

Economic Empowerment-Based Communication Management in Rupert Utara Tourism Area

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Abstract

Tourism is the world's largest service industry. Its growth creates social, economic and environmental changes so that understanding and thorough steps are required to manage it. Such changes push involvement of both local and regional communities in the tourism industry. Rupert Utara is a potential tourism area that can be managed in an integrated way to improve the ability and the economic prosperity of people independently. The purpose of this study is to provide practical recommendations to the tourism industry about the communication management model in empowering community economy in the tourism area. This study was conducted using qualitative descriptive method through the interactional communication model in accordance with the communication empowerment or participative approach. The data collection was done through observation and interviews as well as literature studies that contributed to the subject field of tourism communication development in the context of community economic empowerment in coastal areas. This study concludes that an integrated management model through the management of communication resources in various forms and contexts of effective communication can increase the community economic income independently. Communication management is accomplished through the process of using various communication resources through planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling the elements of communication in achieving the expected goals. Meanwhile, the forms of communication in achieving the objectives are adapted to the characters of the local community through various forms of socialization, assistance and counseling that have used information and technology media. Although the community has already realized that tourism has potential to improve their economy independently, but it still has not been done well, so that there is still chance for improvement based on the integrated development approach.

Keywords: Management, Communication, Tourism, Community Empowerment

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the important sectors of the national development in accordance with the plans set by the government. In order to realize the success of development, there should be an action that must involve actors, enforcement process, policy, politics, and social culture that interact each other, and this will be more realistic when viewed as a system with various subsystems that are interconnected and mutually influential (Ernststein: 2011). The process is important to view in terms of various aspects through various approaches to the functions and roles of actors, environmental impact, knowledge improvement, and community prosperity. Besides, equality in the implementation process becomes increasingly important. At present, it still seems that the synergy of the efforts made by various parties to develop the national tourism is not optimal yet due to different perceptions.

Warouw, et al (2017) stated that the tourism development policies are currently an effort to encourage actors in the tourism sector. As viewed from two sides, the community is incorporated not only as an object, but also as the subject of development, so that the tourism development is carried out through a comprehensive and integrated systemic approach. Some various apprehensive issues about tourism development come up and their solutions need to be sought, such as low understanding of community about the tourism area empowerment, less ability of community to make use of technology, non-solution oriented planning (projects), changing policies, low quantity of and qualified facilities, non-community based management, unclear coaching, and quantity and promotion effectiveness.

In its implication, tourism development program needs to be reviewed through tourism communication by using economic approach and community empowerment approach. In the empowerment approach, one that should be noted is that the information submitted must be appropriate with what already exists in the community, meaning that it has already entrenched in the target community. Hence, the information is easy to understand, reasonable, and the community is willing to accept the information. The key formula in an effort to sustainable management of tourist destinations is the participation of the local community, the development of local tourism product quality and the development of local micro, small and medium group businesses.

A number of problems found in Rupert Utara tourism area were caused by less involvement of the community either as an object or even as a subject. The community did not realize that the area had potential to

develop tourism and to improve the community economic empowerment. Consequently, only the government who concerned the tourism development program, while the community did not. The factor causing this community incomprehension was due to the lack of management of communication and information conveyed to them. Based on this fact, the focus of this study was on how the communication management could improve the economic empowerment of Rupert Utara.

2. Literature Review

Management is only a tool to achieve the goals expected by the institution/organization. According to Suprpto (2011: 139), management is necessary to influence goals, to maintain a balance between conflicting goals, and to achieve efficiency and effectiveness. The achievement of the goals of an institution /organization needs the communication process that is managed effectively. Therefore, management in communication is considered important and plays a large role in the achievement.

Suprpto (2011: 140) simply puts communication management as the management applied in communication activities. Management will act as a driver of communication activities in the effort to achieve communication goals. Similarly, as revealed by Michael Kaye (in Soedarsono, 2009: 46), communication management implies the optimal use of human and technological resources to establish relationships between humans. It can be concluded that one of the goals of communication is to change individual behavior. To achieve this, there must be various stages or the communication process being through with a managerial approach. Therefore, in order for communication to reach its goals effectively, each element in the communication process should be managed by linking the management functions, namely planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating.

2.1 Management Process in Communication Activities

Edwar J Robinson (in Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2009: 285) stated that the formulation process of communication management in general can be done through an approach. The first is to define the problem that includes: background of the problem, community needs identification, investigation and opinion monitoring. According to Clipes, Center and Broom (2009), the situation analysis should be based on a scientific research methodology and formal approach, not just intuitive.

Scientific research is important for obtaining information in order to formulate strategic planning. Without research, the communication practitioners will get limitations in understanding the situation and providing solutions. The research process is divided into two, namely information or exploration method and formal method. The former can be done through personal communication, interviewing key informants, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), telephone surveys, data searching through online media, and field reports. Meanwhile, the latter includes database analysis, survey and content analysis.

Organizations that are able to define stakeholders and to find out their needs will also be better prepared to take appropriate action in the decision-making process that impacts in improving organizational success (Freeman, 1984: 31).

The second is planning that consists of planning mode and evolutionary mode. In the planning mode, the strategy is a systematic plan and guide to achieving organizational goals. Meanwhile, the evolutionary mode is a strategy that is established over time and characterizes decision patterns that are able to adjust to organizational opportunities or threats (Cutlip, Center and Broom, 2009: 314).

Strategy planning in communication management involves making decisions about the objectives and the program goals, identifying the public, establishing policies or guidelines in selecting strategies and establishing their own strategies. The third is action and communication that refers to implementing action and communication programs designed to achieve specific goals. Suitability, priority, and measurement of the right results in each activity are the main points that will determine the success of the implementation.

Finally, the fourth is evaluation. All forms of communication activities must be measured quantitatively and qualitatively by conducting a thorough evaluation of the program which strongly emphasizes feedback and adjustments. Components undertaken are formulating performance indicators and evaluation methodology. Evaluation undertaken in communication includes awareness level evaluation, acceptance level evaluation and participation rate evaluation (Ronald D Smith, 2005: 244-255).

2.2 Empowerment and Participatory Communication

Communication and society are two complementary sides (Hamijoyo, 2010: 4). Social dynamics that take place in a society will influence the communication behavior played by each individual in the community. Likewise, the communication process will influence and reflect the life style of a society. Communication between humans always takes place in a value-packed atmosphere, such as tradition, customs, culture, ideological religion and political orientation.

To allow the public has the ability to solve their own problems, it needs a form of communication that

makes them free to think and express themselves openly corresponding the value they have. Therefore, a directional communication model or a linear model is certainly not appropriate in the context of communication empowerment. An appropriate approach or model of communication is a communication model that allows the exchange of information between components in the communication process with many dimensions. Therefore, the approach used in this study is a participatory communication model. This model has the assumption that humans are not passive communicants, but are the result of their social environment.

The essence of this empowerment communication model is that in the communication process it is possible for the emergence of new ideas at the time communication is in progress. The main concept of participatory communication is community-centered. Thus, this model shows an interactive situation between the communicating parties. This model underlies the emergence of Appropriate Communication for Development of Communication (ACDC) programs or so-called "Appropriate Communication for Community Development".

This empowerment or participatory communication model is the most effective when applied to groups in society. The concept of participatory communication is an approach that views initiatives from the people as the main development resources and views their material and spiritual well-being as the goals to be achieved through the development process.

3. Methods

This study used qualitative research method with this kind of exploratory research. Collecting data was done through triangulation techniques by using observation, interviews and the collection of documents at once. The interviews were conducted with some key figures related to the research objectives. The Information from these key figures was highly required because they are the institutional authority to the development of tourism and the state of society in the region. Field observations were intended to provide an objective identification of the various physical resources both natural and artificial in the form of tourist destination readiness in Rupert Utara sub-district. The institutional element associated with tourism development and community development components is the capacity and ability of the community to participate in the tourism communication management based on community economic empowerment through various literature, planning documents, as well as previous research.

4. Discussion

4.1 Rupert Utara Tourism Area as Tourism-Based Community Empowerment

The area of Rupert Island is $\pm 1,524.85$ km² consisting of two sub-districts: Rupert and Rupert Utara sub-districts. Rupert Island is one of the outer islands of Indonesia which is directly adjacent to Malaysia. In addition, the island is shaped like a small mountain in the middle of the vast ocean. It has a very strategic position as it is near Malaka Strait. Thus, it has an exotic value for foreign ships that pass in Malaka Strait can directly be docked to the island with the longest white sand beach in Indonesia. The coast stretches along ± 17 kilometers from the village of Teluk Rhu, Tanjung Punak (Rupert Utara) to Cingam River (Rupert). It has a width of ± 30 meters at low tide and ± 7 meters during high tide.

The beach is still natural and only around ± 30 sea miles or ± 45 minutes from Port Dickson (Malaysia), ± 210 Km or ± 5.5 hour drive from Pekanbaru (the capital of Riau Province), or ± 1.5 hours from Dumai city. Every year around 1,500 tourists are visited every year, especially domestic tourists.

an international event is held each year in Rupert Island beach, namely non-stop swimming across Malaka Strait from Rupert Utara coast to Pasir Panjang Port Dickson by swimmers from Malaysia. Other activities that tourists can enjoy in the beach are sunbathing, surfing, scuba diving, fishing, and swimming.

Based on the Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMD) of Riau province, Rupert, Duri, and Dumai are designed to be one triangle area for new economic growth center in Riau. The development of Rupert Island is a priority for both provincial and central government to become a national tourism area as a tourist destination. Developing a range of facilities such as road access, ferry terminal dock (roll on/roll off or Ro-Ro) to Malaka in Tanjung Medang Village (the capital of Rupert Utara Sub-District), and ferry terminal dock from Dumai to Tanjung Kapal (Rupert sub-district). The government provides various facilities to the investors in the form of providing supporting facilities and infrastructure, and accelerating licensing.

The government role in realizing development success is by giving authority, responsibility and opportunity to the community to manage resources in the area through management and local community empowerment strategies. The concept of empowerment is always associated with the concept of self-reliance, participation, networking and justice. In essence, providing the best management practices must be done so that people are willing and able to manage their resources. Nikijuluw (2002) describes three forms of community-based fisheries resources management (PSPBM), they are empowerment of fisheries resources by the government and co-management (integration) of PSPBM as well as management of fisheries resources by the government.

PSPBM is a process of giving authority, responsibility and opportunity to the community to manage their own resources by firstly defining the needs and desires, goals, aspirations and making decisions that influence

the community prosperity. The resource management starts from information gathering, planning, implementation, control, monitoring and evaluation carried out by the government. The government is the holder of power and the authority in utilizing resources and, as seen from the legal aspect, is supported by formal rules so that each party can carry it out

The community or local people play an important role in making decisions that affect and benefit to the economic life in their neighborhood. Tourism-Based Community Empowerment is a form of community activity as an initiator and motivator in managing tourism objects and aims to conserve the environment, local community culture, and improve the prosperity of the community. Contribution to the maintenance of quality and sustainability of natural resources and culture/balance is actualized through tourism products managed by the community itself.

Contributions to the improvement of the local people's prosperity are realized through the increased tourism income that are partly utilized by the community involved in tourism activities. The increase in income gained by the community comes from their involvement as the homestay providers, the owners of land along the coastline, sellers of food products from the fish catches of the fishermen in the area, attraction performers, etc.

Rupat Utara tourist destination is one object of tourist attractions run by the community participation. Such participation of the North Rupat community in its management starts from the planning, the management, and finally the evaluation process. This most important process is a form of community participation in each stage. Factors that encourage participation in management are the importance of getting contributions from services provided, communication activities in achieving goals in a single community, and the same desire and interaction to improve the economy of the community itself. Each element in the communication process needs to be managed by linking the functions of management, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. The participation can be identified based on the power key positions that are classified into three categories: primary stakeholders, secondary stakeholders, and key stakeholders. Based on the results of the research, each category is elaborated as follows:

First, the planning stage. In identifying the tourism potential, as a whole the community is not involved, but the potential identification is merely carried out by the local government and the staffs. Similarly, the development of tourism area policies/programs is involved only the local government and the community leaders, but not the community. The management did not involve all the local people, but only those who have positions as the heads of sub-district, the heads of village, and the heads of *Rukun Warga* and *Rukun Tetangga*.

All tourism activities must be able to contribute to local economic development and to improve the local community prosperity. In developing the tourism and governance, there are at least 6 aspects should be met in accordance with the formulation of criteria for the development and management of community economic empowerment-based tourism communication and interaction as follows:

- Open business opportunities and jobs with new economic activities
The majority or about 50% of villagers in Rupat Utara sub-district are fishermen. Until now, their activities on the sea are the major sector in economic activity. Although most of the people do not have any experience in the field of tourism, they are provided with various trainings by the related agency and institutions that concern the condition of the area as a tourist destination. Some of the activities that the community do are homestay management, renting motorbike bots for tourists, and making the fish catches into food products such as fish crackers, shrimp crackers, salted fish, and salted fish. These bring economic benefits to the population and ease the tourists to understand the attractiveness and customs of the community. Besides, direct interaction and communication between the locals and the tourists will provide a new experience for the community.
- Does not eliminate the existing economic activities
In an effort to increase the benefits of tourism, the local community try to expand their economic activities and think to vary job opportunities by participating in the tourism service industry. The tourism activities that have just emerged in the past 10 years do not necessarily shift the existing economic activities. The community becomes more creative to create additional income outside of fishing and farming activities. They are to be involved in tourism activities, such as providing and renting houses as homestays, renting motorbikes, and selling local culinary. These are additional activities carried out by the wives of fishermen and farmers. Hence, the new economic activities arise by not eliminating such existing economic activities as fishing and farming.
- Create economic relationships between sectors
The existence of tourism activities has created economic relations between sectors, for example the fish catches from the fishermen besides being marketed to other regions and consumed by themselves are also used as raw materials managed by home industry entrepreneurs for food products such as fish crackers, grilled fish (smoked fish), salted fish, fish meatballs, shredded fish, and other kinds of food. Besides, with the tourism activities, the community has begun to revive and to develop traditional arts such as *zapinapi*, and other cultural art activities such as *safar* bathing. So, directly or indirectly the tourism activities have affected

the infrastructure development and facilities for tourist destinations as well as have motivated the community to preserve the local arts and culture.

- Improve living standards and benefit local community
The main objective of the economic empowerment-based tourism communication management on is increasing prosperity. Improving community prosperity can be seen from the increase of their income as a result of tourism activities in Rupert area. From the analysis of the results obtained, the tourism affects the income of the community. This means that some people have begun to understand the benefits of tourism and how these initiatives can improve the independent management of activities or businesses related to tourism, such as homestay management, culinary, food products, motorcycle rentals, etc.
- Contribute to community activities
The tourism activity results in Rupert Utara coastal area has contributed to community activities, because in general these activities are managed by small business assisted groups, so that the fishermen and their families who are members of the groups can immediately feel the benefits, such as "Laksmane Utare" Joint Business Groups (KUBE) as a fish cracker business under the guidance of the social service located in Teluk Rhu village. In addition to the presence of tourism activities, both the provincial and local governments provide attention to build and to improve environmental road conditions around the tourist attractions, and other public facilities such as mosques equipped with toilets and clean water, health facilities, sanitation facilities, electricity and clean water. Such facilities can push society to think how using them creatively. Therefore, the tourism development in this area is expected to be used as a tool in the community development.
- Provide markets to involve the community in the promotion of tourism goods and services
There is currently no market for the promotion of tourism goods and services, but a gallery is being developed to market the products of the community's coastal tourism area in Rupert Utara Sub-District. There are souvenir shops currently owned by the community to accommodate and sell products made from other communities. Some productions they made are in the form of processed foods such as fish crackers, shredded fish, and others are sold and promoted when there are events or tourist visits. By the time being, the community involvement in promoting the tourism is represented by small business group such as "Kerupuk Ikan Parang Cik Delly" that has followed a number of events at sub-district, regency, and provincial levels. The events promote tourism activities by inviting reporters, local TV reporters, and travel agents to report the events that can be a tourist attraction in this area. Each village can be a window display for the various products of Rupert Utara that will eventually be able to give the added value to the families of coastal fishermen in the area of tourist attraction.

4.2 The Role of Stakeholders in the Economic Empowerment-Based Communication Management in Rupert Utara Tourism Area

In order to speed up the acceleration of the national tourism strategic area (KSPN) of Rupert in Bengkalis Regency, Riau Province, the central government through 3 ministries under the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs offers 2 (two) concrete options, namely: 1) Rupert becomes an authority area, and 2) Rupert becomes a special economic zone for tourism. In fact, the government does concern in driving Indonesia's tourism development. Related to the national tourism strategic area (KSPN) of Rupert Island, it has been regulated in the Government Regulation Number 50 Year 2011 on the master plan of national tourism development in 2010-2025 and in the Decree of President Number 6 Year 2017 that Rupert Island in Bengkalis Regency as one of 111 outer islands of the Republic of Indonesia.

Based on the decrees, Bengkalis regional government has made the KSPN program as a facility in accelerating Rupert Utara tourism development. This is where integration of various components is needed to enforce the functions according to the law. Based on the strength, an important position, and the influence of stakeholders on the issue, it can be categorized into three categories: primary stakeholders, secondary stakeholders, and key stakeholders.

The primary stakeholders are those who have direct interests in relation to a policy, program and project. They are positioned as the main determinants of the decision-making process, namely community and community leaders. The community associated with activities is identified as those who will get benefit from and who will be directly affected by tourism activities. Community leaders are members of the community who are defined by the community as well as considered to represent the aspirations of the community.

One of the primary stakeholders in this study are the lodging business actors who used to be ordinary people but dare to change their fate by utilizing natural resources. After Rupert was designated as a strategic area of tourism by the government, it begins to be promoted through the media. This has been used as an opportunity to develop the tourism area. However, the facilities are not yet available although the promotion has been done. As a result, a lodging and supporting facilities were built to meet the needs of tourists. With such facilities, the tourism access is more open and the surrounding community is being assisted. There is collaboration between the

entrepreneurs and the community in terms of local souvenirs and culinary such as fish crackers, salted fish, fish paste, smoked fish, etc., as well as supplies of fish and crops from the fishermen and the farmers.

In developing the community on the aspect of economic empowerment, communication management is a means of achieving community participation. Communication is planned specifically by involving communication elements in the form of communicators, message content, channels, and communication goals. The message is designed based on the purpose of empowerment needed in the process of changing people's behavior. People have knowledge, skills and attitudes to behave in applying messages in the form of selected ideas or technology in order to achieve improvements in life as expected.

Based on the survey results, it can be seen that the current development planning process has started to put more emphasis on the bottom-up model which refers to a community-oriented approach through village apparatus and the existing stakeholders. It is an approach that demands community participation in its management and emphasizes the empowerment of the community towards independence. The form of community participation in the management of tourism objects can be as homestay owners, as members of Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis), or as tourism attraction performers. The people participate on their own with the hope of gaining incentives from the services provided as a result of the community empowerment. So, the essence of community empowerment is the effort of empowering people based on the integration of ideas of independence. Therefore, the government in central and local continuously strengthen the position of the community as an important stakeholder in the development.

Second, the secondary stakeholders are those who do not have direct link with a policy, program, project or activity, but they have the same concerns with the former. Concerns and voices from these stakeholders will greatly influence and determine people's attitudes and the government decisions. For instance, the stakeholders can be the government institutions in an area but do not have direct responsibility, the government agencies that are related to the issue but do not have direct authority, the Civil Society Organizations engaged in the appropriate field, academic groups from universities who also have important influences in decision making by the government, and the entrepreneurs (business entities) related.

Next, key stakeholders are those who have legal authority in decision making. The key stakeholders are the executive elements according to their level, legislative and agency. The interests of these key stakeholders are needed, such as for a regional level project decision.

Roles and functions of the legislative are very strategic in accommodating the aspirations of the community and finding the solutions, especially the legislative functions on budgeting and controlling. There is joint coordination between the legislative and the executive to go to the next level in the relevant ministries with the Local Proposed Regulation (Ranperda) and development planning. Now, the key highlight from the legislative and the executive in coastal areas which becomes a classic problem is how to handle abrasion. In this case, the government has built a plaster in part of the coastline, especially along the tourist beach to withstand the abrasion rate of the Malaka Strait. The handling of abrasion has been implemented collectively by sharing budget between the local, the provincial and the central government.

4.3 Media in Economic Empowerment-Based Communication Management

The effective communication media to improve community participation is a direct communication or face-to-face in a persuasive way. In distributing messages equally in a community, communicators need to use a communication approach which is appropriate with their expected effects. Especially in the process of communication such as counseling, the use of various media is indispensable, because the use of communication media will facilitate the public to understand the content of the message delivered by a company.

The fruitfulness of community activities depends largely on how effective the communication activities between the government and the community, the apparatus and the community, and the community and another community in utilizing the media. In this study, the communication activity is in the process of *musyawarah* or discussion about the development program plan, such as general infrastructure development program plan. Another communication activity is in the form of counseling in the economic field, small businesses, fishery and other kinds of counseling which aims to increase the public knowledge.

The high level of communication activity is determined based on the intensity of communication, technique and the communication model used in each activity. Overall, the communication activities in the area are categorized as not yet effective. This is because the intensity, technique and model of communication are relatively low since the communication frequency with the community is very little, and in the process of discussing the program preparation plan, a part of the community in the village are not involved, only represented by the head of village and his apparatus.

4.4 Communication Model of Community Economic Empowerment

In implementing the communication strategy, it is not just about increasing the participation of the community, but how to create an idea or a message through the dissemination of information that is useful in accordance with

the needs of the community and have an impact on changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes. Hopefully, they are able to see the problem and resolve it on their own without relying on another party. Communication is inseparable from the aspects of communicators, messages, media, communicants and feedback.

In its implementation, communication can improve the community empowerment through a process of economic empowerment that is realized from physical capital in the form of natural resources, and human as communicators who interact with each other. This can provide a solution because the communication process in community empowerment is absolutely necessary to achieve economic empowerment. The role of effective communication ability by the empowerment actors can improve the community empowerment. The empowerment communication cannot directly influence the community empowerment, but it must be mediated by a process that accompanies the empowerment itself. Improving communication in the empowerment as a determinant of communication success for the actors in an effort to increase the community empowerment.

The process of managing communication in enhancing the empowerment in Rupert Utara tourism area has a significant effect on the community empowerment. The community as the communicators who are aware of tourism take advantage of opportunities that exist to implement the economic empowerment process characterized by the interaction and the ability of people to make analysis of the problems they face, to plan and to evaluate the development of economic activities. However, the role of communication by the empowerment communication actors needs to be improved so that they can provide support in facilitating the success of economic empowerment.

The community empowerment can be achieved through the process of communication because of the role of physical capital and human capital as communicators. This finding provides a solution that business capitals which includes physical capital and human capital does not automatically generate the community empowerment. The development of physical capital will stimulate the development of human capital that will support the empowerment process through problem analysis, planning, and evaluation which will ultimately improve the community as shown in Figure 1.

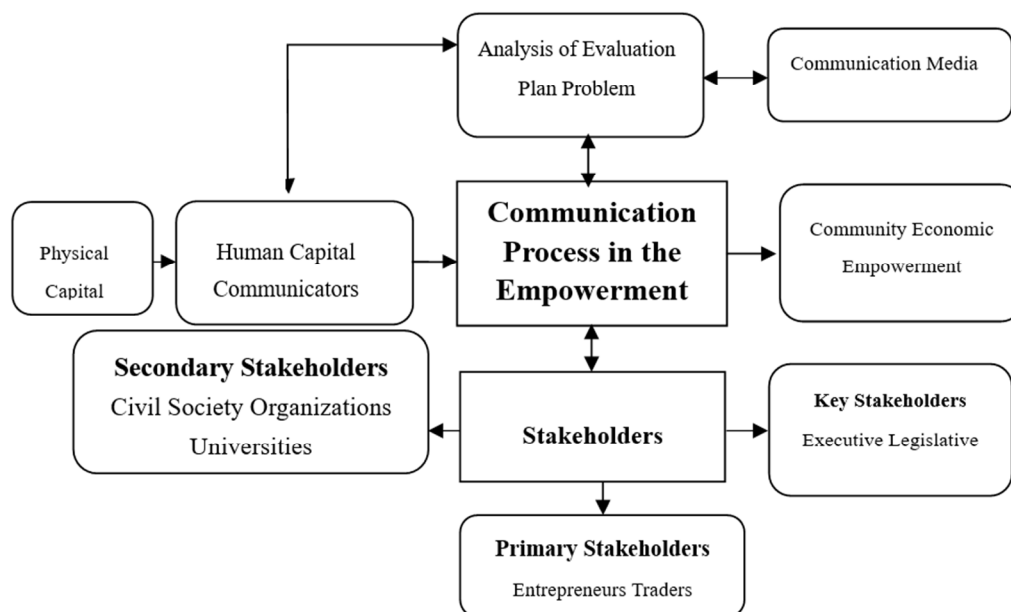


Figure 1. Communication Patterns

To be able to improve the community empowerment, it requires not only developing the physical capital, but also improving the quality of human resources in order for the success in empowering. In the process of empowerment, the most important thing is the quality of skills and supports from the primary stakeholders, the key stakeholders, and these secondary stakeholders. In this era of reformation, people must be able and be brave to make decisions to do new business for their future.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the role of government in realizing the success of local development is by giving the authority of responsibility and opportunities to the community to manage the existing resources through the management and strategy of community empowerment. Contribution to the improvement of the community prosperity is also realized through the increase of income. The increased community income is obtained through their own community involvement. The development planning process has started to put more emphasis on the bottom-up communication model. Meanwhile, the effective

communication media to increase the participation of the community is a directly persuasive or face-to-face communication. The effective communication management process significantly influences the community empowerment. However, the role of communication by the empowerment actors needs to be improved and upgraded effectively in order to provide support in expediting the empowerment success, so as to increase the sustainable community independence.

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