Communication Structuring in Aisyiyah’s Empowerment Activities in Isolated Tribal Communities

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**ABSTRACT**

Several parties continue to criticize the empowerment of remote tribal or indigenous communities. The empowerment program for remote indigenous communities has not yet been deemed effective for empowering indigenous communities. Using Anthony Giddens’ structuration theory, this study aims to examine how communication is structured in community empowerment activities for isolated tribes. Using a case study methodology, this study uses qualitative descriptive approach. Interviews were conducted with the Regional Leader of ‘Aisyiyah (PDA) Banggai, who empowered an isolated tribe in the interior of Tombiobong, Maleo Jaya village, South Batui sub-district, Banggai district, Central Sulawesi (Sulteng). The study indicates that social reproduction occurs through the duality of structures in Aisyiyah empowerment activities among the indigenous Loinang people. This fits with Giddens’s idea of duality, which says that structure and agent work together and affect each other.

Keywords: Communication Structuring; Empowerment; Isolated Tribal Society.

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**ABSTRAK**


Kata Kunci: Strukturasi Komunikasi; Pemberdayaan; Masyarakat Suku Terasing.
INTRODUCTION

Indigenous Tribal Communities, referred to as Remote Indigenous Communities (KAT), according to the Presidential Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 186 of 2014, are people bound by geographic, economic, and/or socio-cultural units and are poor, remote and/or socio-economically vulnerable. Generally, KAT exists in areas that are difficult to reach or remote. Many KAT lives or inhabits the wilderness, which is difficult to access either on foot or by vehicle. As stated by Adriyani in her research, for remote indigenous peoples, the forest becomes a place for them to associate their rights and obligations to nature as a whole (Adriyani et al., 2019).

The activities of empowering isolated tribal communities or remote indigenous communities are currently still being criticized by several parties. The empowerment program for Remote Indigenous Communities is deemed ineffective in empowering indigenous communities. Obstacles occur because the government as a local agency only provides guidance, training, and understanding of the empowerment of Remote Indigenous Communities. However, facilities such as educational infrastructure, places of worship, and health services have not been adequately equipped (Sujarwani et al., 2018). Another obstacle was the lack of continuous mentoring and training (Bakar & Ghofer, 2017).

Efforts to empower KAT have been carried out in such a way through various kinds of academic studies, policies, programs, and activities based on the mandate of laws and regulations. However, the results have not shown the expected conditions, namely the equality of social and economic conditions in this remote area with other areas (Suyanto & Mujiyadi, 2015). The government needs to optimize the involvement of Regional Apparatus Organizations (OPD), which have the main task and function of providing access to the fulfillment of the basic needs of KAT residents (Rusmiyati, 2020).

The program to socialize isolated tribes must be changed from a “guidance” pattern to an “empowerment” pattern with various policies that pay more attention to the aspirations and values of their local culture (Syuroh, 2011). There needs to be the development of alternative development models that can act as a counterbalance to maintaining territorial control and local structures (Torres-Wong & Jimenez-Sandoval, 2021). Therefore, this research aims to analyze the structuration of communication in empowering isolated tribal communities by using the approach of Anthony Giddens’ structuration theory. The message planning process, the selection of communication channels and media, and the approach and style of communication are some important things that need to be considered (Rasyid et al., 2019).

Approaches in the social sciences that can provide insight into community risk are structural, and agency approaches. The expert who discussed this study was Anthony Giddens, a figure who is considered the highest priest of modernity. In line with Ulrich Beck on society at risk (Doncu, 2016; Esgin, 2013; Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2017). In the view of modern Social Sciences, structure and agency are not dualism but are dualities that cannot be separated, so according to Anthony Giddens, this is called structuration (Revelation, 2015).

Anthony Giddens’ thinking is quite interesting, from its classification to its application (Adib, 2012). Giddens explains that structuration is a process by which an organizational action or structure in society creates norms, rules, roles, or other social structures that will inhibit or influence other actions in the future (Haryanto, 2009). Poole and McPhee argue that structure is the manifestation and product of organizational communication systems (Morissan & Hamid, 2010). Even Giddens’ thinking is also often used in viewing complex structures such as religious systems (Dharma, 2021).

The main basis of Giddens’ theory of structuration is agency, structure, agent, resources, time, and space, with the most substantial focus on the agency (van Rooyen, 2013). Giddens’ concept explains that in a structuration, there is structure and agency. So in the context of this research, empowerment stakeholders as the agency and structure of remote indigenous peoples as an inseparable duality. Giddens’s view also states that structure is a rule (rules), and resources (resources) can be formed from and simultaneously form the repetition of social practice (Haryanto, 2009; Nasir, 2012). This is understood as a factor that is not only limiting or restraining but also empowering the perpetrator (Haryanto, 2009). Giddens is very concerned about the importance of the struggle to realize civil society because civil society is not a condition that is created just like that, taken for granted (Achmad, 2020).

On the other hand, actors who are actors can also influence the structure in the sense that they do not always have to be subject to the structure (Dawson, 2010). Furthermore, Anthony Giddens mentions three groups of structures: signification, domination, and legitimacy (Giddens, 2010). The
structure of signification refers to the meaning or symbolic, mention, and discourse; the domination structure group refers to the control over both people and goods; and the legitimacy structure group refers to the normative regulations that appear in the rule of law. These three structural groups, apart from being able to limit, can also empower actors (Sihotang, 2012). So in this sense, the act of communication in empowerment activities provides significance, dominance, or legitimacy in efforts to develop the capacity of isolated tribal communities. This is called by Giddens an adaptive effort in a structuration between the duality of agency and structure.

Communication has an important role in creating or realizing the duality of structuration. In its application, this research provides an overview of whether a communication act is able to strengthen an agency from the mapping that appears on the agencies involved. Do agents also have the potential to be involved in the process of structuring communication in empowering isolated tribal communities? This study analyzes explicitly how the structuration of communication in Aisyiyah empowerment activities in isolated tribal communities in the Loinang Tribe indigenous community.

METHODS
This type of research is descriptive qualitative using a case study approach. Research with a case study approach is research that aims to examine research questions and problems, which cannot be separated between phenomena and the context in which these phenomena occur. In this case, a case study is used to examine a special phenomenon related to communication structuring in the empowerment of the isolated tribal community carried out by the Banggai Regional Leader’ Aisyiyah (PDA) in the Loinang tribal community.

Using case study research methods was carried out by considering several things. First, the research focuses on answering the “how” and “why” questions. Second, in case study research, the researchers should not manipulate the behavior of the object under study involved in the research. Third, the researcher wants to cover the contextual background conditions because the researcher believes that it is relevant to what is being studied. Finally, there is an unclear boundary between the phenomenon and the context under study (Yin, 2008). A technique used in case studies is called synthesis to search for repetition in cases. The end product is a narrative that tells about the case, which allows the reader to fully understand the case that happened (Prihatsanti et al., 2018).

Data collection techniques in this study were interviews. Interviews can be used as a heuristic tool, as new information leads to new perspectives and questions for future subjects (Given, 2008). This study conducted interviews with Banggai PDA, Central Sulawesi, which empowers isolated tribes in the interior of Tombiobong, Maleo Jaya Village, South Batui District, Banggai Regency, Central Sulawesi (Sulteng).

Several data validity testing techniques were used to test the validity of the data in this study. Data validation is important to measure the extent to which the data obtained can be trusted. The technique used to measure the validity of the data in this study is a triangulation of source data. Source data triangulation is a data validation technique that checks the source of information data by examining the evidence coming from the source and then using it to justify themes logically (Cresswell, 2016).

After the data is collected, the data reduction process is carried out by sorting out the data that can be used and ignored. The selected data were then analyzed using case study data analysis which was carried out by categorizing the data. After there is a category of data, it is continued by organizing the data in four ways: pattern matching, building explanations, finding model logic, and performing time series analysis (Yin, 2008).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Signification, Domination, and Legitimacy of the Indigenous Peoples of the Loinang Tribe
Banggai Regency, located in Central Sulawesi Province, has three different ethnic groups: the Banggai Tribe, the Balantak Tribe, and the Loinang Tribe. The three tribes have differences in terms of language and customs (Mangundap et al., 2017). The Loinang indigenous people, especially those living in the Tombiobong Hamlet, Maleo Jaya Village, South Batui District, are isolated tribal communities in Banggai Regency. Loinang is intended to refer to communities that used to live in the
interior, especially the area that stretches along the Sensean and Lobu rivers (Dalle & Jundi, 2021). The activities of the Loinang indigenous people are mostly carried out in forest and hilly areas. Before then, the Social Service of Banggai Regency made an engineered settlement later named Dusun Tombiobong. The everyday language used by the Loinang indigenous people is the Saluan language. The Saluan language is used in most of Banggai Regency, Central Sulawesi Province, which is spread over 18 sub-districts, especially in Pagimana District and its divisions Lobu and Bualemo Districts (Pamolango, 2012).

The social practice of the Loinang tribal community is different from society in general. Only a few members of this community can speak Indonesian. Does not know modern technology, lacks socialization, and has unusual names. Among them are Platforms, Philippines, and Pencils to Airplanes, which are the names of the tribal chiefs of the Loinang tribal community. Access to the location of the engineered settlement of the Loinang Tribe in Tombiobong is quite isolated. One must pass an unpaved road and cross a river to reach the village. This geographical factor then makes the Loinang tribal community lag behind when compared to other communities. These various backgrounds are the reasons that encourage the Banggai Aisyiyah Regional Leader (PDA) to run an empowerment program for the Loinang tribal community. However, we need to avoid essentialist ideas about indigenous peoples, their cultures, and aspirations. This notion continues to hold true among some stakeholders who view indigenous peoples as pure human groups living in harmony with their natural environment or as defenseless populations in need of development (Torres-Wong & Jimenez-Sandoval, 2021).

There are three important clusters in Giddens’ view regarding how a structure works: signification, dominance, and legitimacy (Sihotang, 2012). The three concepts of the structural cluster can be used to see how the communication structuration of the Banggai PDA carrying out empowerment activities in the Loinang Tribe Community. The first is signification related to symbolic schemata, mention, and discourse. The relationship pattern of the three structures/schemata with social practice can be illustrated in the following diagram:

![Figure 1. Dimensions of the structural duality relationship (Giddens, 2010)](image)

Social actions and practices in communicating always presuppose a structure of significance. The use of various methods and communication strategies in the Banggai PDA empowerment activity in the Loinang Tribe Community is part of the structure’s significance. Sri Moxsa Djalamang, Head of Banggai PDA explained that the empowerment carried out in isolated tribal communities was based on the spirit of Al-Maun. Spirit Al-Maun is the basic teaching of social human values from the Muhammadiyah movement, which actualizes the Al-Qur’an Surah Al-Maun about caring for people with powerlessness (Hilman & Sari, 2018). Spirit of Al-Maun can be categorized as a form of ‘culture’, which refers to the schemata-signification and activities within the scope of the schemata-signification.

Another signification scheme of the Banggai PDA is the use of the Saluan language as an introduction to interacting with the indigenous Loinang tribe. Several team members from Banggai PDA are Saluan speakers. Sri Moxsa Djalamang also said that this empowerment activity became a
space or arena for mutual language learning for the two agencies involved. The indigenous people of the Loinang tribe are learning to speak Indonesian, and the Aisyiyah PDA team is adding to their Saluan language repertoire. This allows the communication practice between the two social structures to run effectively. Therefore, language is an important aspect of community empowerment, especially in isolated tribal communities.

In addition to the use of language, Sri Moxsa Djalamang explained that the indigenous people of the Loinang tribe have customary law and various kinds of local knowledge. Local customary knowledge systems are generally understood as an integrated, holistic, social, and ecological collection of knowledge, practices, and beliefs relating to the relationship of living things, including humans, to each other and their environment (Hill et al., 2020). The customary law that applies to the Loinang Tribe is considered in line with Islamic law by Banggai PDA. An example is the existence of rules and norms in visiting. If you want to visit a house where only women are, then men are not allowed to enter. Vice versa, if there are men, women should not visit. Banggai PDA then obeyed this discourse to adjust the empowerment program to be carried out with the social practices of the Loinang Tribe. The application of customary law can also be linked to the schemata of domination and legitimacy.

Domination produces and exercises power by controlling various resources (Achmad, 2020). The structure of ‘domination’ includes the schemata of control over people (politics) and control over goods. Meanwhile, the legitimacy structure is related to the schemata of normative regulations contained in the laws, rules, and norms. Another form of schemata-domination described by Sri Moxsa Djalamang can be seen from the Banggai PDA communication strategy using the distribution of necessities. Sri Moxsa Djalamang explained that the initial approach taken by Banggai PDA to the indigenous Loinang Tribe was the intense provision of basic necessities. In addition to providing basic necessities, Banggai PDA also uses intermediaries to make initial approaches to the Loinang tribal indigenous peoples. The intermediary is Health Workers who have previously conducted mentoring activities in Tombiobong. Banggai PDA obtained access through the Head of the Banggai District Health Office, who is also the Chairman of the Banggai Muhammadiyah Regional Executive Board (PDM). The existence of duality between PDA and PDM Banggai is a form of a ‘legitimacy’ scheme.

As previously explained, the Loinang indigenous people have a tribal chief named Pak Air. The existence of the tribal chief is not only a social practice in the structure-signification system but also related to controlling over people in the domination-structure scope. This principle of ‘signification’ finally includes the schemata of ‘domination’ and ‘legitimacy’. Because the schemata of significance is shown through the person who leads the adat community, which is referred to as the tribal chief, concerns the schemata of domination of the tribal chief’s power over members of the adat community. In addition to tribal chiefs, other forms, namely the existence of traditional leaders to Banggai PDA, can also be positioned into the three-dimensional schemata of the duality relationship of the structure.

Sri Moxsa Djalamang revealed that the Banggai PDA in Tombiobong is also part of the Banggai Regency Government’s strategic program in accelerating stunting prevention. The involvement of the Banggai Regency government through the stunting prevention acceleration group program here is a form of legitimacy for the implementation of the empowerment program for isolated tribal communities, especially in the Loinang tribal community. Previously, the Department of Social Affairs had also contributed to the presence of an engineered settlement which was later transformed into a Tombiobong hamlet. The relationship between the Banggai PDA and the Banggai Regency Government in empowerment activities for the Loinang indigenous people is a form of legitimacy that provides facilities, authority, and convenience. In addition to collaboration with the Government.

The Loinang indigenous people have shy characteristics and tend to be sensitive to the presence of strangers. Thus, interacting with them requires local knowledge, approval, and the trust of community members. Sri Moxsa Djalamang and the Banggai PDA team also understand that gaining the trust of the Loinang indigenous people is very important. This form of legitimacy schemata can support Banggai PDA empowerment activities in the Loinang Tribe indigenous people. Thus, the Banggai PDA team is very careful in communicating outside the established strategy. If done, it has the potential to violate the social standards of the Loinang Tribe. This, of course, will result in social sanctions or distrust. From the perspective of structuration, the social environment in which humans are located does not only consist of various accidental events or actions but is structured. There is an underlying order in the way people behave and in the relationships in which they stand with one another (Junaedi et al., 2017).
The Duality of the Banggai PDA Structure and the Loinang Tribe’s Indigenous People

If referring to structuration theory, the duality of structure in agency relations can lead to new social practices in social life. This happens with a structured pattern. In the context of Aisyiyah’s empowerment in the Loinang Tribe, the interaction between the two is a process of structuring communication. The structure, in this case, is the District Government of Banggai and Aisyiyah and the social system that applies in the Loinang tribal community. At the same time, the agencies involved are Banggai PDA actors and community members involved in it. An important focus of structuration theory is the relationship between agency and structure which explains the duality and dialectical relationship between agency and structure (Junaedi et al., 2017). The formation of agents and structures are not two separate clusters of phenomena but represent a form of duality. Social reproduction occurs through the duality of structures in Aisyiyah’s empowerment activities in the Loinang Tribe.

Indigenous peoples of the Loinang tribe are individuals who have personal ties within their community. Some social systems and structures bind community members in it. Customary legal order, norms, customs, and local knowledge of the indigenous people of the Loinang Tribe are not born just like that. Everything happens in a structured structure with a clear pattern. In the social practice of the Loinang tribal indigenous peoples, they recognize the role of the tribal chief, traditional leaders who are divined and “copies” as healing spells in their local knowledge. It is the same with Aisyiyah, which is part of the autonomous organization of Muhammadiyah. In Banggai PDA, there is a general chairman and organizational management structure under him. Sri Moxsa Djalamang explained that the Banggai PDA empowerment program activities carried out in the Loinang Tribe are not top-down. However, it is composed of the duality of the Banggai PDA as a structure and members of the Loinang Tribe indigenous community as an agency. This is in line with the concept of duality believed by Giddens in which structure and agents are dialectical and influence each other.

So how is the relationship between structural principles and social practice in the context of the duality of the structure of the Banggai PDA and the Loinang indigenous people? The duality of the structure between the two can be seen, for example, in the use of the Saluan language as an introduction. The social act and practice of communicating constantly presuppose a certain structure of ‘signification’, for example, through grammar. The duality of social structure and action also always involves modalities or intermediate means. The modality is part of the rules and available resources, which can be interpretation schemes, facilities, and norms. Such as the belief or local knowledge of the indigenous Loinang Tribe. The role of Banggai PDA in empowering members of the Loinang Tribe community is not only limited to social, economic, and health assistance. Sri Moxsa Djalamang explained that gradually the Loinang indigenous people were also taught values, beliefs, and ideology based on religion. This is in line with the philosophical foundation of the Al-Maun Banggai PDA spirit. For example, there is local knowledge of the Loinang tribe in the healing process of the sick. They believe that the disease is caused and originated by other humans. So in practice, the two people are not allowed to meet. This belief will certainly complicate the implementation of health services and assistance programs for the indigenous Loinang Tribe. Therefore, Banggai PDA then uses religious understanding to straighten local knowledge. This practice is part of a form of structural duality (Fadillah, 2021).

Modality is also related to awareness of social practices and actions. According to Giddens, there are three dimensions of consciousness in social practice (Giddens, 2010). The first is that there is an unconscious motivation associated with a want or need that has the potential to direct action but not the action itself. The implementation of community empowerment for the indigenous Loinang Tribe was carried out by Banggai PDA. Unconsciously, although based on the motives and spirit of the Al-Maun movement. Empowerment efforts carried out by Banggai PDA are a form of management appropriate for the social system. The second is discursive awareness, which refers to the capacity to reflect and explain our actions explicitly. Obeying customary law and following the customs of the Loinang tribal community carried out by Banggai PDA to avoid potential social sanctions is a form of discursive awareness.

The last is practical awareness related to the cluster of practical knowledge that cannot always be parsed. Practical awareness is the key to understanding the analysis of social practice as the routinization of personal and social life occurs through this practical cluster of consciousness. Practical awareness in the context of empowering the Banggai PDA in the Loinang tribal community
involves various elements that exist in the duality relationship of structure and agent in it. This can be seen from the process of social reproduction, which involves groups of signification and domination. The new habit is formed through repeated social practice, while this practice is a means of realizing legal norms that continue to be enforced at the level of social practice carried out in the scope of space and time (Hidayatulloh et al., 2021).

Agent and structure cannot be seen as separate things but instead become a unit or what is called the concept of duality. In Giddens’ view, the relationship between agents and structures is the relationship in the social practices they practice (Herman & Rusadi, 2020). We can see this from every communication action in the context of empowering the Banggai PDA in the Loinang tribal community. In society, agents and structures are a unity that influences each other and whose relationship reflects the duality of structure. The duality of structure is a resource that is applied in an interaction that occurs in a society that is implanted repeatedly in the same interaction (Prastika, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Empowerment carried out by Banggai PDA on the Loinang tribal community in Tombiobong is a form of study on the reproduction of a system in the interaction of the two. In this context, the duality of the structure becomes the primary basis for social reproduction in space and time between the Banggai PDA and the Loinang indigenous people. The results of this study can also explain why the analysis of ideology is usually closely related to the analysis of a culture in the social sciences. Culture concerns the whole cluster of schemata which are the principles of social practice from the three structural groups of significance, domination, and legitimacy. From this relationship, this research finally tries to provide suggestions related to structuration theory which is considered too focused on only explaining the relationship between agent and structure. The structural theory should be able to be contextualized to see the extent of culture and local knowledge to the dimensions of communication in the social practice of society. This can be seen from the case study on the Banggai PDA empowerment activity in the Loinang Tribe indigenous community.

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