
Public Communication of Territorial Apparatus in the Implementation of Urban Community Development Policies

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the communication practices of the Military District Command (Kodim) in fostering urban communities, communication strategies in conveying social security messages, the role of public communication by territorial officials in managing local issues, and efforts to build synergy between territorial officials and Medan residents in implementing urban community development policies. The study used a qualitative approach with library research methods and a case study of Medan City. Data were obtained from scientific journals, books, policy documents, institutional reports, and various publications relevant to public communication, TNI social communication, social security, and urban community development. Data analysis was conducted through content analysis and thematic analysis to identify key themes related to the research focus. The results show that the communication practices of the Military District Command (Kodim) in fostering urban communities are carried out through social communication, community dialogue, outreach, interpersonal communication with Babinsa (village supervisory officers), and the use of digital media. The social security communication strategy is implemented through persuasive, educational, participatory, and dialogical approaches aimed at increasing public awareness of various social threats. Public communication by territorial officials also plays a role in early detection of potential conflicts, managing information, clarifying local issues, and building coordination with various stakeholders. Synergy between territorial officials and residents is built through inclusive, transparent, and trust-based communication, thereby strengthening community participation and urban social resilience. The synthesis of studies yielded a collaborative public communication model encompassing social development, social security education, local issue management, and community partnership building.

Keywords

Public Communication; Territorial Apparatus; Social Security; Urban Community Development; Medan City

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1. INTRODUCTION

The complexity of urban life demands that governments and all state institutions develop public communication strategies that are adaptive, participatory, and responsive to community needs. Public communication is no longer understood simply as a process of conveying information, but rather as a



strategic instrument for building trust, strengthening public participation, managing social conflict, and fostering collaboration between the state and its citizens.(Nugroho, 2023)Public communication capacity is becoming increasingly important because urban communities are heterogeneous, critical, and connected through various digital communication platforms.

The Indonesian context exhibits similar dynamics. Rapid urban growth is accompanied by increasing complexity of social issues. The development of information technology and social media has significantly changed public communication patterns. Information about security issues, social conflict, radicalism, narcotics, brawls, crime, and various other social issues can spread rapidly and potentially influence public perception. This situation requires the presence of state institutions capable of building effective communication with the public so that the various emerging information can be managed appropriately and does not cause social unrest.(Setiarsih, 2016).

The existence of territorial apparatus is a crucial part of the national defense system, serving as a regional development and community development agency. Indonesia's comprehensive defense system places the community as a crucial component in maintaining national stability. Territorial apparatus not only performs defense functions but also serves as public communicators, bridging the relationship between the state and the community through various territorial development activities, social communication, and community empowerment.(Khaidir et al., 2022).

Medan, as one of the largest metropolitan areas in Indonesia, faces numerous social challenges that require an effective public communication approach. High population mobility, ethnic and religious diversity, the development of digital technology, and socio-political dynamics make Medan a complex social space. Issues such as environmental security, social conflict, drug abuse, the spread of hoaxes, juvenile delinquency, and other social issues require the active involvement of all stakeholders, including territorial officials at the regional level.

Studies on public communication within state institutions have developed quite extensively in the academic literature. Research conducted by Grunig and Hunt (2019) emphasizes the importance of symmetrical two-way communication in building relationships between organizations and the public. Research on communication within territorial apparatuses has also been conducted in various contexts. Several studies have addressed the TNI's social communication in fostering regional resilience, community empowerment, disaster mitigation, and village development. Research by(Hasan, 2021)shows that social communication of territorial officials contributes to increasing community participation in regional development programs. Study by(Salsabila et al., 2024)found that communication between regional officials plays a role in strengthening social relations between state institutions and the community. Research by(Machmudah et al., 2024)explained that the Babinsa

interpersonal communication approach was able to increase the effectiveness of delivering information to the community at the local level.

The limitations of previous research are evident in the focus, which often places territorial officials within the context of rural areas, regional development, or national resilience in general. Studies specifically analyzing public communication by territorial officials in the implementation of urban community development policies are still relatively limited. Previous research has also focused more on the function of territorial development from a security and defense perspective, while the dimension of public communication as an instrument for managing urban social issues has not been studied in depth.

Another research gap lies in the limited number of studies linking territorial officials' communication practices with the process of conveying social security messages, managing local issues, and building synergies between territorial officials and urban communities in an integrated manner. Yet, the heterogeneous nature of urban communities requires a different communication approach than that of rural communities. The need for dialogic, participatory, collaborative, and trust-based communication is increasingly crucial in the modern urban context.

The urgency of this research is further strengthened by the strategic position of public communication within territorial officials in supporting the implementation of urban community development policies. Effective communication can enhance public understanding of various development programs, strengthen collective awareness of social security, facilitate the resolution of various local issues, and build constructive partnerships between residents and territorial officials. This research is also crucial for providing conceptual contributions to the development of public communication, government communication, and territorial communication studies in Indonesia.

This study aims to analyze: (1) Kodim communication practices in fostering urban communities, (2) communication strategies in conveying social security messages to the community, (3) the role of public communication of territorial officials in managing various local issues that develop in Medan City, and (4) efforts to build synergy between territorial officials and Medan City residents as part of the implementation of urban community development policies.

2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach combined with a case study of Medan City. This approach is used to analyze public communication by territorial officials in implementing urban community development policies based on various relevant literature sources and documents.

The research data consists of secondary data obtained from scientific journals, books, government policy documents, Indonesian Army publications, international agency reports, and previous research

findings on public communication, TNI social communication, social security, and urban community development. The case study focuses on the role of Kodim 0201/Medan as a regional command unit that carries out territorial development functions in Medan City.

Data collection was conducted through searching, selecting, and documenting relevant literature. Data analysis used content analysis and thematic analysis to identify, categorize, and interpret various literature findings according to the research focus.

The analysis focused on four aspects, namely: (1) Kodim communication practices in fostering urban communities, (2) conveying social security messages to the community, (3) managing local issues in Medan City, and (4) building synergy between territorial officials and residents. Data validity was carried out through source triangulation by comparing various relevant literature, policy documents, and previous research results.

The research results are presented descriptively-analytically to provide an understanding of the role of public communication of territorial officials in supporting the implementation of urban community development policies in Medan City.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Kodim Communication Practices in Developing Urban Communities

A literature review shows that public communication is a key instrument in implementing territorial development in urban areas. The Military District Command (Kodim), as a territorial command unit, has a strategic role in bridging relations between state institutions and the community through various social communication activities. Community development is carried out not only through structural and administrative approaches, but also through interpersonal, group, and community communication, which allows for direct interaction between territorial officials and residents.(Fitrianang & Soeling, 2024).

The development of urban society in the digital era has transformed the relationship between public institutions and the public. City residents have broad access to information, relatively diverse levels of education, and the ability to express opinions openly through various communication platforms. This situation demands that territorial officials develop a more dialogic and participatory communication approach than the traditional one-way approach. Public communication in an urban context must be able to build interactive spaces that enable the exchange of information, the expression of aspirations, and the creation of a shared understanding of various social issues developing in society.(Handoko, 2022)

The context of Medan City demonstrates that the heterogeneous characteristics of its society require territorial officials to develop adaptive and participatory communication patterns. Ethnic

diversity, including Malay, Batak, Javanese, Minang, Chinese, Acehnese, and various other ethnic groups, forms a complex social structure. The diversity of religions, cultures, and economic backgrounds also influences the social communication patterns that occur in urban environments. These conditions prevent territorial officials from using a uniform communication approach for all community groups. Effective communication requires the ability to understand the social, cultural, and needs of each community targeted for development.(Pratama & Siregar, 2024).

The dominant communication practices employed by the Military District Command (Kodim) in developing urban communities are realized through social communication (Komsos), community outreach, dialogue forums, social gatherings with community leaders, youth development, religious activities, and involvement in various social activities. These activities serve as a medium for conveying information, building social relationships, and obtaining feedback from the community regarding various issues developing in their environment. Communication serves not only as a means of conveying messages but also as a mechanism for gathering social information needed in the regional development process.

The role of the Babinsa (village supervisory non-commissioned officer) is crucial in the public communication practices of territorial officials. Babinsa are the spearhead of territorial development, interacting directly with the community at the sub-district and neighborhood levels. The high frequency of meetings allows Babinsa to understand social conditions more deeply than other institutions that have limited access at the grassroots level. The Babinsa's presence in community activities fosters interpersonal relationships that contribute to the formation of public trust.(Wibowo & Lestari, 2021). Interpersonal communication literature explains that relationships built through social closeness and ongoing interaction have a stronger influence on changing people's attitudes and behavior than communication conducted solely through mass media or formal communication.

Literature on territorial development explains that the success of communication between territorial officials is greatly influenced by the intensity of interaction and the level of public trust in them. The presence of Babinsa (village military officers) in various social activities provides a means of obtaining information about the community's social conditions while simultaneously building persuasive and participatory relationships. This sustained relationship strengthens the unity between the Indonesian National Armed Forces (TNI) and the people, which serves as the foundation for territorial development.

The participatory dimension is an important characteristic in public communication of territorial officials in urban areas.(Nugroho, 2023). Communities are no longer positioned as objects of development, but as subjects with an active role in maintaining environmental security, resolving various social issues, and supporting regional development. A participatory approach allows

communities to be involved in the process of identifying problems, developing solutions, and implementing various development programs. This communication model aligns with the concept of collaborative governance, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration between public institutions and communities in solving shared problems. (Kurniawan & Saputra, 2023).

Developments in communication technology have also influenced the Military District Command's communication practices in fostering urban communities. The use of social media, digital communication groups, and internet-based information platforms is increasingly being used to support social communication. The use of digital media allows for faster information dissemination and wider reach. The use of communication technology provides opportunities for territorial officers to increase the effectiveness of information delivery regarding environmental security, social awareness, community activities, and various ongoing development programs. The ability to integrate face-to-face and digital communication is a crucial requirement in addressing the dynamics of modern urban society.

Communication Strategies in Delivering Social Security Messages to the Community

The study results show that social security messages are a primary focus of public communication for territorial officials. Social security is not only related to national defense and security, but also encompasses efforts to maintain public order, prevent social conflict, reduce crime, strengthen tolerance, and raise public awareness of various contemporary social threats. (Hidayat, 2022). The concept of social security in urban communities has developed into part of the effort to maintain the stability of social life, which is characterized by a sense of security, social trust, community cohesion, and the community's ability to face various social risks that arise due to changes in the strategic environment.

The development of urban communities presents new challenges in conveying social security messages. High population mobility, socio-cultural diversity, increasing use of digital media, and the rapid flow of information cause communities to face various sources of threats, not only physical but also non-physical. These threats include the spread of hoaxes, hate speech, intolerance, radicalism, drug abuse, cybercrime, and social polarization, all of which have the potential to disrupt societal stability. This situation requires territorial authorities to develop communication strategies capable of building collective public awareness regarding the importance of maintaining social security as a shared responsibility. (Budiman et al., 2022).

The development of information technology has changed the way information is disseminated in society. Social media allows information to spread rapidly without adequate verification. This situation has the potential to give rise to disinformation, hoaxes, hate speech, and provocation, which can disrupt the social stability of urban communities. This situation requires territorial authorities to develop

communication strategies that can improve public information literacy while strengthening collective awareness of the importance of social security.(Ramadan, 2024).

A persuasive approach is important because urban communities are generally more receptive to communication that emphasizes rational argumentation than coercive approaches. Social security messages are conveyed through narratives that emphasize collective benefits, family protection, environmental security, and the importance of maintaining social harmony. This strategy aims to build awareness that security is not solely the responsibility of state officials, but also of all members of society. The persuasive communication perspective explains that attitude change will be more effective if individuals understand the direct benefits of the desired behavior.(Ramadan, 2024)

A dialogic approach is also a crucial element in the territorial apparatus' communication strategy. Dialogue enables a two-way exchange of information between officers and the community. The community has the opportunity to express their aspirations, concerns, and the various problems they face, while officers can provide explanations and clarifications on emerging issues. Dialogic communication creates a more equal relationship and strengthens mutual trust between officers and residents. Relationships built through ongoing dialogue can reduce misunderstandings and increase the effectiveness of delivering social security messages.(Habermas, 2022)

The Medan City context demonstrates that social security communication strategies need to consider the characteristics of a multicultural society. Ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity necessitates a communication approach sensitive to local values. Social security messages must be delivered in inclusive language, respect diversity, and avoid narratives that could potentially create exclusionary attitudes toward certain groups. An approach based on local wisdom can increase public acceptance of the messages, as they are perceived as relevant to the social realities they face.

The success of conveying social security messages is greatly influenced by the credibility of the communicator. Territorial officials who have social ties with the community tend to gain public trust more easily, making the message more readily accepted. Public communication theory explains that source credibility is a crucial factor influencing communication effectiveness and changing public attitudes.(Handoko, 2022)Credibility is built through competence, integrity, consistent behavior, and the ability to demonstrate concern for community needs. The presence of territorial officers in various social activities serves as a means of strengthening social legitimacy while increasing the effectiveness of security communications.

A literature synthesis shows that the territorial apparatus' social security communication strategy is built through the integration of four main approaches: persuasive, educational, participatory, and dialogical. The integration of these four approaches enables social security messages to be not only understood by the community but also internalized as shared values that support the creation of order,

social cohesion, and regional stability. The collaborative social security communication model is becoming increasingly relevant in complex urban communities like Medan because it is able to connect the interests of territorial apparatus with the community's needs in maintaining security and social resilience in a sustainable manner.

The Role of Public Communication of Territorial Apparatus in Managing Various Local Issues in Medan City

A literature review shows that public communication plays a crucial role in managing local issues that arise in urban communities. Medan, as a metropolitan city, faces various social dynamics such as environmental conflict, juvenile delinquency, drug abuse, crime, intolerance, and the spread of unverified information. These issues require a swift, precise, and coordinated communication response. The complexity of urban issues demonstrates that social stability is determined not only by the ability of law enforcement but also by the effectiveness of communication that can build shared understanding among various community groups.

The development of urban society has caused local issues to develop rapidly and often involve numerous social actors. Information circulated through social media can accelerate the spread of perceptions, opinions, and even conflict within society. This situation makes public communication a strategic instrument in managing various social issues before they escalate into broader crises. Public communication literature explains that institutions that effectively manage the flow of information tend to be more successful in maintaining social stability and public trust than institutions that react to evolving issues (Canel & Luoma-aho, 2019).

Crisis communication literature explains that issue management requires institutional capabilities to detect potential problems early on, build open communication, and provide accurate information to the public. (Afida, 2025) Territorial officials hold a strategic position because they are close to the community and have direct access to various social information developing at the local level. This proximity allows them to quickly obtain information about social phenomena that could potentially disrupt public order and security.

Public communication by territorial officials serves as an early detection mechanism for potential conflict and social disruption. Regular interactions through social communication activities enable officials to gain insight into the needs, aspirations, and problems faced by the community. This information serves as the basis for building coordination with local governments, the police, religious leaders, community leaders, and various other stakeholders.

The early detection function has strategic value in the context of Medan City, which has a high level of social heterogeneity. Diversity in ethnicity, religion, culture, and social interests can provide

social capital that strengthens community integration, but also has the potential to create friction if not managed properly. Public communication by territorial officials helps identify various problems early on, allowing preventative measures to be taken before they escalate into open conflict. This preventive approach is more effective than a repressive approach implemented after a conflict has occurred.

The role of public communication is also evident in the process of clarifying information circulating in society. The digital era has led to people obtaining information from various sources, each with varying degrees of accuracy. The spread of hoaxes, disinformation, and identity-based provocations often triggers social unrest and worsens relations between community groups. Territorial officials play a crucial role in conveying accurate information, providing explanations to the public, and constructing a calming narrative when sensitive issues arise that could potentially lead to social conflict. (Nugroho, 2023)

The context of local issue management in Medan City also relates to various social issues such as drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, inter-group brawls, gambling, environmental crime, and various other forms of public order disturbances. Public communication by territorial officials serves as a means of social education aimed at raising public awareness of these risks. Messages are delivered through outreach activities, outreach, dialogue forums, youth development, and various social activities that directly involve the community.

Literature on community engagement explains that the success of managing local issues is greatly influenced by the level of community involvement in the problem-solving process. (Putnam & Mumby, 2013) Public communication by territorial officials plays a role in encouraging community participation in identifying problems, formulating solutions, and implementing various social programs aimed at strengthening environmental resilience. Community involvement will increase a sense of ownership in the resulting solutions, making their implementation more effective and sustainable.

The collaborative governance perspective explains that public issues cannot be managed by a single institution alone. The involvement of various actors is essential for generating effective solutions to various social problems. (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Public communication of territorial officials functions as a medium of coordination and collaboration that brings together various parties in the problem-solving process at the local level.

This coordinating role is evident in various forms of collaboration between territorial authorities, local governments, the police, religious leaders, community organizations, educational institutions, youth communities, and other community groups. Public communication serves as a means to align perceptions, build shared commitment, and integrate the resources of each party in addressing social issues. Collaboration built through effective communication can produce a more comprehensive response than separate sectoral approaches.

Discussion

Building Synergy between Territorial Apparatus and Medan City Residents in Implementing Urban Community Development Policies

Synergy between territorial officials and the community is the primary goal of implementing urban community development policies. Studies show that the success of public policies is greatly influenced by the level of community participation and support for programs implemented by the government and state institutions. (Norris, 2022). A well-designed policy will not achieve its objectives optimally if it does not gain social legitimacy and active involvement from the community as its primary target. A contemporary governance perspective positions the community not only as a beneficiary of policy but also as a strategic partner in the implementation and evaluation of public policy.

The paradigm shift from government to governance has shifted the relationship between the state and society from a hierarchical one to a more collaborative one. This relationship places state and community institutions in a complementary position to achieve common goals. In the context of urban community development, territorial officials function not only as policy implementers but also as facilitators, mediators, and liaisons, bridging various social interests at the local level. (Wardani, 2023).

Harmonious relationships between officials and citizens are built through ongoing, transparent, and trust-based communication. Public communication serves to create a space for dialogue that allows citizens to express their aspirations, needs, and the various issues they face. Relationships built through two-way communication can strengthen a sense of ownership in the various development programs implemented within the community. (Rahmawati & Setiawan, 2023).

Two-way communication is a crucial foundation for building equal partnerships between territorial officials and the community. Public communication literature explains that community involvement in the communication process improves the quality of social relations because citizens feel valued and heard by public institutions. (Fransiska et al., 2025). The opportunity to express opinions and receive an adequate response will strengthen public trust in territorial officials. This trust is a key asset in creating productive collaboration in various community development programs.

Social capital plays a strategic role in urban communities, which tend to have higher levels of individualism than rural communities. Strong social ties facilitate coordination and collaboration in addressing various social issues. Growing trust between officials and the community allows for a more open exchange of information, increased citizen participation in various social activities, and strengthened social solidarity within the community. This situation is a crucial factor in creating social resilience capable of facing various urban challenges.

The Medan city context demonstrates that synergy between territorial authorities and the community is a crucial need in addressing increasingly complex urban challenges. The ethnic, religious,

cultural, and social diversity that characterizes Medan requires an inclusive and sensitive communication approach to differences. Communication that respects diversity will strengthen social cohesion and prevent the emergence of group exclusivism that could potentially lead to social conflict.

Inclusive and collaborative communication enables the creation of strategic partnerships between authorities and residents to maintain environmental security, strengthen social cohesion, constructively manage conflict, and support sustainable regional development. These partnerships are realized through various social communication activities, community discussion forums, youth organization development, mutual cooperation activities, social outreach, and various forms of collaboration between authorities and the community to maintain environmental stability.

The role of religious leaders, community leaders, traditional leaders, youth organizations, and community organizations is crucial in building this synergy. Collaborative governance literature explains that the involvement of local actors can strengthen the effectiveness of policy implementation because they possess social legitimacy and close ties with the community (Emerson & Nabatchi, 2015). Territorial officials can leverage the social networks of local leaders to expand their communication reach and increase community participation in various development programs.

The use of communication technology also makes a significant contribution to strengthening synergy between authorities and citizens. The development of digital media enables faster, more open, and interactive communication. Social media-based communication groups, digital information platforms, and various online communication channels can be used to convey information, coordinate activities, and absorb public aspirations. The integration of face-to-face and digital communication allows for a more effective relationship between authorities and the highly mobile urban population. (Mergel, 2013)

The social resilience perspective explains that communities with high levels of participation and trust in public institutions tend to be better able to cope with various crises and social changes. The synergy established between territorial authorities and the community will strengthen collective capacity to address issues such as social conflict, crime, disasters, the spread of disinformation, and other social threats. (Siswantara, 2017). Collaborative relationships enable communities to become part of the solution, not just objects of policy.

The synthesis of the study results shows that public communication by territorial officials in implementing urban community development policies has four main functions: social development, social security education, local issue management, and community partnership development. The social development function strengthens the relationship between officials and residents. The social security education function increases public awareness of various social threats. The local issue management function helps create a rapid and coordinated response to various community issues. The community

partnership development function strengthens the participation and collaboration of various actors in maintaining regional stability.

The integration of these four functions forms a collaborative public communication model that positions the community as a strategic partner in implementing urban community development policies. This model demonstrates that the success of community development in Medan City is determined not only by the institutional capacity of territorial officials, but also by the ability to build trust, participation, and sustainable cooperation with the community. A harmonious relationship between officials and residents is a crucial foundation for creating social security, community cohesion, and inclusive and sustainable urban development.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrates that public communication by territorial officers plays a crucial role in the implementation of urban community development policies in Medan. Kodim communication practices include social communication, community dialogue, outreach, interpersonal communication with Babinsa (village supervisory non-commissioned officers), and the use of digital media to build participatory relationships with the community. Social security communication strategies are implemented through persuasive, educational, participatory, and dialogical approaches aimed at raising public awareness of various social threats. Public communication by territorial officers also plays a role in detecting local issues, managing information, building cross-stakeholder coordination, and strengthening synergy between officers and residents. The study results produce a collaborative public communication model that encompasses social development, social security education, local issue management, and community partnership development as a foundation for urban social resilience

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