



## Village Government Communication Strategy in Coffee Farmer Community Empowerment Activities in Tanjung Beringin Village, South Merapi District, Lahat Regency

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the communication strategy of the village government in the empowerment of the coffee farmer community in Tanjung Beringin Village, South Merapi District, Lahat Regency, and identify communication obstacles faced in its implementation. This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive method. Data collection techniques were carried out through in-depth interviews with key informants, field observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that the village government implements various communication strategies, namely interpersonal communication (face-to-face), communication through the media (WhatsApp), participatory communication, extension communication (educational), plot demonstration (demonstration plot), and communication based on local culture. Of all these strategies, face-to-face communication is the most dominant and effective because it is able to adapt to the characteristics of the farming community. Meanwhile, the use of digital media serves as a support in the dissemination of information. Participatory communication strategies, counseling, and plot demonstrations have been proven to be able to increase farmers' understanding, skills, and trust in the innovations provided. However, in its implementation, there are still various communication barriers, such as obstacles in message delivery, physical obstacles, low community participation, resistance to change, and cultural and customary barriers. Therefore, a more adaptive, participatory, and in accordance with the socio-cultural conditions of the community is needed so that the empowerment process can run more optimally.

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### INTRODUCTION

The empowerment of farming communities is an important part of rural development in an agrarian country like Indonesia, where the agricultural sector is still the main source of livelihood for rural communities. However, agricultural development cannot be separated from the communication aspect, because the success of the empowerment program is largely determined by how information, knowledge, and innovation are conveyed and understood by farmers. (Media & Agriculture, 2020) emphasized that development communication plays a strategic role in encouraging social change in rural communities, especially when communication is carried out in a participatory manner and adjusted to the characteristics of the target. This shows that without the right communication strategy, enablement programs have the potential to not achieve their goals even if they are well designed (Qwabe & Khapayi, 2025).

If pulled into a more specific context, this condition is also reflected in the coffee farming community in Tanjung Beringin Village, South Merapi District, Lahat Regency. This village has great potential as a robusta coffee producing area, but this potential has not been fully able to improve the welfare of farmers. Most coffee farmers have a low level of formal education, so they still rely on traditional tools in coffee cultivation and processing. This condition is in line with research (Ihsaniyati & Setyowati, 2022) about coffee farmers in mountainous areas, which concluded that low education makes it difficult for farmers to understand the quality standards and innovations of coffee processing needed to penetrate the wider market (Sari, 2014).

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This problem has an impact on the weak competitiveness of Tanjung Beringin Village coffee in the market. The coffee produced has not been able to dominate the market due to non-uniform quality and the lack of knowledge of farmers about marketing. Limited access to market information and weak marketing communication cause coffee farmers to only depend on middlemen, so that farmers' bargaining positions are low. This phenomenon is relevant to the condition of coffee farmers in Tanjung Beringin Village who do not have independence in marketing their crops (Women's 2025).

As an effort to overcome this problem, the village government in collaboration with PT Kalimantan Prima Persada (KPP) has carried out counseling activities for six months to coffee farmers. This program aims to improve farmers' knowledge and skills in coffee cultivation and processing. However, even though the extension activities have taken place, there are still many farmers who have not understood the material delivered optimally. Counseling is not always directly proportional to the level of understanding of farmers, if the communication strategy used does not adjust to the educational background and local culture of the community (Andryanto et al., 2023).

This condition shows that the core of the problem in empowering coffee farmers in Tanjung Beringin Village does not only lie in the availability of programs, but also in the communication strategy of the village government in conveying empowerment messages. An effective communication strategy must be simple, repeatable, dialogical, and based on community experience. Therefore, the study of the village government's communication strategy in coffee farmer community empowerment activities is important to understand how the extension message can be received, understood, and applied by farmers in a meaningful way (Zainal S, 2020).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. The case study approach is used as a strategy to investigate earnestly, continuously, and deeply to obtain optimal results. In this study, the case studied is the communication technique of the village head in improving the knowledge of coffee farmers in Tanjung Beringin Village, South Merapi. The case study was carried out by collecting data through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and documentation related to communication activities carried out by village heads. The data obtained was then analyzed to find communication patterns and their impact on increasing the knowledge of coffee farmers (Harling, 2012).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Village Government Communication Strategy in Coffee Farmer Community Empowerment Activities in Tanjung Beringin Village, South Merapi District, Lahat Regency** **Interpersonal communication strategies (face-to-face)**

If analyzed using the communication strategy theory of Onong Uchjana Effendy, the choice of direct communication shows that the village government has considered the element of communicator or audience. Coffee farmers as the target of communication have diverse characteristics, especially in terms of education level and information understanding. Therefore, direct communication is the right choice because the message can be conveyed simply, clearly, and can be immediately reexplained if something is not yet understood. (Sukmawati et al., 2022).

### **Communication strategy through media**

Usage Posted by E It also helps to maintain communication between members of farmer groups to remain active. Through the group, farmers can exchange information, experiences, and solutions related to the problems they face in agricultural activities. Not only that, but the village government can also quickly provide the latest information without having to wait for a face-to-face meeting. Posted by E As a digital communication medium, it is able to increase interaction and facilitate the dissemination of information in community groups, because members can directly Response and discuss in the group (Digital & Online, 2024).

Based on the theory of communication strategies by Onong Uchjana Effendy, the use of Posted by E shows the use of communication media elements, even though it is still simple. However, the use of Posted by E This is only a supporting medium, not as the main medium in communication. This is because not all farmers have the same ability to use technology, so communication is still needed Interpersonal (face-to-face) so that information can be understood more clearly. Therefore, the village government continues to combine communication Interpersonal (face-to-face) with the media Posted by E so that the delivery of information becomes more effective. WhatsApp in farmer groups is effective for coordination and dissemination of information, but it still needs to be supported by communication Interpersonal (face-to-face) so that the message can be understood thoroughly (Journal & Education, 2025).

### **Participatory communication strategy**

In the perspective of Empowerment Theory by Dabiel Lerner, participatory communication strategies are closely related to the stage of Empowering, which is the process of increasing the capacity of the community to be able to be independent. Through participatory communication, farmers not only obtain information, but also engage in the process of learning, decision-making, and problem solving. This process promotes the emergence of a sense

of belonging (sense of ownership) to the empowerment program, so that farmers become more active and responsible in developing their coffee business (Indah, 2020).

### **Extension communication platform (educational)**

Educational communication strategies are carried out through direct meetings, farmer group training, and field demonstrations. The face-to-face method was chosen because it was more effective in explaining material that was technical and allowed for direct interaction between the village government and farmers. This interaction is important so that farmers can ask questions and discuss, so that the message conveyed is easier to understand. This approach shows that counseling communication is two-way and participatory, which is the key to success in community empowerment activities (Nurhidaya et al., 2024). Counseling activities carried out directly with farmers can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 Village Heads and Supervisors from PT Kalimantan Prima Persada (KPP) Hold Direct Practice of Making Organic Fertilizer with Farmer Groups

Source: By Researcher 2026

The extension communication strategy is also realized through hands-on practical activities in the field, such as land conservation training and sustainable coffee cultivation techniques. This method is considered effective because farmers can learn directly through experience, not just theory. Thus, the educational process becomes easier to understand and apply. This is supported by research that explains that practice-based extension activities are able to significantly increase farmers' knowledge and skills in agricultural management.

### **Demonstration-based communication strategies (plot demonstrations)**

Communication strategies based on plot demonstrations also play a role in increasing farmers' trust in village government programs. When farmers see the tangible results of the practices being carried out, such as improving crop quality or crop yields, they become more confident to adopt those innovations. Plot demonstrations are also a means of proving that the techniques given can be applied and provide benefits. Research explains that success demonstration plot not only as a learning medium, but also as a tool to build trust and encourage the adoption of innovation among farmers (Pertiwi & Tenriola, 2024).

### **Local culture-based communication strategy**

Local culture-based communication strategies also help reduce communication barriers, especially those related to differences in farmers' understanding or education levels. By using an approach that is appropriate to the local culture, the message becomes simpler, less formal, and easier to understand. This makes farmers more open in receiving information and more active in empowerment activities. Research shows that a communication approach based on local wisdom can increase community participation in development programs because of the sense of closeness and common values (Communications et al., 2020).

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**Communication Barriers in Empowering Coffee Farmer Communities in Tanjung Beringin Village, South Merapi District, Lahat Regency**  
**Obstacles in the delivery process**

Obstacles in the delivery process in coffee farmer community empowerment activities in Tanjung Beringin Village are all forms of obstacles that occur when messages, information, and programs conveyed by the village government cannot be accepted, understood, or implemented optimally by farmers. This obstacle arises because there is a mismatch between the way of delivering messages and social, cultural, and community understanding conditions, so that the communication carried out becomes less effective. In the context of development communication, barriers to delivery are often related to language disorders, differences in perception, and limitations in the media used to convey information to the public (Scott, 2025).

Obstacles in the delivery process can also occur due to differences in education and experience levels between the village government and coffee farmers. Village governments often use more formal or technical terms, while farmers are more familiar with simple, practical language. This difference causes the message conveyed to be not fully understood, so that farmers have difficulty in applying the information provided in empowerment activities. Research shows that language suitability with community characteristics greatly determines the success of communication (Grace Sonya Tondang<sup>1</sup>, Rosnita<sup>2</sup>, 2022).

**Physical barriers**

Physical barriers can also be seen from the limitations of communication facilities, especially telecommunication networks and the internet. Although the village government has used digital media such as WhatsApp as a means of disseminating information, its effectiveness is still not optimal because not all areas have stable signal access. Some farmers do not even have adequate communication devices or are not used to using digital technology. This condition causes an information gap, where some farmers obtain information quickly, while others experience delays or even do not receive information at all.

Physical barriers in coffee farmer empowerment show a close relationship between environmental, infrastructure, and technological access factors to communication success. Therefore, a communication strategy that is more adaptive to field conditions is needed, such as taking a pick-up approach by visiting farmers' locations directly, holding meetings in turn at various points in the region, and utilizing alternative communication media that are simpler and more accessible. This effort is expected to minimize physical barriers so that the information delivery process can take place more evenly, effectively, and be able to increase farmer participation in empowerment activities.

**Lack of community participation**

The lack of community participation in the empowerment of coffee farmers shows that the success of communication is not only determined by the delivery of the message, but also by the level of engagement of the communicators. Therefore, a more participatory communication strategy is needed, such as involving farmers in discussions, providing a question and answer room, and adjusting the time and method of delivery to community conditions. This approach is expected to increase farmer involvement so that the empowerment process can run more effectively and sustainably (Results et al., 2023).

**Resistance to change**

Resistance to change is a fairly complex obstacle in the process of empowering coffee farmers. To overcome this, a more persuasive and participatory communication strategy is needed, such as providing real examples (demonstrations), involving farmers who have succeeded as farmers. Role Model, and build trust gradually. This approach is expected to reduce resistance and encourage farmers to be more open to innovations that can improve their well-being (Huda et al., 2025).

**Cultural barriers and customs**

Differences in communication cultures are also an obstacle in itself. Farming communities are generally more accustomed to communication that is informal, simple, and uses local languages. Meanwhile, extension workers or the government often use more formal and technical language. These differences can cause misunderstandings or even make farmers feel less close to communicators.

The statement shows that culture and habits not only influence actions, but also the way people perceive information. When communication is not adapted to the cultural background, there will be a distance between the communicator and the communicator which has an impact on the low reception of messages (K. W. Putri et al., 2024).

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the village government's communication strategy in empowering the coffee farming community in Tanjung Beringin Village has been carried out in a diverse and quite systematic manner through a combination of interpersonal communication (face-

to-face), media (WhatsApp), participatory, counseling (educational), plot demonstrations (demonstration plots), and based on local culture. The implementation of these various strategies shows the efforts of the village government in adapting the communication approach to the conditions and characteristics of the farming community. Of all these strategies, interpersonal communication (face-to-face) is the most dominant and effective because it is able to reach farmers directly, facilitate understanding, and build closer and more open relationships. The use of media such as WhatsApp plays a supporting role in accelerating the delivery of information and keeping communication going in a sustainable manner. However, its effectiveness is still limited because not all farmers have access to and ability to use technology. Meanwhile, participatory communication strategies, counseling, and plot demonstrations have been proven to be able to increase farmers' knowledge, skills, and trust in the innovations provided. A local culture-based approach is also an important factor because it is able to adapt the message to the values and habits of the community, so that communication becomes more acceptable.

Nevertheless, the implementation of the communication strategy still faces various obstacles that affect the effectiveness of empowerment. These obstacles include obstacles in the process of delivering messages due to differences in levels of understanding, physical obstacles such as distance and infrastructure limitations, and limited access to communication media. In addition, low community participation, resistance to change, and the influence of deep-rooted culture and habits are also factors that hinder the acceptance and application of information by farmers. Overall, the success of the village government's communication strategy is greatly influenced by the ability to adapt the communication approach to the social, cultural, and geographical conditions of the community. An effective communication strategy focuses not only on the delivery of information, but also on how the message can be understood, received, and implemented by farmers. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to develop communication strategies that are more adaptive, participatory, and contextual so that the empowerment process can run more optimally and sustainably.

## SUGGESTIONS

It is suggested that the village government further optimize communication strategies in empowerment activities by adjusting the way of delivering messages to the characteristics of the coffee farming community. The use of language that is simple, clear, and in accordance with the local culture needs to be continuously applied so that information is easier to understand. In addition, face-to-face communication, which has been the main strategy, needs to be improved through a pick-up approach, especially for farmers in remote areas. The village government is also expected to develop the use of communication media such as WhatsApp by providing assistance to farmers, so that communication can run more effectively and evenly. In addition, it is important to strengthen participatory communication by providing a wider space for farmers to discuss, express opinions, and be involved in decision-making in order to create a sense of ownership of empowerment programs.

It is recommended that coffee farmers be more active and open in participating in empowerment activities carried out by the village government. Farmers are expected not only to be recipients of information, but also to play an active role in discussing, asking questions, and trying to implement the innovations provided. In addition, farmers need to increase awareness of the importance of change and self-development in increasing coffee production. The attitude of sharing experience and knowledge between farmers also needs to be improved in order to create a more effective joint learning process. With active participation and an open attitude towards innovation, the empowerment process can run more optimally and sustainably.

It is suggested that further research can examine more deeply the effectiveness of each communication strategy used in community empowerment, both through qualitative and quantitative approaches. Further research can also develop more innovative communication strategy models by utilizing digital technology and integrating it with local wisdom-based approaches. In addition, research can focus on other factors that affect the success of empowerment, such as the rate of adoption of innovations, changes in farmer behavior, and the impact of communication on improving community welfare. Thus, the results of the research are expected to make a broader contribution to the development of development communication science, especially in the agricultural sector.

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