind sett and system sett. The cultural sett aspect is related to a work culture that is still input oriented (budget, attendance) and not yet in the output and outcome orientation. In the mind sett aspect that are very urgent to change are knowledge, understanding, and responsiveness and responsibility for the task. The key issue is the low commitment of ASN (State Civil Apparatus) to its duties and responsibilities. Whereas in the sett system, the most basic change is in the pattern of job recruitment that adheres to the spoils system (approach of close relatives, family, and seniority). While merit system recruitment patterns based on performance, capability, and reputation of performance have not been fully implemented.

If based on the explanation above, we can see that the main problem faced by Gorontalo Regency is related to the fulfillment of public welfare. As a newly developing area, Gorontalo Regency must be able to keep up with the current modernization. The problems faced were related to the development of the agricultural sector, development of people's economy, bureaucratic reform and improvement of human resources. To anticipate this problem, the pro-active steps are carried out by the government starting from the District level to the Village level.

The research focuses on increasing the capacity of regional leaders in accommodating community participation to participate in regional development. Avolio and Bass in Sutikno (2014: 54) suggest that participatory leadership has four dimensions which he calls the "the four is" dimensions including:

- 1) Idealized Influence. This first dimension is described as a leader behavior that makes his followers admire, respect, and at the same time trust him.
- 2) Motivation for inspiration. In this dimension transformational leaders are described as leaders who are able to articulate clear expectations of subordinate achievements, demonstrate their commitment to all organizational goals, and are able to upload team spirit in the organization through growing enthusiasm and optimism.
- 3) Intellectual stimulation. In this dimension transformational leaders must be able to grow new ideas, give creative solutions to various problems faced by

- subordinates, and provide motivation to subordinates to look for new approaches in carrying out organizational tasks.
- 4) Individual consideration. In this dimension transformational leaders are portrayed as leaders who listen attentively to subordinates' input and specifically want to pay attention to subordinates' needs for career development.

With the implementation of this participatory leadership model, it is expected that the interests of the community to the lowest level can be accommodated as a whole. Leaders who involve the community in policy making are one of the strategies in improving the performance of the bureaucracy in the framework of community and regional development.

Especially with the enactment of the 2015 AEC, ASEAN will become a single market and a single unit of production goods, so that there will be a free flow of goods, services, investment, capital and skilled labor among ASEAN countries. This is an opportunity as well as a challenge that needs to be addressed by Indonesia carefully and integratedly. Indonesia's readiness needs to be done in all fields as a whole, both at the central and regional levels. Public education on the 2015 AEC opportunity, increasing national and regional economic competitiveness, and increasing the quality and quantity of Indonesian labor will be valuable assets for Indonesia to achieve the success of the 2015 AEC for national development interests.

In response to this, each region must prepare itself. The method that can be applied is to maximize leadership potential in each region. This will certainly have a positive impact on improving performance which will further increase regional capacity and competitiveness.

## **B. Application of Participatory Leadership in the Agricultural Sector**

Tjokroamidjojo (in Husain 1992) explained that there were four important aspects of development, namely: first, the involvement and participation of the people in accordance with the mechanism of a country's political process helped determine the direction of the strategy and development policies carried out by the government. Second, increasing the articulation (ability) to formulate goals and especially the ways in planning those goals should be. Therefore, the government generally needs to provide guidance on the objectives and ways to achieve the development objectives. Third, community participation in real activities that are consistent with the direction, strategy and plans that have been determined in the political process. In this case, it depends on the system and procedures for administering the government that apply in a country. Fourth, the community will provide active participation if there are formulations and implementation of programs that touch their interests directly to improve prosperity.

There are two factors that influence the success or failure of community participation in development planning as stated by Conyers (in Rohman 2012), namely: first, the result of community involvement itself, the community will not participate nor be self-willed nor with high enthusiasm in planning activities if they felt that their participation in the planning had no effect on the final plan. Second, people feel reluctant to participate in activities that do not interest them or that do not have a direct influence they can feel (Rohman, 2012)

In many studies, the process of community participation became a concept which was then considered ideal in the formulation and implementation of public policies. However, in practice this participatory government process also encountered various obstacles. For this reason, the implementation of participation needs to be considered several things, among others: (Soetrisno in Husain: 2011)

First, people's participation in development is not the mobilization of the people in development. People's participation in development is cooperation between the people and the government in planning, implementing and financing development. Second, To develop and institutionalize people's participation in development a change must be made in the government's perception of development. Development must be regarded as a moral obligation of all this nation, not a new ideology that must be secured. And the third, to arouse people's participation in development, tolerance from government officials is needed against criticism. Alternative thoughts that arise in the community as a result of the dynamics of development itself, because criticized and alternative thoughts are a form of people's participation in development.

The concept of participation basically offers the right design so that it is widely adopted in public policy. The research will link the process of participation with the leadership of a regional head.

The agricultural sector is the development priority program of Gorontalo Regency. For horticulture plants dominated by vegetables, fruits, biopharmaca, and ornamental plants, the results are harvested in the reporting period. Horticulture Development in Gorontalo Regency focuses on daily plants such as Mango, Orange, Papaya, Banana, Pineapple, Durian, Avocado, Starfruit, *Duku/Langsat*, Guava and Rose Apple, Jackfruit, *Salak*, Soursop and Chili. In Gorontalo Regency banana plants have an area of 25,674 tons. The Mango Plant has the largest production of 9.561 tons and Jackfruit has a production of 3.235 tons. Meanwhile, plantation crops in Gorontalo Regency are dominated by Coconut, Cloves and Cocoa. The plantation sector in Gorontalo Regency in 2016, the production of several commodities is: 121 tons kapok, and 22,812 tons coconut.

The problem of regional development is a "gap expectation" between the development performance achieved at this time and the planned one and between the targets to be achieved in the future with the real conditions when planning is made. Potential regional development problems generally arise from forces that have not been utilized optimally, neglected weaknesses, underestimated opportunities, and unanticipated threats.

The problems faced in the agricultural sector in Gorontalo Regency include, low incentives for small farmers; institution of farmer groups is still weak and generally has no legal entity; the quality of farmer human resources is very minimal and tends to be resistant to agricultural technology; agricultural budgets are dominated by the Assistance Task Budget (Budgeting Commitments from Very Small Areas); local food restoration has not been carried out; the pattern of agriculture still uses a system of planting a uniformity; the ratio of the number of extension agents and work areas is very lame.

Optimization of Integrated Agriculture is a method that is applied and becomes the priority of Gorontalo Regency government. This priority is aimed at achieving Food Security for Sovereign Indonesia as a national priority. This

priority is directed at increasing the productivity of food crops through interventions strengthening the mastery of agricultural technology to achieve production efficiency which impacts later on increasing the farmer sub-sector exchange rate. Subsequent interventions on increasing the productivity of horticultural agriculture are targeted at meeting the needs of the horticulture market in Gorontalo and the surrounding region. The availability of sufficient food is expected to encourage the creation of a regional food industry so that people get added value. These interventions are certainly able to improve regional food security, availability of food reserves. Space-based territorial interventions in focus Agriculture directs the Boliyohuto Subdistrict and its surroundings as a center for agriculture and agro industry. The next focus is to integrate agricultural activities with livestock, so that the productivity of the agricultural sub-sector with the livestock sub-sector increases.

In order to optimize the agricultural sector, the strategy to strengthen leadership capacity in reality needs to be implemented more optimally. The agricultural sector is essentially a sector that is close to the community. For this reason, community involvement in every agricultural policy making is very necessary. This is because the community as an actor in the agricultural sector is the party most aware of the problems at hand.

In increasing the productivity of the agricultural sector, a regional leader must be able to accommodate every community's aspirations regarding the management of the agricultural sector. In addition, leaders in promoting community participation, regional leaders should also provide motivation to improve the performance of agricultural sector actors, from upstream to downstream.

Until now the village government in Gorontalo District has been trying to carry out the *Musrembangdes* (Village Development Planning Meeting) in the policy-making model at the village level. Based on the results of interviews with community leaders in Gorontalo District, the mechanism of the *musrembangdes* mostly only involved leaders / elites so that the interests of the community as a whole could not be accommodated. Not to mention in terms of supervision and policy implementation processes in the field. Most people in reality are not involved in this process.

Of course this must be reviewed by noting that the community is the spearhead in the development of a region. Active involvement or community participation in each policy process will achieve ideal results. Regional leaders on the other hand are central actors who are required to connect the aspirations of the people. So that by itself policy is not only beneficial for a few parties, and democracy is not only a mere discourse.

#### **4. CLOSING**

The problems in the problems in the agricultural sector in Gorontalo Regency are still complex, starting from the still weak security issues to the quality of the Farmers' Human Resources is very minimal. In order to optimize the agricultural sector, the strategy to improve leadership capacity needs to be improved, it needs to increase the capacity of protection and agricultural Human Resources. In increasing the productivity of the agricultural sector, leaders must provide a broad space for community participation, namely by gathering each community's aspirations related to the agricultural sector. In addition, leaders in increasing

community participation, regional leaders also need to provide motivation to improve the performance of the agricultural sector, from upstream to downstream.

Based on this, competency development is needed in order to build a strong and independent agriculture. Besides that, it is necessary to disseminate and develop a participatory leadership model in optimizing the potential of the agricultural sector in Gorontalo Regency.

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