

Community Involvement in the Development Process: A Case Study of Gunung Putri Village, Bogor Regency

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ABSTRACT

Community participation in the village development process is one of the key indicators of successful good governance and sustainable development implementation. This article provides a descriptive-argumentative analysis of community involvement in the development process of Gunung Putri Village, Bogor Regency, by examining the roles of local actors, participatory mechanisms, and socio-economic dynamics that affect policy effectiveness. Drawing from data by the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) Bogor Regency (2023, 2025), the latest regulations such as Law No. 3 of 2024 on Villages and Ministerial Regulation of Village Affairs No. 6 of 2023 on Village Development Planning, and field research findings, the study finds that community participation in Gunung Putri has increased formally but remains substantively limited. Restricted public information access, elite domination, low policy literacy, and growing social heterogeneity due to urbanization are major factors hindering citizens' active roles in development planning. This article argues that the success of participatory governance depends not only on formal regulations but also on social capacity and participatory infrastructure that bridge local government and the community. Therefore, strengthening institutional capacity, ensuring information transparency, and developing digital participation innovations are essential steps toward inclusive and equitable village governance.

INTRODUCTION

Village development in Indonesia has undergone significant transformation following the enactment of Law No. 3 of 2024 as an amendment to Law No. 6 of 2014. This regulation reinforces the position of villages as autonomous entities with the authority to manage community interests based on local wisdom. Within this framework, community involvement is an absolute requirement for the realization of participatory governance, in which residents are positioned as the main actors from the planning stage to the evaluation stage (Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration, 2023a). This transformation requires a paradigm shift from development “for” villages to development “by” villages, which places village deliberation as the highest institution in strategic decision-making.

The village of Gunung Putri in Bogor Regency is an interesting locus due to its unique characteristics as a semi-urban area directly adjacent to the Jakarta metropolitan area. With a population of 331,940 and a dominance of the industrial sector, this region has a high level of social complexity (BPS Kabupaten Bogor, 2024). However, data shows that citizen participation in Musrenbangdes is only around 35%, with the majority still dominated by village officials and formal figures (Gunung Putri Village Profile, 2024). This phenomenon illustrates the classic problem of participatory development in Indonesia, which is often still symbolic and administrative in nature, where physical presence does not necessarily reflect substantive involvement in policy-making.

This participation gap is rooted in the dominance of a top-down approach, where strategic decisions are often concentrated among village elites. Akbar (2020) argues that administrative formalities in planning often ignore grassroots aspirations, while Affandi (2022) highlights low public literacy on budgeting as a major obstacle in the participatory budgeting process. In Gunung Putri, this challenge is exacerbated by the high workload of the industrial community, which limits the time available for participation in physical forums. Limited access to public information and budget transparency are also crucial factors that weaken residents' enthusiasm for active involvement in development oversight.

In addition to busyness, shifting social values in suburban areas also influence patterns of resident interaction. Pratama and Suparman (2019) explain that rapid urbanization has transformed the character of villages into heterogeneous and individualistic communities, which has gradually eroded traditional social capital such as mutual cooperation. This condition creates a paradox; on the one hand, villages have strong economic capacity due to industrialization, but on the other hand, the social cohesion that is the foundation of public participation has weakened significantly. The now more heterogeneous social structure requires more flexible and inclusive communication mechanisms to bridge the interests of native and migrant populations.

Although regulations such as Permendesa PDTT No. 6 and 7 of 2023 have provided ample space for marginalized groups, their implementation is

often hampered by power imbalances (Nugroho & Wibowo, 2021). The novelty of this research lies in its focus on semi-urban areas undergoing simultaneous social and digital transitions. With internet penetration reaching 80%, there is a great opportunity to adopt digital participation mechanisms as a bridge to inclusivity (Anindito & Sulisty, 2022). This is particularly relevant given that semi-urban communities have better digital literacy than agrarian villages, but this has not been institutionally optimized by village governments.

Based on this reality, this study aims to comprehensively analyze the dynamics of community involvement in the development process in Gunung Putri Village. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on semi-urban areas experiencing urbanization and digital transformation, a context that differs significantly from studies of traditional agrarian village development. This study seeks to make a conceptual contribution through the development of a hybrid participatory governance model as a solution to the limitations of conventional participation. Specifically, this study is formulated to answer the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics and levels of community participation in the village development cycle, and to what extent are they involved in the decision-making process?
2. What structural, cultural, and technological factors determine the effectiveness of citizen participation in semi-urban areas?
3. How can the integration of social capital and technological innovation shape an inclusive and sustainable hybrid participatory governance model?

Through analysis of these three issues, this study is expected to contribute theoretically to the discourse on deliberative democracy at the local level, while also providing strategic recommendations for strengthening village governance that is adaptive to the dynamics of modernization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Community Participation in the Perspective of Governance

Participatory governance emphasizes that citizens are not merely objects, but subjects in public decision-making (Fung, 2015). In Indonesia, this principle has been accommodated through regulations that require inclusive village planning, including women and vulnerable groups, in line with the Village SDGs targets (Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration, 2023b). However, Cornwall (2016) points out the difference between instrumental participation (mere administrative legitimacy) and transformative participation (change in power structures). So far, practices in many villages are still stuck at the instrumental level, where the community attends meetings without having any real bargaining power to change or reject development plans prepared by village elites (Akbar, 2020).

Dimensions of Participation: Instrumental and Transformative

Cornwall (2016) distinguishes participation into instrumental (administrative formalities for legitimacy) and transformative (empowerment that changes power structures). In Indonesia, the reality of village participation is often stuck at the instrumental level; residents attend village deliberations or

participatory budgeting only to fulfill bureaucratic procedures without having any real influence on strategic decisions (Akbar, 2020; Affandi, 2022). This shows that the community does not yet have full substantive control over the direction of development.

Deliberative Democracy and Cultural Challenges

The ideal of deliberative democracy requires a space for equal rational discussion (Habermas in Nugroho & Wibowo, 2021). However, at the village level, this transformation is hampered by a paternalistic political culture and patrimonial relations between village heads and residents. Institutional reform and changes in local political culture are absolute prerequisites for village deliberations to become not merely ceremonial forums, but arenas for inclusive exchange of ideas.

The Dynamics of Urbanization and Social Structural Change

Rapid urbanization in suburban areas such as Gunung Putri has triggered social heterogeneity that erodes traditional solidarity and mutual cooperation (Pratama & Suparman, 2019). The shift in values from collectivism to individualistic economic orientation has weakened social participation despite the region's increased economic capacity. This confirms that participation is greatly influenced by the transformation of the economic and cultural structure of the local community.

Digitalization and Community Participation

Digital technology through the concept of digital participatory planning (such as e-Musrenbang) offers opportunities for expanded access and transparency (Anindito & Sulisty, 2022). However, its effectiveness is often hampered by infrastructure constraints and low digital literacy (Susanto & Hartono, 2023). Digitalization will only be effective if accompanied by strengthening the institutional capacity of village governments and systematic public education.

Social Capital, Trust, and Leadership

Social capital, especially trust, is the foundation of collaboration between citizens and the government (Putnam, 1993; Widodo, 2020). True participation requires the redistribution of power through empowerment that recognizes citizens' rights in development negotiations (Chambers, 2017). In this context, participatory leadership from village heads is crucial in fostering a sense of ownership among citizens towards public policy (Rizal & Marwoto, 2021).

Conceptual Framework: Participatory Governance in Semi-Urban Villages

Based on a review of the literature, community participation in semi-urban villages is influenced by the synergy of three main dimensions:

1. Structural: Includes regulations, institutional capacity, and village bureaucracy.
2. Cultural: Includes social capital, public trust, and adaptation to heterogeneity.

3. Technological: Related to the use of digital platforms for inclusiveness.

The interaction of these three dimensions in Gunung Putri Village forms the basis of analysis for formulating a hybrid participatory governance model that is adaptive to the dynamics of modernization.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the aim of understanding in depth the form of community involvement in the development process in Gunung Putri Village, Bogor Regency. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore social dynamics and relationships between actors contextually, rather than simply measuring the frequency of community participation as in quantitative research. In line with the opinion of Creswell (2018), qualitative methods are effectively used to explore complex social phenomena that cannot be reduced to numbers.

Informant and Sample Determination Techniques

Informants were selected using *purposive sampling techniques* to ensure that the data obtained was relevant and in-depth. The total number of informants is 12 people, consisting of:

- Government Actors: Village Heads and Village Secretaries (2 people).
- Village Institutions: BPD and LPM representatives (3 people).
- Community Leaders: Chairman of RW/RT and religious leaders (3 people).
- Community Groups: PKK representatives, Youth Organizations, and immigrant residents (4 people).

Data Collection Techniques

Data is collected through three main techniques:

- In-depth Interview: Using semi-structured interview guidelines.
- Field Observation: Observing the interaction of residents in deliberative forums and physical development activities.
- Documentation Study: Examining official village documents (RPJMDes, RKPDDes, and APBDes Realization Report).

Data Validity (Triangulation)

To ensure the credibility and validity of the data, this study explicitly applies the following triangulation techniques:

- Source Triangulation: Comparing data or information obtained from different informants (e.g., verifying village officials' statements with the testimonies of immigrant residents or community leaders).
- Technical Triangulation: Cross-checking the data obtained through different techniques, namely matching the interview results with official documentation evidence and field findings from observations.
- Member Checking: Reconfirming crucial findings to key informants to ensure that the researcher's interpretation is aligned with the reality experienced by the research subject.

Data Analysis and Thematic Coding Techniques

Data analysis follows the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldana through a *thematic coding* procedure:

- *Open Coding*: Giving the interview transcript an initial label related to the phenomenon of participation.
- *Thematic Analysis*: Categorize the code into three main themes: Structural (institutional capacity), Cultural (social capital), and Technological (digital access).
- *Conclusion*: Connecting between themes to formulate a *hybrid participatory governance* model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Gunung Putri Village

Gunung Putri Village is one of the villages in Gunung Putri Subdistrict, Bogor Regency, which has semi-urban characteristics. According to the Bogor Regency Central Statistics Agency (2024), this village has a population of approximately 42,380 people and an area of ±720 hectares. The community's economic structure is dominated by the manufacturing sector (38%), trade and services (27%), and informal labor (25%). Only about 10% of the population still depends on agriculture and livestock for their livelihood. The geographical position of Gunung Putri Village, which borders Bekasi Regency and DKI Jakarta, makes it a transitional area between village and city. Rapid infrastructure development, especially in residential and industrial areas, has had a significant impact on the social structure and patterns of community interaction. Data from the Central Statistics Agency's Podes (2023) shows that more than 70% of heads of households in this village are migrants from outside Bogor, resulting in a high level of social heterogeneity. This condition creates its own challenges in the implementation of participatory development. Some residents are more involved in formal economic activities outside the village, while their involvement in community activities and development planning is relatively low. This is in line with the phenomenon identified by Pratama & Suparman (2019), that the process of urbanization often weakens social bonds and the value of mutual cooperation, which are the basis for community participation in villages.

Forms of Community Involvement in Village Development

Based on interviews and field observations (2025), it was found that the forms of community involvement in the development of Gunung Putri Village can be categorized into three types:

1. Participation in Planning

Planning participation is facilitated through the Village Development Planning Meeting (Musrenbangdes) held annually. Based on data from the 2023 Musrenbangdes Minutes, the event was attended by 126 participants, consisting of village officials, BPD, RT/RW representatives, PKK cadres, Karang Taruna, religious leaders, and the general public. However, when compared to the total

number of adult residents, which reaches $\pm 25,000$ people, the level of direct participation is only about 0.5% of the total population.

A thematic analysis of the interviews shows that residents consider the Musrenbangdes process to be largely symbolic. This finding indicates that the deliberative process is not yet optimal. In the framework of participatory governance (Fung, 2015), this condition shows the dominance of the administrative elite in the decision-making process. Some residents also admitted that they did not understand the village budgeting mechanism due to limited access to the RPJMDes and APBDes documents.

Nevertheless, new initiatives have begun to emerge, such as the use of WhatsApp groups by residents of RW 04 and RW 06 to accommodate aspirations for environmental development (drainage, street lighting, and waste management). This practice shows the potential for informal digital participation that can be strengthened into an official deliberative channel, in line with the findings of Anindito & Sulisty (2022) that digital participatory planning can increase the reach of citizen participation.

2. Participation in Program Implementation

The most tangible form of participation is seen in the implementation stage, especially physical activities such as the construction of neighborhood roads, water channels, and neighborhood security posts. Based on the 2023 Village Fund Realization report, around 18% of the total development budget (IDR 2.6 billion) was carried out using the Village Cash-for-Work (PKTD) system, which involved 96 local workers. Most of the workers were from the productive age group (30–50 years old), with women accounting for 28% of the workforce. This shows an increase compared to 2022, which was only 14%. The data reflects an increase in gender equality participation, in line with the 5th Village SDG indicator (Village Cares for Women and Children).

However, for non-physical activities such as creative economy training and strengthening BUMDes institutions, participation was relatively low. Of the 50 training participants in 2023, only 12 were non-village officials. Interviews revealed that some residents were unaware of the activity schedule due to limited socialization. This reinforces Widodo's (2020) argument that low public trust and two-way communication are major obstacles to meaningful participation at the village level.

3. Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation.

Community involvement in development monitoring is still limited. Based on the 2024 APBDes Realization Report, there were only two community complaints submitted through the BPD regarding delays in neighborhood road construction and the unsuitability of material quality. Most residents stated that they were unaware of the formal public reporting mechanism. This phenomenon indicates weak institutionalized accountability, as stated by UNDP (2019). Although regulations require village governments to submit accountability reports openly, their implementation has not been accompanied by participatory mechanisms such as public evaluation forums or village audit meetings.

Factors Affecting Participation Levels

1. Structural Factors: Regulations and Institutional Capacity

The institutional capacity of villages is a determining factor in participation. Based on observations, the organizational structure of the Gunung Putri Village Government is relatively complete, but some of its apparatus still has limited technical capabilities in participatory planning. The last training on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was conducted in 2019 through a program of the Bogor Regency Community and Village Empowerment Agency (DPMD). This has an impact on the quality of community deliberation facilitation. According to Akbar (2020), without adequate facilitator capacity, community participation tends to be formalistic. From the interviews, it was found that the main challenge is the knowledge gap between officials and residents. Many residents still do not understand the stages of village planning, so they leave the decisions to the officials. This condition shows the need to strengthen institutional capacity so that the principles of good participatory governance can be implemented consistently.

2. Cultural Factors: Solidarity and Public Trust

Social transformation due to urbanization also affects participation patterns. Data from the Bogor Regency BPS (2023) shows that 68% of the population of Gunung Putri are migrants, most of whom are industrial workers who have limited time for social interaction. As a result, mutual assistance and community deliberation activities are becoming increasingly rare. From interviews, it is known that active participation tends to come from older groups (native residents) who still maintain the value of togetherness. Meanwhile, migrants are generally apathetic towards village activities. This phenomenon is in line with Cornwall's (2016) findings on exclusive participation, where only certain social groups are involved in formal participation spaces. To build inclusive participation, social capital and public trust are key (Putnam, 1993; Widodo, 2020). Unfortunately, the 2024 LPM internal survey shows that only 37% of residents consider communication between the village government and the community to be good. This low level of trust weakens sustainable deliberative participation.

3. Technological Factors: Digitalization and Access to Information

Although internet penetration in Gunung Putri is high (82% of households, BPS 2023), the use of technology for participation is still limited. The official village website (gunungputri-bogor.desa.id) only functions as a passive information board. There are no interactive features such as forums for aspirations or citizen reporting. In fact, a study by Susanto & Hartono (2023) shows that OpenSID-based digitalization can increase transparency and public engagement when managed actively. The Gunung Putri Village Government has begun exploring cooperation with the Bogor Regency Communication and Information Agency to develop a village e-aspiration system integrated with the Bogor One Data portal. This step has the potential to strengthen digital participatory governance as proposed by Anindito & Sulistyono (2022).

Analysis: Participation Patterns and Governance Challenges

Analysis of the overall data shows that community participation in Gunung Putri Village is stronger in the implementative dimension (physical program implementation), but weaker in the deliberative and evaluative dimensions. This pattern reflects instrumental participation (Cornwall, 2016), in which residents participate as implementers, not as policy makers. This pattern is caused by three main conditions:

1. Information asymmetry between the village government and the community, where residents do not have full access to the RPJMDes and APBDes documents.
2. Low public policy literacy, causing residents to leave decisions to officials.
3. A paternalistic culture that still places the village head as the dominant figure.

From the perspective of deliberative democracy (Habermas in Nugroho & Wibowo, 2021), an egalitarian communication process is a key requirement for participation to produce valid collective decisions. However, in Gunung Putri, participatory communication is still one-way. Musrenbangdes functions more as a forum for policy socialization than a deliberative arena. Nevertheless, there are positive indications of informal digital transformation through residents' social media. RT/RW WhatsApp channels and local Facebook groups have become new platforms for aspirations that are more fluid and rapid. If the village government is able to institutionalize these channels, digital participation can become an effective means of empowerment (Chambers, 2017; Tandon & Cordeiro, 2019).

Synthesis: Towards a Semi-Urban Village Participation Model

The results of this study show that in the context of semi-urban villages such as Gunung Putri, community participation is influenced by three main determinants:

| Dimensions | Characteristics in Gunung Putri | Implications for Participation |
|---------------|--|---|
| Structural | Strong regulations, uneven device capacity | Administrative participation is dominant |
| Cultural | Social solidarity weakened due to urbanization | Community-based participation is declining |
| Technological | High digital access, minimal utilization | Potential for online participation is high if facilitated |

These three dimensions interact with each other. When regulations open up space for participation, but are not accompanied by strong capacity and social capital, participation becomes ceremonial. Conversely, if digital technology is used inclusively, participation can transcend the barriers of time and space, strengthening governance responsiveness. Therefore, Gunung Putri Village has the potential to develop a "Hybrid Participatory Governance" model that combines conventional participation (Musrenbangdes and mutual

cooperation) with digital participation (e-aspirations, social media channels, online community forums). This model is in line with the direction of the 2024–2029 Village Digital Transformation policy launched by the Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions and Transmigration (2023c).

Policy Implications

Policy implications can be achieved through the following steps:

1. Strengthening village institutional capacity through training in participatory facilitation, policy literacy, and public communication for village officials and BPD institutions.
2. Developing a participatory digital platform that allows residents to express their aspirations, access financial reports, and monitor development online.
4. Revitalizing the values of mutual cooperation and social trust through collaborative activities across community groups, including migrants and indigenous residents.
5. Institutionalizing an annual public evaluation forum as a deliberative space for transparently assessing village development performance.

With these steps, community participation becomes not only an administrative requirement but also a democratic mechanism that strengthens accountability and the sustainability of village development.

Limitations of the Study and Future Research Agenda

Although this study was conducted objectively and systematically using a qualitative approach, the researchers acknowledge several fundamental limitations related to data collection and analysis.

1. Limitations of Generalization and Regional Context

The results of this study are not intended for broad statistical generalization. The focus on Gunung Putri Village as a semi-urban area provides a specific contextual depth. Findings regarding the hybrid participatory governance model may have different relevance if applied to villages with purely agrarian characteristics or villages in remote areas that have more extreme digital infrastructure constraints.

2. Potential Bias in the Thematic Coding Process

As the main instrument in qualitative research, there is potential for subjective bias on the part of the researcher in the thematic coding process. The determination of labels (labeling) in the open coding stage to the grouping of major themes (structural, cultural, and technological) is highly dependent on the researcher's interpretation of the figurative language or implicit statements of the informants. To mitigate this, the researcher triangulated sources and conducted member checking to ensure that the themes produced truly represented the informants' perspectives, rather than merely the researcher's theoretical assumptions.

3. Limitations of Data and Information Access

This study faced challenges in accessing closed digital data, such as discussion records in informal social media groups that were crucial for

analyzing digital participation. Limited access to private primary data meant that the analysis of digital participation relied heavily on interview results (testimonials) and limited observations, so that the dynamics of digital communication could not be fully analyzed technically.

4. Future Research Agenda

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to:

- a. Use a digital ethnographic approach to directly monitor citizen interactions in the village cyberspace to strengthen the validity of the digitization theme.
- b. Conduct comparative studies between suburban villages by comparing the results of thematic coding from various regions to develop a more established typology of participation.
- c. Apply mixed methods to quantitatively test the extent to which the themes found in this study influence the effectiveness of development in general.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

This study shows that community involvement in the development process in Gunung Putri Village is partial and not yet fully deliberative. The community tends to be more active in the implementation stage of physical activities such as village cash-for-work programs than in the planning and monitoring stages. This condition shows that the practice of participation in Gunung Putri is still at the level of instrumental participation, where residents act as policy implementers, not determinants of the direction of development.

There are three main factors that shape this pattern of participation. First, structural factors, namely the limited capacity of village government institutions to facilitate participatory dialogue. Second, cultural factors, in the form of weakened social solidarity and low levels of public trust due to changes in social structure as a result of urbanization. Third, technological factors, namely the suboptimal use of digital technology as a medium for public communication despite relatively high internet access. Nevertheless, there is a positive trend in the form of the transformation of informal digital participation through residents' social media and online community groups. This indicates the potential for a hybrid participatory governance model, which combines conventional and digital participation mechanisms to expand the scope of public deliberation.

This study also shows that the success of participatory development in semi-urban areas such as Gunung Putri is largely determined by the synergy between three main elements:

1. Strong and accountable institutional capacity,
2. Adequate social trust between residents and the village government, and
3. Technological facilitation that enables open and sustainable participation.

By strengthening these three aspects, semi-urban villages can become new models of inclusive participation and deliberative democracy-based development governance that are adaptive to modern social dynamics.

Recommendations

1. Village governments and village councils need to strengthen the capacity of their officials through training in facilitation of deliberative meetings, policy literacy, and public communication skills so that the village development planning process becomes more participatory and deliberative.
2. The Ministry of Villages, Development of Disadvantaged Regions, and Transmigration is expected to expand the implementation of Village Digital Transformation by providing OpenSID-based e-participation templates that can be accessed directly by the community.
4. Academics and local research institutions need to conduct longitudinal studies on the effectiveness of digital participation in semi-urban areas to enrich the hybrid governance theoretical model.
5. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups need to strengthen cross-group communication forums to build social trust and collective solidarity in the development process.

By implementing these recommendations, community participation is expected to no longer be merely an administrative formality, but rather a democratic instrument for creating inclusive, transparent, and socially just village development.

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