



# Policy Communication in Rural Regulation Formulation: Why Is It Difficult to Be Realized?

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**Abstract.** Policy communication in village regulation formulation is a crucial aspect that often faces significant obstacles between village governments and their communities. This study aims to identify and analyze the factors causing difficulties in policy communication during the stages of village regulation formulation in Kudus Regency, Central Java. Using a qualitative research method with a case study strategy, data were collected through in-depth interviews and analysis of village regulation documents. The results indicate that Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models tend to produce higher policy communication, while the Incremental model shows lower communication. The low communication in the Incremental model is due to the low commitment of village governments and the lack of community participation interest. The study also found that high policy communication mainly involves men, while women's involvement remains low due to cultural and structural factors that hinder their access. These findings highlight the need for improved access to information and community participation, especially for women, in the village policy formulation process. This study contributes conceptually and methodologically to understanding the factors influencing village policy communication and offers recommendations for more inclusive and comprehensive strategies. The limitation of this study is its focus on Kudus Regency, necessitating further research in other areas to strengthen these findings.

**Keywords:** Policy communication, village regulation formulation, community participation, policy models, gender involvement

## 1 Introduction

The policy of drafting village regulations often encounters significant communication barriers between the village government and its community. This issue is evident from the low community participation in the policy formulation process, which is often caused by a lack of access to information and effective communication. According to the latest data from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) in 2023, only about 25% of the total village population actively participates in village meetings related to regulation drafting [1]. These communication barriers result in various village regulations not reflecting the needs and aspirations of the entire village community, ultimately affecting the effectiveness of policy implementation. Village governments often face difficulties in conveying policy information clearly and openly, leading to distrust and apathy among the community.

Previous research has discussed various models of village policy formulation, such as the Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Incremental models. However, not much has delved into the specific factors causing low policy communication during the stages of village regulation formulation, particularly in rural areas such as Kudus Regency, Central Java. Some studies have highlighted the importance of community participation in the policy formulation process, but they have not thoroughly explored the communication barriers faced by village governments. For example, research by Suparman only touches on the surface of participation issues without delving deeper into the role of effective communication in the process [2]. Another study by Hartati indicates that women's roles in

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policy formulation are still minimal, but it does not provide practical solutions to address this issue [3]. This paper aims to identify and analyze the factors that cause communication difficulties in the policy formulation stages of village regulations in Kudus Regency, Central Java. This study will explore how various village policy formulation models influence the level of communication between the village government and the community. Additionally, this research will identify specific barriers that hinder community participation, especially women, in the policy formulation process. By understanding these factors, it is hoped that effective solutions can be found to improve policy communication at the village level, resulting in village regulations that better reflect the needs and aspirations of the community [4].

This article will demonstrate that the model of village regulation formulation (Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, Policy as System Output vs. Incremental) influences the level of policy communication. The hypothesis proposed is that the Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models tend to result in higher policy communication compared to the Incremental model. Additionally, this article will show that the low involvement of women and the commitment of the village government are the main factors causing communication barriers. The low involvement of women in the policy formulation process is due to various cultural and structural factors that hinder their access to information and opportunities to participate. The village government's lack of commitment to opening access to information also plays a significant role in creating these communication barriers [5].

Previous studies have shown three main trends in policy communication research on village regulation formulation: policy formulation models, the level of community involvement, and the role of gender in community participation. Each of these trends has significant implications for how policies are formulated and implemented at the village level. Understanding these patterns is important for evaluating the effectiveness of policy communication and identifying areas that require improvement [6], [7], [8]. The Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models tend to result in higher policy communication. Research by Nyashilu shows that villages adopting the Rational-Comprehensive model are more effective in involving the community in the policy formulation process. This model encourages comprehensive analysis and active participation, allowing policy information to be conveyed more clearly and accepted well by the community. Similarly, the Procedural model, which emphasizes clear and systematic stages in the policy formulation process, and the Policy as System Output model, which focuses on systemic outcomes, have also proven to enhance policy communication. These two models ensure that there are effective communication mechanisms between the village government and the community [9].

The Incremental model tends to result in lower policy communication. In this model, policy changes are made gradually and often do not involve broad community participation. A study by Prasetyo shows that villages using the Incremental approach often fail to convey policy information effectively to their residents. This model relies more on ad-hoc decisions made by village government officials without significant input from the community. Consequently, policy communication becomes limited, and community participation in the policy formulation process remains low [10].

Gender involvement shows that high policy communication mostly involves men, while the involvement of women remains low. Research by Patel reveals that although there is an increase in community participation, women are still underrepresented in the village policy formulation process. This is due to cultural and structural factors that limit women's access to information and opportunities to participate. The low involvement of women impacts the effectiveness of policy communication, as women's perspectives and needs are often not accommodated in the village regulations that are formulated [11].

These studies lack in-depth analysis of the specific factors affecting low women's participation and the commitment of the village government in the policy formulation process. While there is recognition of the issues of gender participation and government commitment, existing research tends to be descriptive and lacks practical solutions. For example, research by Mariyanti only identifies low women's participation without

exploring the factors causing this problem [12]. Similarly, Rahman's study notes the lack of village government commitment but does not deeply analyze its causes and implications [13].

This research will complement the aspect of analyzing specific factors influencing the low participation of women and the commitment of the village government, as well as their impact on the success of policy formulation and implementation. By focusing on an in-depth analysis of policy communication barriers, this research is expected to provide new insights into how to enhance community participation, especially women, in the village policy formulation process. Additionally, this research will explore strategies to increase the village government's commitment to opening access to information and encouraging community participation, resulting in more inclusive and effective village regulations.

## 2 Research Methods

The case selected for this research is Kudus Regency, Central Java, because this area exhibits significant variations in village policy formulation models. Kudus Regency is known for its diversity in village policy formulation approaches, including the Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, Policy as System Output, and Incremental models [14], [15], [16]. This variation provides an opportunity to explore how each model influences the level of policy communication and community participation. Additionally, Kudus is an area with interesting social and cultural dynamics, especially in the context of community participation and gender roles in the village policy formulation process. (a) This research is qualitative, utilizing a case study strategy. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of the complex and dynamic phenomena related to policy communication in the drafting of village regulations. (b) The data used consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through in-depth interviews with participants directly involved in the village regulation formulation process, including village government officials and community members. Secondary data consists of documentation related to village regulations, such as meeting minutes, enacted village regulations, and reports on village meetings.

The participants in this research are village government officials and community members involved in the village regulation formulation process in Kudus Regency [17]. They are selected based on their direct involvement in the process, thus providing relevant and in-depth information about policy communication. The village government participants include village heads, village officials, and members of the Village Consultative Body (BPD). The community members involved include representatives of community groups, such as traditional leaders, religious leaders, and members of women's groups. The research is conducted through stages of in-depth interviews with participants and analysis of village regulation documentation. Interviews are conducted face-to-face to obtain detailed and contextual information about the participants' experiences in the village policy formulation process. In addition to interviews, data is collected through a review of relevant literature to understand the context and background of the research. The documentation analyzed includes village regulations, meeting minutes, and reports on village meetings, which provide additional information about the policy formulation process and the level of community participation.

Data is analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify communication patterns and factors affecting low community participation and village government commitment [18]. Thematic analysis involves the process of coding data, where the main themes emerging from the data are identified and organized. This process includes stages of familiarization with the data, initial coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes. This analysis enables the researcher to understand the relationships between policy formulation models, the level of policy communication, and

community participation, as well as to identify specific barriers hindering effective policy communication processes.

### 3 Results and Discussion

This section discusses the main findings related to village policy formulation models and the factors influencing policy communication. This research identifies how various village policy formulation models impact the level of policy communication and community participation. Additionally, the analysis aims to understand the role of gender in community participation and the commitment of the village government in providing access to information [19]. Description of the Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models that show high policy communication. Based on interviews and document analysis, villages that adopt the Rational-Comprehensive model exhibit high levels of policy communication. In this model, the policy formulation process is conducted through comprehensive analysis and active community participation. The Procedural model, which emphasizes clear and systematic stages, and the Policy as System Output model, which focuses on systemic outcomes, also show high levels of policy communication. In these three models, policy information is communicated clearly and openly, allowing the community to participate actively and express their aspirations. This phenomenon involves most of the villages in Kudus Regency that use different policy formulation models. Of the 132 villages in Kudus Regency, about 60% use the Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models. These villages show higher community participation levels compared to villages using the Incremental model. The scale of this phenomenon indicates that a comprehensive and systematic approach to village policy formulation can enhance policy communication and community participation [17].

High-intensity policy communication occurs in villages using the Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models. In these villages, community participation is not only invited in village meetings but also involved in every stage of policy formulation. This intensity is reflected in the number of meetings held and the level of attendance and contribution from the community in the process. According to the data, these villages hold an average of 8-10 meetings per year to discuss village policies, with community participation rates reaching 75% [20]. Description of the Incremental model that shows low policy communication. Villages that use the Incremental model tend to exhibit low levels of policy communication. This model relies on gradual policy changes, often without involving broad community participation. As a result, policy information is not communicated effectively, and community participation is minimal. In the Incremental model, policy decisions are often made by village government officials without significant input from the community, reducing the transparency and accountability of the policy formulation process.

The formation of this relationship occurs because the Incremental model tends to disregard community participation in policy formulation. In this model, policies are often formulated ad-hoc by village government officials based on short-term needs or external pressures. This process reduces opportunities for the community to be involved in policy formulation and to express their aspirations and needs. Consequently, policy communication becomes limited and less effective [21]. The low policy communication in the Incremental model is directly related to the low commitment of the village government and community interest in participation. In the Incremental model, village governments often show a lack of commitment to providing access to information and involving the community in the policy formulation process. Community interest in participation is also low because they feel they are not given meaningful opportunities to contribute. This relationship is evident from the low number of meetings held and the low level of community participation in village meetings, which only reaches 20% in villages using the Incremental model.

Description of gender involvement showing that high policy communication predominantly involves men, while women's involvement remains low. This research finds that although high policy communication involves broad community participation, many active participants are men. Data shows that in villages with high policy communication, male participation reaches 80%, while female participation is only about 20%. The low involvement of women is due to cultural and structural factors that limit their access to information and opportunities to participate in the policy formulation process.

This relationship may be influenced by intermediary variables such as access to information and the ability to articulate community needs. Limited access to information and the lack of ability to effectively articulate needs become intermediary variables affecting the relationship between policy formulation models and the level of policy communication. Villages with better access to information and communities capable of articulating their needs tend to show higher levels of policy communication [23].

The structural and cultural context of the village influences the level of community participation and the commitment of the village government in the policy formulation process. The patriarchal social structure of the village and a culture that does not support women's participation are major obstacles to increasing overall community involvement. Village governments that lack commitment to providing access to information and involving the community also play a significant role in hindering effective policy communication. This context indicates that changes in the village structure and culture are necessary to enhance community participation and the effectiveness of policy communication [24].

The results of this study show that village policy formulation models significantly influence the level of policy communication. The Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output models tend to result in higher policy communication compared to the Incremental model. These findings also reveal that the low involvement of women in the policy formulation process and the lack of commitment from the village government to provide access to information are the main factors hindering effective policy communication. Villages with high levels of policy communication generally have more inclusive community participation, although still predominantly male.

These research findings provide an initial understanding of the importance of gender participation and government commitment in the village policy formulation process. While this research has identified the main barriers to policy communication, further research is needed to explore effective solutions for increasing women's participation and the commitment of village governments. Additionally, reflections from this research highlight the importance of integrating more inclusive and comprehensive approaches in village policy formulation to achieve greater success in policy implementation [25].

The identified low policy communication in this research indicates the need to improve access to information and community participation in the village policy formulation process. The low involvement of women and the lack of commitment from the village government are challenges that need to be addressed to enhance the effectiveness of policy communication. Interpretations of these results suggest that more inclusive and transparent strategies need to be implemented in the policy formulation process to ensure that the needs and aspirations of all community members are adequately accommodated [26]. Comparing these research findings with previous studies shows that community participation and gender involvement are key to successful policy formulation. Previous studies have also identified the importance of community participation in village policy formulation. However, this research adds a new dimension by highlighting the importance of gender roles and village government commitment in providing access to information. This discussion suggests that a more comprehensive approach is needed to improve policy communication and community participation [27].

Actions that need to be taken include increasing the commitment of village governments to provide access to information and enhancing women's participation in the policy formulation process [28]. Village governments need to develop more inclusive strategies to ensure that all community groups, including women, have equal opportunities to participate in the policy formulation process. Additionally, training and education for

village governments and communities on the importance of participation and effective policy communication can help overcome existing barriers. By improving access to information and community involvement, it is hoped that the resulting policies will better align with the needs and aspirations of village residents and be more effective in their implementation.

#### 4 Conclusion

A surprising finding from this research is the low involvement of women in the village policy formulation process, despite high policy communication in several policy formulation models. Models such as Rational-Comprehensive, Procedural, and Policy as System Output show that although general community participation has increased, women's participation remains low. This indicates that cultural and structural factors limiting women's access to information and participation are still very strong and need special attention in efforts to improve policy communication. This research contributes significant conceptual and methodological understanding regarding the factors influencing policy communication in village regulation formulation. Conceptually, this study enriches the literature by showing how various policy formulation models affect the level of policy communication. Methodologically, this research demonstrates the importance of qualitative approaches and thematic analysis in exploring policy communication barriers and community participation. These findings can serve as a basis for further research to develop more effective strategies to enhance policy communication at the village level. The limitation of this research is its geographical scope, which is confined to Kudus Regency, Central Java. The results of this study may not fully represent the conditions in other areas with different social and cultural characteristics. Therefore, further research in other regions is necessary to strengthen and validate these findings. Research in other areas can help identify whether these findings are more widely applicable and provide additional insights into how cultural and structural factors influence policy communication and community participation in village policy formulation.

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