

## Participatory Communication Model Based on Local Wisdom in Ecotourism of West Detusoko Village

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**Abstract** - Sustainable ecotourism development needs participation, participatory communication, and local wisdom. A participatory communication strategy needs to be implemented so that the community is willing to accept the policy and get involved in developing and maintaining these tourist destinations. Communication must be dialogical and symmetrical, and decision-making must be participatory by considering local wisdom. This study uses participatory communication theory. The study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data collection uses literature studies, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. Informants in the study were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The research findings show that participatory communication in ecotourism planning and development includes Dialogue, Heteroglossia, Polyphony, and Carnival. Meanwhile, the model of community participation is empowered participation. Ecotourism based on local wisdom can increase community participation and build participatory communication. Optimizing ecotourism based on local wisdom can help increase people's income and maintain nature conservation and cultural preservation.

**Keywords:** Community; Ecotourism; Local Wisdom; Participatory Communication; Traditional Storytelling

### Introduction

According to data from the Ministry of Communication and Information, the recovery of Indonesia's tourism sector is one of the best practices. Data in July 2022 shows that the number of tourist arrivals reached more than 470 thousand. This figure is the highest on record since the Covid-19 pandemic. Cumulatively, the number of foreign tourists visiting Indonesia throughout the first semester of 2022 reached 1.2 million (Kominfo). Indonesia can potentially develop ecotourism because of its unique culture, nature and biodiversity. However, ecotourism management needs to consider ecotourism and sustainable communication in the ESG framework. Tourism problems in Indonesia are (1) conflicting regulations and policies at tourist attractions; (2) the quality of human resources (HR) that are less supportive; (3) poor packaging of tourist attractions; (4) limited product diversification, lack of promotion and publication about the village; (5) lack of attention to environmental aspects; and (6) inadequate tourism infrastructure (Nugroho, 2020).

Detusoko Village, Ende Regency, has great tourism potential because various cultural arts, flora and fauna, and abundant natural wealth support it. If managed optimally, tourism will provide benefits, both economically and socially. Communication practices and participatory culture based on local wisdom in increasing community involvement in ecotourism management in Waturaka, Detusoko Villages, and Ende Regency are crucial for building sustainable ecotourism.

Traditional tourism communication practices can result in the exploitation of nature and the environment, lack of attention to biodiversity conservation, lack of attention to the welfare of local

communities, low participation from local communities, and lack of promotion for small and medium tourism businesses. Apart from that, if tourism management does not involve community participation, the impact on the community will be the loss of the natural resource base, increasing economic injustice, and erosion of cultural values. Meanwhile, the impact on the area is encroachment, excessive use of resources, and loss of local wisdom (Asmin, 2018).

Therefore, participatory communication strategies and participatory culture based on local wisdom are needed to increase the involvement of village communities in developing sustainable ecotourism. Participatory communication strategies must be implemented so that the public is willing to accept policies and get involved in developing and maintaining the tourist destination. Dialogic communication needs to be carried out in a symmetrical manner, and decision-making should be participatory.

Ecotourism management needs to pay attention to sustainable communication. Ecotourism and sustainability communication (Tilemachos, et al., p.773), ecotourism is tourism based on natural experiences, enabling local communities' economic and social development. Honey in Patrick Brandful (2015, p. 181), explains that the five guiding principles of ecotourism are: (1) visiting natural areas; (2) minimizing effect; (3) raising environmental consciousness; (4) empowering local populations through financial support; and (5) respecting cultural traditions.

According to (Arida, 2017), the guiding principles of ecotourism: (1) concern, responsibility, and commitment to environmental sustainability; (2) its development that must be based on consultation with and approval from the local community; (3) provision of benefits to the community; (4) sensitivity to and respect for the socio-cultural values and religious traditions adopted by the local community; and (5) attention to laws and regulations in the areas of environment and tourism. To make ecotourism planning and development effective, community participation is required. In this case, the village government provides access and space for residents to be involved in ecotourism planning and development. There needs to be an appropriate system to encourage community participation. Tourism management that does not involve community participation leads to the loss of the natural resource base, increasing economic injustice and eroding cultural values. Meanwhile, the impact on the area is encroachment, excessive use of resources, and loss of local wisdom.

In this context, tourism planning and management need to involve community participation. A participatory communication strategy needs to be implemented so that the community is willing to accept the policy and get involved in developing and maintaining these tourist destinations. Dialogical communication needs to be carried out, is symmetrical, and decision-making is participatory. Participatory communication models based on local wisdom in ecotourism development are necessary. Previous studies on ecotourism communication by Jocelyn investigates how local community communication is involved in ecotourism. Their ability to actively participate in decision-making is the goal of participatory communication. Participatory communication involves several key elements, including participation, dialogue, and empowerment (Amata, 2021).

Incio, et al., examines participatory communication to facilitate citizen integration, cohesion, participation, and action. The results demonstrate how behavior and social empowerment can be energized by a participatory communication technique (Incio et al., 2021). Attemene and Eguavoen explain the importance of communication in the flow of information senders and receivers in ecotourism. However, the study has not revealed aspects of participatory communication and their role in ecotourism development (Attemene & Eguavoen, 2017).

The study by Adom highlights the involvement of cultural traditions and community participation in ecotourism practices. The study has not examined the aspect of continuous communication (Adom, 2019). Cobbinah sees the implementation of ecotourism as a process centered on the participation of various stakeholders. This study has not examined aspects of local wisdom and sustainability communication, while the study by Nugraha has seen local wisdom as a supporting aspect of successful tourism communication but has not linked it with aspects of sustainable communication (Nugraha et al., 2017). Tourism and local wisdom studies by Farhan and Anwar has yet to look at aspects of sustainable communication (Farhan & Anwar, 2016). The study of local wisdom and tourism by Tanjung, et al. discussed the importance of community involvement in local wisdom-based tourism development. However, the participatory communication aspects have yet to be studied (Tanjung et al., 2021).

Incio, et al. investigates the significance of participatory communication as a key tactic in civic development. Participatory communication can promote a sense of community cohesiveness and integration based on shared initiatives, participation in decision-making, and acts that benefit the citizens. The results demonstrate that a participatory communication technique enables the dynamic determination of social behavior to attain social empowerment (Incio et al., 2021).

This study examines the role and participation of the community and local wisdom in participatory communication practices related to ecotourism. The communication process within community groups, including traditional, religious, village tourism development, village officials, MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises or UMKM) and Karang Taruna youth plays a vital role in building inclusivity and increasing community participation in sustainable ecotourism development. In addition, this study will look at participatory communication in the context of dialogue models, participation, and empowerment of communication participants.

Participatory communication is a dialogue-based strategy that enables different stakeholders to share information, perceptions, and ideas, thereby promoting their empowerment. Two-way communication is an important aspect that must be implemented consistently by relevant stakeholders and is inclusive by taking into account the diversity of ethnicity, gender, and social status. According to Kent & Taylor in (Turton, 2023), participatory communication is two-way or symmetrical and includes dialogical theories. This two-way relational communication model describes a balanced and authentic communication exchange. In this study, participatory communication is defined as a communication process that actively involves ecotourism program stakeholders in dialogic interactions related to the planning, implementation, and evaluation of village ecotourism programs. Through dialogical communication, stakeholders can build understanding in communication and contribute to problem-solving.

Participatory communication in this study is seen in the discourse on planning, implementing, and evaluating ecotourism programs. Participatory communication in West Detusoko village was carried out by the Village Government, Tourism Awareness Groups (pokdarwis), Village-Owned Enterprises (Bumdes), Traditional and Religious Leaders, Karang Taruna Youth Groups, Farmers' Groups and Homestay Owners. Through participatory communication, all stakeholders are expected to build awareness, and commitment, increase participation, and reduce resistance. Through this approach, people as subjects who can reflect, act, and make decisions independently. Participatory communication provides space for relevant stakeholders, especially the community, to exchange information and experiences.

West Detusoko Village, is a world-recognized tourism and conservation area with ecotourism potential, economic value, and good biodiversity and ecosystems. Ecotourism in the village includes natural objects such as waterfalls, agro-tourism, the lakes of Kelimutu, traditional villages, and cultural rituals. However, ecotourism has various problems behind the potential for ecotourism in the village, such as (1) limited human resources; (2) low public awareness; (3) limited funds; (4) lack of management competency; (5) lack of support from local government; (6) inadequate management capabilities; (7) low coordination among stakeholders.

Looking at these problems, it is necessary to involve community participation in ecotourism management. It is hoped that the community will be involved in all ecotourism program activities, ranging from planning, implementation to evaluation through participatory communication. In this context, local wisdom is important for creating participatory communication and increasing community participation. Communication based on local values will make the community understand existing problems so that they can make informed decisions, bearing in mind that the West Detusoko residents whom the Lio Tribe inhabits still adhere to cultural traditions in their daily lives.

According to Arida, a participatory approach involves the community in self-development. Local or community participation is often seen simply as sharing social and economic benefits. Participatory processes help people have sufficient control over their lives and get empowered to make decisions independently (Arida, 2017).

Therefore, this study aims to (1) identify participatory models based on local wisdom in ecotourism development; (2) identify a communication model for sustainable ecotourism participation based on local wisdom; and (3) identify local wisdom models in developing ecotourism. The novelty of the study conducted by researchers lies in participatory communication, local wisdom, and storytelling as a study of ecotourism communication.

Previous studies have yet to include aspects of participatory communication, local wisdom, and storytelling as the concept of ecotourism communication studies. Some of these studies used a quantitative approach with survey methods. The novelty of the research lies in the use of cultural concepts, local wisdom, participatory communication, and digital storytelling in the development of sustainable ecotourism using the case study method. Therefore, this research will focus on participatory communication models, local wisdom models in participatory communication and digital storytelling in sustainable ecotourism development.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### *Participatory communication*

A participatory communication approach to communication of development, change, and development cannot come in the community, according to Mefalopulos (2008), Melkote & Steeves (2015), and Tufte (2017), Unless the "recipient" engages in a dialogic and communicative process designed to inspire trust in them to actively participate in decision-making. Process choices on important, life-altering development initiatives. taken into account while determining the degree to which participatory communication is used in the development process are the three themes of participation, discourse, and empowerment (Molale, 2019).

Participatory communication focuses on conversational communication, not linear communication. Emphasis on participatory and collective processes in research, problem identification, decision making, implementation, and assessment of change (Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009). Dialogue, participation, and empowerment are used to describe participatory communication as a process of dialogue, communication, and mutual empowerment aimed at enabling stakeholders (i.e. beneficiaries, development planners, funders, and city governments) to jointly identify local issues and jointly make decisions on necessary construction projects. to overcome these challenges (Mefalopulos, 2008; Tufte & Mefalopulos, 2009, Otto & Fourie, 2016) in (Molale, 2019) towards positive and lasting social change.

Rahim (2004) defines participatory communication in four concepts to encourage participatory communication creation: heteroglasia, dialogue, polyphony, and carnival. The concept of heteroglossia is understood that development is a complex system made up of many economic, social, and cultural variations that complement each other. The concept of dialogue is understood as the communication process taking place in a transactional manner so that the communicator and the person being communicated interact with each other in a certain period of time and share a common meaning. The concept of polyphony is the understanding that dialogue is a forum for dissimilar but not overlapping voices and perspectives. Meanwhile, the concept of carnival is an informal process of conveying messages through various variations, such as customs, legends, myths, entertainment, etc. to reach a common understanding.

According to Kent & Taylor in Katie Turton (2015, p. 13), participatory communication is two-way or symmetrical and includes dialogical theories. This two-way relational communication model describes a balanced and authentic communication exchange. In this study, participatory communication is defined as a communication process that actively involves ecotourism program stakeholders in dialogic interactions related to planning, implementation and evaluation of village ecotourism programs. Through symmetrical and dialogical communication and the active role of stakeholders, they can build understanding in communication and contribute to problem-solving.

### *Participation*

Stakeholders often have very different visions and definitions of participation in development. Therefore, for development practitioners to clearly understand their conceptual approach to participation, a series of important questions must be answered: (1) Why is participation for each stakeholder?; (2) Why is participation so important in the development process, and who is it for?; (3) Who should participate; (4) When is participation relevant and for whom, and (5) What are the most common obstacles to participation and according to whom ( Tufte & Mefalopuls, 2009, p.4).

Participatory strategies applied in the intervention will produce: (1) Psychosocial outcomes of increased feelings of ownership of the problem and commitment to do something about a particular matter; (2) Increasing the competencies and abilities needed to engage with defined development

problems; (3) Actual influence on institutions that can influence individuals or communities (Tufté & Mefalopulos, p.3).

Referring to Mefalopulos' opinion, there are four types of participation, namely: (1) Passive participation, where stakeholders are informed about what will happen or what has happened, and there is minimal feedback; (2) Participation through consultation, stakeholders provide feedback on questions asked by researchers or outside experts. However, this consultative process keeps all decision-making power in the hands of external professionals; (3) Functional participation – stakeholders participate in discussion and analysis with pre-determined objectives set by the project. While this kind of participation does not usually result in dramatic changes regarding "what" the goal is to be achieved, it does provide valuable input on "how" to achieve it; (4). Empowered participation – stakeholders are willing and able to participate in the process and in joint analysis, leading to joint decision-making about what should be achieved and how (Molale, 2019, p.61-61).

### *Ecotourism*

Ecotourism is tourism based on natural experiences, enabling the economic and social development of local communities. Honey in Patrick Brandful Cobbinah explains that ecotourism has the principles of (1) Involving travel to natural destinations; (2) Minimizing impacts; (3) Building environmental awareness; (4) Providing financial benefits and empowerment of local communities; (5) Respect local culture and support human rights and democratic movements (Tilemachos et al, 2020, p.773-181).

According to I Nyoman Sukma Arida (2017, p 19), the principles of ecotourism are: (1) having concern, responsibility and commitment to environmental sustainability; (2) development that must be based on deliberation and approval of the local community; (3) providing benefits to local communities; (4) being sensitive to and respecting the socio-cultural values and religious traditions held by the local community; and (5) paying attention to laws and regulations in the environmental and tourism sectors.

### *Local Wisdom*

Muchtar says the principle of participatory communication involves the community actively ranging from identifying their problems, finding solutions, to making decisions for implementing actions in development (Muchtar, 2016). Riyanto, et al. explain that local wisdom is a philosophy that lives in society through wisdom about life, way of life, and traditional rites (Riyanto et al., 2015). Meanwhile, according to Darmastuti et al. Local wisdom is understood as a way of life of a society based on culture, ideology, and philosophy of life (Darmastuti et al., 2016).

## **Material and Methodology**

Research on participatory communication in ecotourism development uses a qualitative approach with an explanatory case study method. Researchers will examine the case in depth. Researchers use relevant literature and make theoretical propositions about the cases studied before conducting data collection.

Case studies are used because this method can view cases causally by explaining the relationship between participatory communication and local wisdom implemented in the ecotourism development process. The location of Detusoko village was chosen because the village is a supporting tourist village for Kelimutu tourism with a variety of natural attractions and cultural rituals that are still firmly adhered to by the Lio people. In this village, community groups actively support ecotourism and have a village communication forum to discuss ecotourism issues.

Data collection uses literature studies, in-depth interviews, and FGDs. Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique. There were ten informants: traditional leaders, religious leaders, village administration, heads of village business units, heads of village tourism development, PKK activists, representatives of Detusoko Barat residents, and tourism awareness groups.

The data analysis technique uses pattern matching. Focusing on processes and outcomes in specific case studies is one way of looking at "how" and "why" questions to match patterns. Researchers compare patterns based on empirical or observational data results and interviews with predicted patterns.

## Result and Discussion

### *Socio-Demographics of Detusoko Village*

West Detusoko Village is one of the Tourism Villages which supports Lake Kelimutu tourism. This village is located about 33 km from the city of Ende, East Nusa Tenggara. The charm of this ecotourism village is the traditionally managed terraced rice fields, waterfalls, hot springs, agro-tourism with organic plants, coffee plantations, culinary tours, and the Wologai traditional village, as well as the attractions of the "Gawi" traditional dance managed by Pokdarwis Niraneni through the studio. Daudole. This village is inhabited by the Lio tribe, who still adhere to cultural traditions and ancestral heritage. Most of the people of the Lio tribe are Catholics. The Lio tribe is the largest and oldest tribe, consisting of several clans: Wolokai, Mbuli, Lise, Unggu, etc. The word Lio is interpreted as Lise Ila Obo, which means torch. The Lio tribal community adheres to traditional leadership and is led by a traditional leader called Mosa Laki. *Mosa* (male) and *Laki* (master). Mosalaki are descended from ancestors and have full authority in terms of traditional ceremonial rights, customary land rights, and customary law rights, which are manifested in marriage rituals, decision-making, and customary violations (source: Informant Ferdinandus Watu, Head of Detusoko Barat Village)

The following activities illustrate the power dynamics between Mosalaki and the indigenous peoples within the ethnic group they govern: (1) Community adherence to and respect for Mosalaki's directives on showing appreciation to the Almighty, according to farming recommendations, being aware of seasons and natural cycles, forbidding logging or other environmental devastation, and other directives; (2) There is a custom of paying "tribute" to Mosalaki by making communal offerings at the end of each crop (Suswandari, & Astuti, S. 2021, p. 29).

West Detusoko Village proclaims sustainable tourism through local wisdom, ecotourism, organic farming, nature conservation, and cultural preservation. Narrated by Ferdinandus Watu (Head of West Detusoko village). Sustainability arises from the vision and mission of West Detusoko village that is to become a village with a local character that is competitive based on integrated agriculture and technology-based towards a just and prosperous society. Thus, there are three keywords: local wisdom, agriculture, ecotourism, and technology. Economic development is conducted with the community through sustainable business groups that exist here. Every year there are trainings for children's forums, then for village children's forums, and even support for culinary groups and village-owned enterprises for creative economy businesses.

### *A Participatory Model Based on Local Wisdom in the Development of Sustainable Ecotourism*

Ecotourism developed in Detusoko village is community-based. According to Setyowati (2010) in (Yasir et al., 2020), Community-based ecotourism is an attempt in ecotourism to concentrate on the active roles of the community. Community-based ecotourism development requires participatory communication from all community groups with direct interests to ensure the sustainability of the program. Communication is an essential factor in developing ecotourism, especially in inviting the community to participate in planning, managing, and developing ecotourism in their village, communication functions to inform tourism objects and build cooperation with stakeholders. The quality of communication plays a vital role in building a shared understanding of expectations and needs. Interested parties in the tourism industry are responsible for ensuring that the information provided is correct to related parties, including local communities and tourists (Albu, 2015).

In ecotourism implementation and development, communication plays a role in informing, building relationships, and establishing shared meanings among stakeholders and relevant community elements. The research findings indicate that community participation involves elements of the community such as traditional leaders, religious figures, village tourism managers, village heads, representatives of the Women's Empowerment and Family Welfare Organization (PKK), Karang Taruna youth group, and the Village Business Unit. They are engaged in planning, implementing, evaluating, and developing ecotourism.

The typology of participation characterizes the forms of involvement of the community and related stakeholders. To find out how the various elements of society participate in the village ecotourism development process, the researcher asked them about their involvement in planning, implementation, and evaluation, how meetings and dialogues were held, and how they expressed themselves and their ideas. Do they have confidence or doubt in expressing their ideas? How is the forum made by the village head to build citizen involvement, deliberation, and dialogue?

Each component of society is assigned a role based on its functions, claims Ferdinandus Watu, the Head of Detusoko Village. For instance, the village head is responsible for developing a tourist work plan and liaising with government officials, traditional and religious leaders, PKK mobilizers, village unit business entities, and tourism awareness organizations. Tourism awareness groups (in Bahasa Kelompok sadar wisata or Pokdarwis) create programs such as organic agro-tourism, organic catfish farming, arts, and homestays. Meanwhile, the PKK's driving role is to make local culinary products and help manage MSMEs. The Village Unit Business Entity has a role in developing the creative economy.

Religious leaders have a role in motivating and maintaining harmony when problems occur in society. The customary leader, called Mosalaki has a role in making decisions if there are problems that cannot be resolved. In the Lio community, traditional leaders have high social status and absolute authority. What he has decided must be implemented and may not be violated. In addition, traditional leaders play a role in imposing sanctions on any resident who violates taboos and culture. Religious figures rank second in the Lio community, while the government ranks third in social status and decision-making.

From traditional leaders in Pokdarwis in creating ecotourism starting in 2021, traditional leaders will help development in the tourism industry. The next one is also with community leaders. Therefore, cooperation between traditional leaders cannot be separated. There are also female figures engaged in such businesses as culinary and so on; and also young people who are involved in tourism development. From the culture itself, it is a connection then from traditional leaders, it is ritualized. For example, there is a ritual before they plant rice.

Meanwhile, the role of the Pokdarwis, apart from creating an ecotourism program, is also motivating the community, for example, by disposing of trash in the space provided and distinguishing organic waste from non-organic one. This is certain to become a tradition or habit in supporting tourist villages here.

The researcher also examined the level of participation of all elements of society involved in ecotourism development by asking several questions of how much they were involved and at what stages they were involved. The findings show that almost all elements of society have significant involvement, especially in the creation of ecotourism programs, for example, road widening, making homestays, and agro-tourism. Usually, the village head invites them via direct message or face-to-face meeting. The village head is chairman of the meeting. He conveys the meeting agenda and work plans to elements of the village community regarding the ecotourism program, budget, and social and economic impacts of ecotourism.

All participants were allowed to express ideas and comment on ecotourism development. Each member comments according to their position, so the participant's comments will differ from one another; for example, the Pokdarwis will comment on aspects of the ecotourism program and the activities to be carried out. Religious leaders will comment on the social impact and how the harmony of citizens is maintained so that economic competition does not affect relations.

The meeting was held in a structured manner but colored by a family atmosphere. Communication that is built is dialogic, open, and honest. Members trusts each other. Each member demonstrated the atmosphere of kinship and listened to each other during the meeting. According to the participants (religious leaders), they must develop various communication techniques and dialogue depending on the issues to be discussed. Therefore, as the village secretary said, people with family and kinship ties are strong. There are three "bangku tungku" or levels, namely three forces that cannot be separated from one another. They are custom, religion, and government. At each level, there is dialogue at the communication level with the government, the church, and the indigenous community.

Communication can be personal and communal if there are residents who disagree with the ecotourism program and do not want to attend the meeting. The village head and related parties use a kinship approach and visit the residents' homes because they think this method is more acceptable. They do not come with rank attributes but rather as "children" to ask for permission to take their land as a road for the benefit of ecotourism.

In a meeting about the Ecotourism program, some participants used face-to-face meetings to convey their wishes and expectations about ecotourism. They hope that with the advancement of ecotourism in their village, they will be able to improve their skills in agro-tourism, catfish cultivation, thus adding economic value and improving infrastructure as well as preserving nature and culture.

Regarding decision-making, each participant who attended the meeting was asked for his opinion on the issues discussed, whether they supported or not. Decisions depend heavily on consensus deliberation. If there is no way out of this meeting, the traditional elders will take it over in making decisions.

During the meeting, all participants of various community elements were made aware of the ecotourism program and the importance of involving residents in supporting the program's success. They are also involved in decision-making, ranging from planning, implementation to evaluation stages. For example, if residents whose land is affected by a road widening or construction project, then they are asked whether the land can be used or not. Likewise, in the construction of homestays, residents are free to design buildings and make interior designs according to their abilities. Thus, there is no element of coercion. This kind of participation can be characterized as active participation.

Referring to Mefalopulos' opinion, there are four different types of involvement, including (1) Passive participation; (2) Participation through consultation; (3) Functional participation; (4) Empowered involvement – Participants (Molale, 2019). The research findings show that the typology of participation in the communication process in the context of ecotourism development is empowered participation. Stakeholders such as homestay and hotel owners, transportation owners, village tourism managers, and Village Unit Business Entities are invited to conduct a joint analysis of the ecotourism program. For example: (1). How to elevate local culture in culinary. Village Unit Business Entities and Independent Youth Communities were invited to discuss how to present local culinary delights for tourists; (2). Homestay creation program. Residents are invited to discuss how to make environmentally friendly homestays full of local wisdom; (3). The tourism awareness group was invited to discuss how to make attractive tourism programs. They are allowed to make programs such as agro-tourism, organic farming, cultural tourism (cultural rituals, dances), etc.; (4). Nature conservation. Residents are invited to dialogue about conserving nature, how to keep rivers and the environment where they live clean, maintaining nature reserves (Kelimutu), maintaining soil fertility by practicing organic farming, and maintaining traditional houses.

The participation of West Detusoko Village residents in ecotourism development is due to the opportunities provided by the village government and traditional and religious leaders to residents to get involved in all village activities. The culture of the Lio tribe, which builds a family system in social relations, and upholds the principle of mutual respect, the principle of unity, the attitude of togetherness to solve problems, and mutual trust is the driving force for the willingness of residents to participate. The culture of the Lio tribe promotes togetherness, collectivism, unity, and harmony. This follows the name Lio which is taken from the expression Sa Li, Sa Ine, Sa One. The phrase Li, Ine, One means one mother and one family, representing unity.

In addition to socio-cultural factors, self-motivation is a strong driver for the emergence of a willingness to participate. Residents are also given various knowledge and training related to ecotourism, such as ecotourism management, organic farming management, organic fish farming, etc. As such, residents have the ability to be able to participate in accordance with their competence. Thus, the active participation of the community in ecotourism planning and development contributes to environmental preservation, management of natural resources, and preservation of local culture.

#### *Participatory Communication Model Based on Local Wisdom in the Development of Sustainable Ecotourism in West Detusoko Village*

Participatory communication in ecotourism development projects uses a bottom-up approach, is inclusive, and makes decisions from residents. Communication is carried out in a dialogical manner, upholding equality and the principle of mutual respect and prioritizing mutual trust. Residents are given space to listen and reflect on their needs and desires, their knowledge and abilities to deal with issues related to ecotourism development, emphasizing the importance of serving and empowering citizens. In this case, the local wisdom and cultural values of the Lio tribe serve as the basis for empowering citizens. Community members are given the freedom to decide on ecotourism development projects and review project plans throughout ecotourism development.

Participatory communication places community groups equally so that two-way communication occurs. Participatory communication in ecotourism development programs in ecotourism villages is dialogic and aims to build a shared understanding.



Referring to the opinion of Rahim (2004) in Miftah Faridl Widhagdhaa, Wahyu Purwanto, & Rahmad Hidayat (2019), the participatory communication model in ecotourism development is characterized by the following:

#### *Inclusive and Equal Access*

Village Heads, Tourism Awareness Groups, Bumdes, Traditional Heads, Religious Leaders, PKK Activists, and community representatives have equal access to participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating ecotourism programs. In every meeting initiated by the Village Head, they are actively involved in discussions, conveying criticism and suggestions as well as personal and general problems related to the ecotourism program. They are also involved in making decisions and voting. If the decision-making reaches a deadlock, the matter will be brought to the customary leader (Mosalaki). The decisions taken are for the benefit of all parties involved and affected by the village ecotourism program.

Communication is inclusive by ensuring that messages are conveyed in an appropriate way and manner, and also involve the interests of citizens. The message material promotes diversity in age, gender, social status, education, religion, and ethnicity. For example, if each hamlet defends their respective ego, then there will be delegates from the hamlets, traditional leaders, community leaders, and young people to solve it. So if they still maintain their ego, then we vote on which letter gets the most votes. If that is the majority vote, inevitably, it has to be a democracy.

#### *Interactive Dialogue*

Dialogue is the interaction between the meeting leader and participants. Communication is transactional, where communication is dynamic, the success of communication is a shared responsibility, and there is interaction between communication participants to build shared meaning. Dialogue is carried out by prioritizing the principle of maintaining mutual harmony and mutual respect. Another important aspect of dialogue is not highlighting individual opinions and looking more at the majority's opinion. Relations built-in dialogue is characterized by closeness, familiarity, and no social distance. For them, personal closeness is essential in building trust. Suppose there are residents whose land is affected by road widening. So for land acquisition, since the majority of us here are family related, they clarify through personal communication to explain that it is purely for development and sustainable tourism as well as the income of the existing community here.

There are various communication techniques they have to build and dialogue depending on the issue. As stated by village secretary that they all have a family relationship, and this kinship is the key to their strength, and there are three stoves here. The three things or levels cannot be separated from one another. They are tradition, religion, and government.

In relation to dialogue at the level of communication with the government, the church, and the indigenous community, for example, when it comes to land acquisition, we have this village meeting. Dialogue in each meeting cannot be separated from the values of local wisdom owned by the Lio tribe, as informant speech. To hold dialogue and communication related to tribal ceremonies, it is usually announced using a gong, or anything of that sort, which cannot be violated. Such instrument used in Java is called *kentungan*, which is also the communication model to deliver announcement. Apart from deliberations, the following communication model is that it has a relationship with programs related to the government and customs, which always collaborate, even with the church. It is inseparable from religion. So, there are several activities that they have to enter using the church door, but the programs that are included are for the government. For example, in May or October, there are daily evening prayers. Sometimes this moment is used to socialize one or two of the existing programs from the village. It is also used because the routine is definitely.

#### *Emergence of Heteroglasia*

In each meeting initiated by the Village Head regarding the ecotourism development program, the participants of the meeting varied, including village heads, traditional leaders, religious leaders, PKK activists, youths, Village Development Enterprises, and Tourism Awareness Groups. The participants of the meeting indicated diversity in gender, age, education level, social status, education, and occupation. In ecotourism program management activities, men and women have equal positions. In this case, women are the PKK activists who are given the same opportunity to express their opinions.

Although they adhere to a strong tradition of placing women second to men, they are placed on an equal footing with men in dialogue. Even the current village head of Detusoko Barat is a woman. The results of interviews with researchers and FGDs showed that women were brave and assertive in conveying their ideas. They are also involved in ecotourism activities starting from planning, implementation, to evaluation. Gender equality is essential for empowering women in participation and communication-related to ecotourism development. By involving women in communication and dialogue for ecotourism planning and development, it can be said that ecotourism has a gender perspective.

Meanwhile, in terms of age, the group of participants aged above 50 years provided more inputs, suggestions, and advice and talked more about local wisdom. They advised that in every ecotourism activity, one must pay attention to local wisdom, respect for ancestors and others. Appeal to the importance of cooperation, mutual trust, and respect one another. Mediate when there are conflicting opinions and maintain harmony in the meeting. They also shared their experiences with younger participants. Meanwhile, the younger participants tend to be proactive and express many innovative ideas related to ecotourism. They also dared to express firm but polite criticism to older participants. In this case, the age difference is not an obstacle to communicating and carrying out all ecotourism activities.

Regarding education level, the meeting participants had various levels of education, from high school to undergraduate. Differences in education also do not pose an obstacle to discussions or ecotourism activities. Younger participants are more prepared with the use of communication technology to communicate, such as (using WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube). In ecotourism activities, young people develop communication through social media, including creating websites related to ecotourism in their villages. Likewise, in meeting forums, those with undergraduate education provide a lot of knowledge and information related to the field they are engaged in.

### *Polyphony*

The concept of polyphony is the understanding that dialogue is a forum for voices and opinions that are not the same but do not cover one another. Openness can clarify each other without closing the differences. Polyphony is the highest form of dialogue built from the dialogue process. Each participant conveys ideas, programs, and activities in the meeting according to their roles and functions. Even though the ideas, programs, and activities are different, each group is interdependent on the decision process. The management of the West Detusoko tourism village must manage the differences by understanding each other and being open. By customary provisions, if there are different decisions that cause disagreements, they will bring this issue to the customary leader (Mosalaki). Then Mosalaki will make the right decision for the common good and the continuity of the ecotourism development program.

### *Carnival*

It is the informal process of conveying messages through various variations, such as customs, legends, myths, entertainment, etc. to reach a common understanding. Participants are encouraged to get involved in the carnival freely. The carnival is carried out in the economic field, such as: making homestays, organic farming, organic freshwater fish farming, organic liquid fertilizer, and local culinary.

The findings show that conveying messages in the context of ecotourism development occurs through the arts represented in the *Gawi* dance. This dance is performed in a circle as a sign of unity, togetherness, and cohesiveness of all local indigenous community members. *Gawi* dance has an entertainment function, an educational function, a ritual function, and a moral function and has a meaning as an expression of gratitude, a meaning of togetherness and solidarity, and a meaning of preservation (claimed the head of the Pokdarwis).

In addition, carnival forms appear in customs such as Pire. Pire is a form of custom to respect nature and ancestors. Pire is not allowed to leave the house for one week, go to the garden, and burn or make a fire in the garden. There is no need for anybody to carry out activities in the garden, and they may not be allowed to play for one week. If they violate that, there will be sanctions from the customary leader.

The Pire ritual which is still held firmly by the people of West Detusoko, is a transcendental and interpersonal communication practiced about communication with ancestors, nature, and fellow

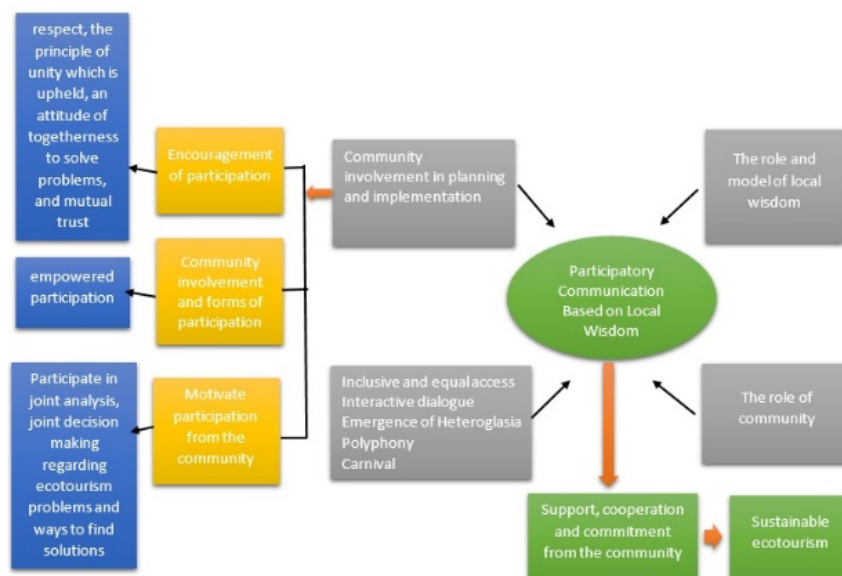
humans. They believe they can reflect on their relationship with their ancestors, neighbors, and nature. Hence, balance and harmony in life is maintained. They also learn to obey and be disciplined toward the rules that have been mutually agreed upon.

According to the informant Ferdinandus Watu, other cultural rituals as a form of communication embodied in the carnival include: a. October (*Wula Mapa*), which is the month for farmers/cultivators to hold a ritual of nature purification to ask for permission from the Ruler of life before planting and this ritual is known as the ritual of rejecting Bala/rejecting negative energy (*Joka Ju, ka Poo/Ka Pena/Keu Uwi*); b. April (*Wula Balu Ree*): which is the month for Peladang (Farmers) to present offerings to God and the Rulers of Nature for the harvest of young corn and vegetables and this ritual is known as the *Keti Uta/Nggua Uta ceremony*; c. May (*Wula Balu Jie*): which is the month to make preparations for the first rice harvest with the ritual of deviation of agricultural equipment (*Leda Su'a*) in the form of Tofa, Tugal hoe, etc.; d. June (*Wula Base Ae*): which is the month to harvest rice, preceded by the rite of giving offerings to Dawi Padi (*Ine Pare*); e. July (*Wula Base Gega*): which is the month to store various crops from the garden to the Rice Barn (*Kebo/lewa*). In this month, a thanksgiving ritual for eating the prime rice (*Mi Are*) is also performed; f. August (*Wula Dero Bebo*): which is the month of rest while at the same time people celebrate it with various folk games in return for abundant harvest, and as expression of gratitude to God, their ancestors, and the rulers of nature; g. *Wula Dero Mbeo* (Time of preparation and opening of New land (*Ngeti Uma*))

### Local Wisdom in Participatory Communication

Participatory communication can be realized if it includes local wisdom as a reference to the values and perspectives of the people of West Detusoko Village in dialogue, relations, and cooperation, especially in building a sustainable ecotourism village. Participatory Communication and the emergence of community participation in developing ecotourism villages in West Detusoko village are necessary because the people still uphold local wisdom in their daily living practices. Local wisdom becomes a guide to building social relations, working together, and maintaining harmony.

The society local wisdom used in participatory communication for ecotourism development in West Detusoko includes: (1) The proverb *Boka Ngere Ki* which means falling like reeds, and *Bere Ngere Ae* which means flowing like water. This expression can be interpreted as togetherness in various situations; (2) *Lake Lika Rapa Pia*, which means lifting the stove will be a dispute, and *Lai Tangi Rapa Sai*, which means lifting the ladder, will lose brotherhood. This proverb can be interpreted as lifting stoves and ladders causes strife and loss of brotherhood. This sentence has the meaning of advice in addressing a problem.



**Figure 1.** Participatory communication model based on local wisdom in Ecotourism Development Program of West Detusoko Village, Ende Regency

## Conclusions

The communication that occurs in the ecotourism development program for the residents of West Detusoko village is participatory communication. This is shown through dialogue in discussions, both with oneself and other participants. Communication that is transactional, and inclusive, allows every participant to have equal access. Participatory communication models in ecotourism development programs include dialogue, heteroglossia, polyphony, and carnival.

The participation of all elements of society involved in ecotourism regarding creating ecotourism programs is a type of empowered participation. Stakeholders are willing and able to be part of the ecotourism development process. They participate in joint analysis, joint decision-making on ecotourism problems and how to find solutions. The emergence of participation is driven by cultural values such as kinship in social relations, the principle of mutual respect, the principle of unity, which is upheld, the attitude of togetherness to solve problems, and mutual trust. Citizen participation is genuine and active. The values of local wisdom that serve as the basis of participatory communication practices are the values of *Boka Ngere Ki*, *Bere Ngere Ae*, *Lake Lika Rapa Pia*, and *Lai Tangi Rapa Sai*. Meanwhile, the local wisdom in the arts is the *Gawi* Dance which symbolizes unity and harmony. Ecotourism based on local wisdom can increase community participation and build participatory communication. In addition, optimizing ecotourism based on local wisdom can help increase people's incomes, maintain nature conservation and cultural preservation.

Through participatory communication carried out by all stakeholders, it is hoped that it can build awareness and commitment, increase participation, and reduce resistance to the program. Through this approach, people are not treated as objects of development programs but they become subjects who can reflect, act and make decisions independently. Participatory communication provides space for relevant stakeholders, especially the community, to exchange information and experiences. The bottom-up approach allows people to solve problems and find solutions.

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