

The Innovation Development Through Group Communications Disseminated by Communication and Informatics Office of North Sumatra Province (Diskominfo), Medan, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: The model of development communication implemented has not considered the conditions, characteristics and backgrounds of different target communities. Therefore, in the study of Islamic communication, it is necessary to consider relevant approaches to the conditions of the society that are the target of communication in North Sumatra Province. It explains that development communication includes the role and communication function as a reciprocal message exchange activity among all parties involved in the development effort; especially between the community and the government, from the process of planning, implementation and assessment of development. This innovation in telecommunication is what Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province disseminates the development innovation in North Sumatra. The development innovation disseminated by Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province is an innovation in the field of telematics and information dissemination, innovation in infrastructure development and innovation in agriculture.

Keywords: innovation development; group communication; Diskominfo; public service

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I. INTRODUCTION

In reality the program, ideas or innovation of development which are implemented by the government do not always get support from the community.¹ This is inseparable from the concerned community's condition, characteristics, and background, so that the need for the proper format of communications development becomes a demand that must be performed. During this time in North Sumatra for example, the indications of local community's refusal in various regions toward the development innovation by government seem very strong, whereas the purpose of the development is for the benefit of the society in the future.

The high refusal from the society toward the development innovation is an indication of the ineffectiveness of development communication activities implemented by the Provincial Government to encourage the community participation. Or conversely, the model of development communication implemented has not considered the conditions, characteristics and backgrounds of different target communities. Therefore, in the study of Islamic communication, it is necessary to consider relevant approaches to the conditions of the society that are the target of communication.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Understanding communication is based on the experts' different explanations, can be viewed from two perspectives, namely communication in the sense of general and paradigmatic understanding. In general communication is understood as an activity that cannot be separated from human life. Everyone who lives in the society, since waking up to sleep again by nature is always involved in communication. The occurrence of communication among human beings as Effendy mentioned is as a consequence of social relations. The social relations creates the arise of social interaction that occurs because of intercommunication.²

¹ According to Rogers in the theory of diffusion of innovation, innovation is not was successfully applied to the community. The innovation decision process which is called the adoption process in innovation diffusion theory takes place through 5 stages: the awareness stage, the interest stage, the assessment stage, the experimental stage and the acceptance stage. See Everett M. Rogers and F. Floyd Shoemaker, *Communication of Innovations*, translated Abdillah Hanafi (Surabaya: Usaha Nasional, 1981), p. 36-37.

² Effendy, *Dinamika*, p. 3.

Communication in the paradigmatic sense can be seen from two aspects, the meaning of communication in etymology and terminology. Etymologically or according to its origin, the term communication is derived from the Latin word of *communicatio* and this word is derived from the word *communis*. The word *communis* is the same, that is the same meaning of a thing. Effendy defines communication from two points of view, ie language (etymology) and term (terminology). In language (etymology), the word of communication comes from the Latin word, that is from the word *communis*. It means the same for *communicatio* or *comunicare* which means making the same meaning. So if there are two people involved in communication, then communication will occur as long as there is a common meaning to what is being talked.³ Simply understood that group is a system consisting of a number of people who interact each other and engage in a single activity together. Group is also understood as a set of people who have the same shared goals that interact with each other to achieve the common goals, get to know each other, and view them as part of the group. Group is a number of people who make face-to-face contacts regularly because they have the common goals and attitudes; relationships governed by norms, acts adapted to position (status) and role of each and between people who have a sense of interdependence with each other. According to Deddy Mulyana, group is a set of people with common goals that interact with each other to achieve the common goals, get to know each other, and see them as part of the group.⁴ This group includes family, discussion group, problem-solving group, or an ongoing committee to take a decision. According to Baron and Byrne, the terms of group are:

1. Interaction, the members should interact with each other.
2. Interdependent, what happens to a member will affect the behavior of other members.
3. Stable, at least there is a significant length of time in the relationship (can be weeks, months and years).
4. Shared goals, some goals are general to all members.
5. Structure, the function of each member must have some kind of structure so that they have set of role.
6. Perception, the members must feel themselves as part of the group.⁵

When Baron and Byrne's explanation is understood, then group is a set of conscious people to form a unified bond, in which the members can interact with each other. Group is created by the members of the community and each member can influence each other's behavior inside it. As Soerjono Soekanto explains, that group is a set or unity of people who live together, because of the relationship between them. These relationships include interrelationships that affect each other and also an awareness to help each other.⁶

In general the group has social aspects and psychological characteristics that see it as one part of a individuals collection. In group, the members interact with each other and the group members influence each other through social interaction to achieve a goal and look at each other as they are. Thus, people who gather in a crowd, such as in a bus, passenger plane, or people huddled in shopping centers, are not called as a group.

Thus, from the above explanation, some of the characteristics of the group can be concluded as follows: 1) there is a same encouragement or motivation between individuals with each other. 2) There is interaction in it, and the interaction of individuals who are different from one another is conducted based on different taste and skill. 3) There is affirmation and the formation of a clear group structure or organization consisting of their respective roles and positions. 4) There are norms or behavioral guidelines that regulate the interaction among the members. 5) All the group members have the same motivation to realize the goals that have been designed by the group. 6) It can be ascertained if group members share the same interests, and to realize those interests, the group members move dynamically. It means every member of the group realizes that their presence in the group because of feeling the same fate, the same interests, the same goals, and all that can only be gained by dynamic movement. Effendy defines communication development as a process of disseminating messages by a person or group of people to audiences to change their attitudes, opinions, and behaviors in order to improve the outward progress and inner satisfaction. According to Mardikanto, development communication is a process of interaction of all citizens (government apparatus, extension officers, community leaders, NGOs, individuals or groups/social organizations) to raise the awareness and mobilize participation through the process of planned change to achieve the sustainable quality of life, using technology or applying the selected ideas.⁷

Zukarimein Nasution explains that development communication includes the role and communication function as a reciprocal message exchange activity among all parties involved in the development effort; especially between the community and the government, from the process of planning, implementation and assessment of development. The development efforts of a society are always marked by the presence of a

³ Onong Uchjana Effendy, *Ilmu Komunikasi Teori dan Praktek* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 1984), p. 9.

⁴ Mulyana, *Ilmu Komunikasi*, p. 42.

⁵ Robert A. Baron dan Don Byrne, *Psikologi Sosial* (Jakarta: Penerbit Erlangga, 2003), p. 98.

⁶ Soerjono Soekanto, *Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), p. 104.

⁷ Totok Mardikanto, *Komunikasi Pembangunan* (Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University Press, 1987), p. 20.

number of people, who pioneer, mobilize and disseminate the process of change. These people are known as the change agents.⁸ Thus, it can be concluded that development communication is a process of interaction and information dissemination among parties involved in the development effort (government, society, and community institutions) from the stages of planning, implementation to development assessment. Development communication is conducted to foster the awareness and participation of the community.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Types of Research and Approach

This type of research is a field research with a qualitative approach. Thus, the purpose of this study is to describe the research results and to find a comprehensive image about the situation and circumstances being studied. Descriptive as quoted by Rachmat from Isaac and Michael, aims to describe systematically the facts or the characteristics of a particular population or a particular field factually and accurately.⁹

Basuki who quotes from Creswell, explains that qualitative research is a process of research to understand human or social problems by creating comprehensive and complex images presented in words, reporting detailed views obtained from informed sources, and conducted in the natural setting.¹⁰ The term from Jalaluddin Rachmat, a natural research he called as a naturalistic setting, because the research focus is on the observation and the natural atmosphere. Rachmat also suggests that the purpose of the naturalistic research is to collect actual information in detail by describing the problem.¹¹

The perspective used to study this research is the communication perspective, because the researcher tries to understand and explain the phenomena that occur in accordance with the views of communication theories. At the same time, it should be emphasized that this study does not mean to explain the relationship between variables.¹² Thus, this study aims to create a systematic, factual and accurate description of the facts of the object being studied, namely the effectiveness of the group communication in the Department of Communications and Informatics Office of North Sumatra. The group communication includes the activities of morning coffee, press conference, KIM empowerment and Public Relations.

3.2 Place and Time of Research

This research is conducted at the Department of Communications and Informatics Office of North Sumatra located at Jl. H. Muhammad Said No 27 Medan. It takes six months to complete this research.

3.3 Source of Data

The data in this research consists of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the main data obtained from the main informant or research source. The main source of research is a key informant that is expected to provide the data in accordance with the desired objectives in this study.

The research informant is taken from the people who are considered capable and competent in providing the data related to the research. The informants are divided into three, namely from the Department of Communications and Informatics of North Sumatra, from public relations in some areas that are considered important for the purposes of the research data, the community leaders, from the press, and also from the community at the location of the research. First, the informants from Department of Communications and Informatics Office of North Sumatra in this case directly chosen by Head of Department, Head of Public Relation and Press. Second, the informants represent the community leaders are selected randomly, regardless of their personality. Third, the press people in this case who have a post in the Office of Communications and Informatics of North Sumatra. Fourth, from randomly drawn community according to the data needed as check and recheck to the truth of data obtained.

In accordance with the procedure that is prevalent in qualitative research, then the informants selection is conducted by using purposive technique (aiming). However, the informants at times may increase from the pre-determined. The increase of informants is in accordance with the required data, so that the data is met. The selection of additional informants, of course still pay attention to the suitability in the direction of the needed data, and competence of the informant.

⁸ Zulkarimen Nasution, *Komunikasi Pembangunan: Pengenalan Teori dan Penerapannya* (Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), p. 106.

⁹ Jalaluddin Rachmat, *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi Dilengkapi Contoh Analisis Statistik* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 1984), p. 22.

¹⁰ Heru Basuki, *Penelitian kualitatif: Untuk Ilmu-Ilmu Kemanusiaan dan Budaya* (Jakarta: Universitas Gunadarma, 2006), p. 86

¹¹ Rachmat, *Metode*, p. 25.

¹² Rachmat Kriyantono, *Teknik Praktis Riset Komunikasi* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2006), p. 69.

Besides the primary data, this study is also assessed with secondary data to support the primary data obtained from the key informants. The primary data obtained by studying, analyzing all forms of documentation belong to the Office of Communications and Informatics, related to the dissemination activities of the development innovation in North Sumatra. The secondary data are also obtained from the journals, scientific papers and relevant research results and have been acknowledged scientific accountability.

3.4 Data Collection Technique

The data collection technique used in this qualitative research is a technique that is commonly used in qualitative research, namely:

1. In-depth interview. The in-depth interviews are conducted directly with the informants selected and established in this study. The interviews are conducted with the Head of Communications and Informatics Department of North Sumatra, the employees of Kominfo, the public relations, the community leaders, the journalists and the general community. The matters to be interviewed include:
(1) the form of group communication carried out in the dissemination of development innovations; (2) the themes discussed in the group communication activities; (3) the desired goals; (3) the community response in providing support to the government; (4) the undertaken obstacles encountered in the communication; (5) The undertaken group communications strategy; (6) the effectiveness of the dissemination of development innovations delivered through group communication.
2. Observation. Observation is conducted directly to see the routine of group communication performed by North Sumatra Communications and Informatics Agency. The purposes is to see exactly the undertaken group communication activities and the development innovations presented to the community. The observation related to the implementation of group communications routinely conducted by the Office of Communications and Informatics, the form of its implementation, the participants who attended the undertaken group communications. Observations are also conducted to see directly the development innovation performed by the government of North Sumatra Province.
3. Documentation.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

The data are analyzed by using descriptive technique. The data analysis in this research is carried out continuously starting from preliminary study until this research ended. To ease, the data analysis is performed by stages in accordance with Lexy J. Moleong's direction, namely:

1. Reviewing and studying data available from various sources, both from primary and secondary data obtained from the interviews, observation and documentation.
2. Reducing the data by making a summary in the form of statements so that the analysis is sharper and more systematic. Reducing means to select the data in accordance with the research objectives and separate the inappropriate data, so that the data to be included in the study are the data in accordance with research objectives.
3. Arranging the data in units of analysis. In this case, the data are compiled and sorted, so it is certain to match between one data and another.
4. Re-examining the validity of the data so that what is described is the data that suit the purpose of the research.
5. Taking conclusions in an inductive way that is the conclusions that start from specific to general.¹³

IV. DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the previous chapter, innovation is an idea, practice, or object that is considered as being new by an individual or another adoption unit. Because of innovation is something new, it does not mean that the new one is instantly accepted by the people and the old ones left behind. In fact, the old one is often maintained, because the new one is considered something disturbing. So it is not infrequently the process of mendifusian innovations that occur in a social system experiencing delays. The process of innovations diffusion in relation to social systems is influenced by social structure, social norms, the role of leaders and agents of change, the types of innovation decisions and the consequences of innovation. But certainly, every innovation is created to provide positive benefits for human life. Innovation is raised to be utilized by humans in order to repair and improve the situation and conditions for teh better life. Due to the development of innovation, humans become more creative in exploiting these innovations. Creativity increasingly leads to the use of innovation towards the follow-up of the utilization of new ideas that have been unearthed or discovered. Concretely, what is created, there is no value in vain in it. Even in the Qur'an Surah Ali Imran verse 190, Allah the Almighty, also affirms that everything He created does not exist in vain.

¹³ Lexy. J. Moleong, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2000), p. 190.

Meaning:

*Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding. Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire."*¹⁴

Based on the results of interviews conducted with Eli Suhaeriyah, it is obtained the information that the development innovation disseminated by Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province to the public is the innovation of public service information, innovation of infrastructure development, and agricultural innovation.¹⁵

4.1 Innovation of Public Services

The changes that occur in the development of the world today is very fast, it requires the bureaucracy to always be able to think quickly developing creativity as well as innovate. The demands of globalization that is happening to the world in various sectors of public services, especially the civilization from abroad, either technology or social aspects into Indonesia quickly can be addressed smartly and wisely. The capacity of the government officials is always optimized through the development of creative and innovative professionalism capability of the government officials. Conversely, society is increasingly critical because the information is more open.

In improving the public services, especially in the service of quality information, Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province innovates in the field of communication technology. Diskominfo serves information for the community through the utmost utilization of internet network. Diskominfo provides a website address that can be accessed by the public at www.diskominfo.sumutprov.go.id. When it is observed, various types of information submitted on the web. Even through on line, the activities about the government program in building North Sumatra is seen directly on the web.

What Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province does is to support the dissemination of easier and broad-reached innovations. The utilization of the web also aims to encourage the pace of development in North Sumatra. The development progress in many realities needs to be sustained by the application of science and technology which of course must be adapted to the conditions that continue to grow. The advances in the development of science and technology have great benefits to the people's lives. Especially in the field of communication with electronic and printed media that have penetrated all corners of the earth's surface, to the most remote accessed areas.

This innovation in telecommunication is what Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province disseminates the development innovation in North Sumatra. Communication technology in the form of telecommunications is one kind of modern technology that simplifies the interaction without having to meet directly or face-to-face. Telecommunication can be through writing such as email. In communication technology, it can be done through face to face, but does not meet in the same place by tele conference. The breakthrough using the Internet as a medium of information broadcasting is an innovation that has been preserved by Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province in the dissemination of development innovations. It is often with the development of people who increasingly want the ease-of-relationship with a wide range of telecommunications services also join the appeal of the development of telecommunications technology and even the information technology also developed.

4.2. Innovation in the Infrastructure Development

When it is noticed and observed, the development of infrastructure development in Indonesia, and also in North Sumatra, every year it can be seen the development in infrastructure development, such as roads, buildings and so on. In this regard, every budget year the government is required to always create a new development program with well ordered creativity and innovation. The expected program is the creation of a program embodied in an integrated, sustainable, effective and efficient activity. Therefore, in supporting the quality development, the more creative innovation of development is absolutely necessary to be avoided from the impression of only completing the program or pursue the project package. To avoid such matters, the government does the innovative development that is oriented to the benefits of the wider community.

The national long-term development plan is embodied in the vision, mission and direction of national development that reflects the collective ideals that will be achieved by the Indonesian nation and the strategy to achieve them. Vision is the elaboration of the ideals of the nation as stated in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution of the State of the Republic of Indonesia, namely the creation of a protected, prosperous and intelligent and just society. When the vision has been formulated, then it also needs to be stated expressly the

¹⁴ QS. Ali Imran/ 3: 190.

¹⁵ Eli Suhaeriyah, The Head of Telematics Application Section at Communication and Information Office. The interview results on 10 January 2017 at Kantor Communication and Information Office of North Sumatra Province.

mission that is the ideal efforts to achieve that vision. This mission is described in the direction of national long-term development policies and strategies. Long-term planning is more inclined to the visionary thinking activities, so that the drafting will focus more on the participation of the society segments that have visionary minds such as universities, strategic institutions, individual visionary thinkers and elements of state organizers who have competence Rational thought while maintaining the interests of the people as a subject as well as the purpose for which development is carried out. Therefore, the national long-term development plan as outlined in the form of vision, mission and direction of national development is the product of all elements of nation, society, government, state institutions, social organization and political organization.

4.3 Innovation in Agriculture

Innovation in general is a process where something new is implemented in a certain context, socially appropriate and beneficial to the involved parties. Innovation serves as a mover of economic growth and competitiveness that is usually implemented in the development. The facilitating innovations and the processes do not arise out of nothing. Innovation arises in a particular socio-economic context and is shaped by the presence or absence of favorable conditions for the innovation development.

Innovations in agriculture, including ideas are disseminated by Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province to the public. The disseminations of agricultural innovation are conducted in order to change the farmers' paradigm from traditional agriculture to modern agriculture. The aim is to increase the crop yields and to reduce the poverty. Because of the higher success rate of managed agriculture, these conditions can automatically help the farmers to get out of the poverty. Thus, agricultural innovation is one of the innovations disseminated by the development communicator from Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province to the community in North Sumatra.

V. CONCLUSION

Innovation as an idea, practice, or object that is considered new by human or other adopted unit is very important in order to improve the quality of the community's life. As a competent institution in the administration of the state in the openly information, Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province disseminates innovations to the community on an ongoing basis. The development innovation that is disseminated by Diskominfo of North Sumatra Province is an innovation in the field of telematics and information dissemination, innovation in infrastructure development and innovation in agriculture.

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