

**POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY:
STUDY OF GOLKAR FACTION'S ROLE IN MEDAN CITY
DEVELOPMENT 2019-2023****Muhammad Afri Rizki Lubis^{1*}, Marlon Sihombing², Humaizi³, Hatta Ridho⁴**^{1,2,3,4} Doctoral Program in Development Studies, Universitas Sumatera Utara, Dr. T.
Mansur No.9, Padang Bulan, Medan*Email: afrizki10@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

The 1998 reforms encouraged the role of DPRD, including the Golkar Party of Medan DPRD, in participatory development through legislative, supervisory, and budgeting functions, focusing on infrastructure, health, education, and budget transparency. This research aims to explore the role of Golkar Party in supporting the inclusive and sustainable development of Medan City. The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to describe in depth the phenomena that occur in the communication of Medan City DPRD members with constituents related to participatory development planning. Data collection techniques were conducted through books, scientific articles, etc., and document analysis. The data analysis technique used is qualitative analysis. Golkar Party, through the Golkar Faction of Medan City DPRD, plays an active role in the development of Medan City by accommodating people's aspirations through effective communication and participatory forums such as recess and Musrenbang. The Golkar faction contributes to inclusive, responsive, and sustainable development planning, including monitoring policy implementation and budget allocation. However, challenges such as gaps in community participation and access to information are still obstacles that need to be overcome. This research highlights the importance of communication strategies and political education to increase community participation, while demonstrating the potential of political parties as the main driver of equitable and sustainable development in Medan City.

**Keywords: Development Planning, Golkar Party, Participatory Planning,
Political Communication.****INTRODUCTION**

The 1998 reforms brought major changes in governance in Indonesia, including the implementation of regional autonomy and decentralization (Yusriadi, 2018). As part of the government system consisting of the executive, legislative, and judiciary, local governments are given broad authority to manage their own households. Decentralization aims to increase the participation of local communities in the decision-making process, while accelerating regional economic development. This condition encourages the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) to play its role in regional development, based on the principles of democracy and social justice that take into account Indonesia's cultural diversity (Iqrom, 2013). As a legislative body, the DPRD has the responsibility to formulate

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policies, oversee the course of government, and form local regulations according to the needs of the community. In carrying out its role, the DPRD must carry out the Tri Functions of the Council, namely the functions of budgeting, supervision, and legislation (Heriyanto, 2023). This is done through effective communication with the community, such as visits to electoral districts (dapil), recess, and regional development meetings (Musrenbang) (Pasaribu & Adhani, 2024). DPRD is also expected to accommodate the aspirations of the community in formulating targeted policies, including infrastructure development, public services, and improving the quality of education and health (Christoper et al., 2024). The legislative role in overseeing policy implementation is key to ensuring that decentralization is effective and responsive to local needs (Sembiring & Nasution, 2024). In this context, the Golkar Faction of Medan City DPRD for the 2019-2023 period seeks to carry out this role through a participatory and transparent approach. As the largest metropolitan city in North Sumatra, Medan faces various challenges in development, especially in infrastructure, economy, and public services (Muda, 2018). In the 2019-2023 period, the Golkar Party, through its four seats in the Medan City DPRD, contributed to strategic decision-making for the city's development. Several Golkar Party DPRD members, such as Mulia Asri Rambe and Modesta Marpaung, played an important role in supporting infrastructure development, such as road improvements and drainage systems, which are major issues in Medan. In 2021, Medan City Council together with the city government allocated IDR 1.2 trillion for strategic infrastructure projects, reflecting a commitment to sustainable development. In addition to infrastructure, Medan DPRD also prioritizes health and education. In 2022, the Golkar faction supports the improvement of Puskesmas facilities and medical personnel to expand access to public health. In the field of education, the DPRD together with the city government agreed to increase the education budget by Rp 30 billion for scholarship programs and the construction of school infrastructure. The Golkar faction also encourages the supervision of budget transparency, including in handling the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure the use of the APBD is effective and right on target. This step shows the Golkar Faction's commitment to human development that supports long-term prosperity. With this in mind, this research aims to explore the role of the Golkar Party in the development of Medan City, as well as provide in-depth insights into how political parties can support inclusive and sustainable development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several articles have conducted research related to this study. First, this participatory planning consultation involves citizens in setting development priorities and ensuring their voices are heard in local governance (Musadat, 2019). The difference in the research lies in the focus of analyzing the communication of Medan City DPRD members of the Golkar faction with constituents in participatory development planning, while the research emphasizes more on the institutional design of participatory planning and its influence on local government accountability and responsiveness. In addition, this study examines the role of the legislature in accommodating community aspirations through strategic policies, while the study uses a case comparison approach to evaluate the effect of participatory

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planning and budgeting on public service performance. Second, the integration of technology in the Musrenbang process increases transparency and accountability, thus enabling greater community involvement in development planning (Ikmal et al., 2022). The difference in this study is in the focus that emphasizes the implementation of technology in development planning to increase government transparency and accountability. Third, research shows that although community involvement is generally positive, there are some barriers such as lack of infrastructure and varying levels of active participation among citizens (Oktavia & Rangkuti, 2024). The study focused on community participation in development planning at the village level, specifically regarding facilities and infrastructure. Meanwhile, this study emphasizes the role of communication with constituents in supporting participatory development planning at the city level. Fourth, high-quality communication is essential to facilitate citizen participation; it helps to simplify complex planning processes (Yonggang, 2022). The study focuses on the quality of communication in enhancing citizen participation in urban planning by highlighting how information is conveyed to encourage debate and collaboration. Meanwhile, this study emphasizes on the communication between DPRD members and constituents in realizing participatory development planning at the city level. Fifth, utilizing opinion polls and standardized interviews can improve communication between councils and the public, allowing for input from a wider public (Foret & Foretová, 2005). The difference between these studies lies in the focus of opinion surveys to improve council and community relations, while this study examines the communication of Golkar faction DPRD members in development planning. Sixth, effective public engagement can lead to increased consultation and participation, although there are still challenges to fully realizing these practices (Leston-Bandeira & Siefken, 2023). The difference in the research lies in its focus on examining public involvement in parliamentary activities in general, while my research is more specific to the communication of legislative members. Seventh, Participatory urban planning allows citizens to influence decision-making, leading to more relevant urban solutions (Kohli, 2024). The difference in the research lies in its focus on urban planning in general and collaboration between stakeholders, while this research focuses on constituent communication. Various participatory methods, such as informing, consulting and engaging communities, are used to achieve true collaboration between government and citizens in development planning (Geekiyana et al., 2021). A case study in Manshiyet Nasser demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach in addressing slums and promoting sustainable urban development (Ashmawy et al., 2022). In addition, establishing feedback channels between parliament and civil society is also important to increase responsiveness to public concerns, which in turn can improve policy accountability and transparency (Vnuchko, 2019). By involving the public in the decision-making process, the policies implemented are more relevant to their needs and support the achievement of more inclusive and sustainable development goals.

METHODS

The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to describe in depth the phenomena that occur in the communication of Medan City

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DPRD members with constituents related to participatory development planning. This research focuses on a holistic understanding of the interaction, role and influence of political communication in development planning at the city level. In this research, data was collected through books, scientific articles, and others. The data analysis technique used is qualitative analysis, which allows researchers to understand patterns, themes and dynamics that emerge from the collected data. With this approach, it is hoped that the research can provide deep insight into how political communication can strengthen or hinder community participation in urban development. This analysis technique also allows the researcher to see the linkages between communication, policy and public participation in the context of regional development planning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication between Members of Medan City DPRD Golkar Faction and Constituents in Development Planning

Communication between Medan City DPRD members of the Golkar faction and constituents plays a crucial role in ensuring community participation in city development planning (Regif et al., 2024). As representatives of the people, DPRD members are responsible for accommodating people's aspirations in development policies, which can only be achieved through effective and transparent communication. Through various communication channels such as recess, Musrenbang, and digital platforms, DPRD members can gather input from the community and ensure that development programs are in line with their needs. Therefore, good communication between DPRDs and constituents is a decisive factor in achieving participatory, inclusive and responsive development planning to local needs.

The Role of Communication in Building Community Participation

Communication between DPRD Medan City Golkar faction members and constituents has a very important role in encouraging community participation in development planning. As a legislative body, DPRD serves to accommodate the aspirations of the community through various communication channels, such as visits to constituencies, recess, and Development Planning Consultation (Musrenbang). Through these direct interactions, DPRD members can listen to the needs and proposals of the community regarding development in their area. In this context, political communication is very strategic, because effective communication will strengthen citizen involvement in the decision-making process related to development (Habermas, 1984). Golkar faction DPRD members, such as Mulia Asri Rambe and Modesta Marpaung, are actively involved in dialog with constituents, both in official forums and through more informal interactions. This process is important to create development that not only meets the basic needs of the community, but also involves them in every stage of the development process. The success of this communication can not only be seen from the frequency of meetings, but also from the extent to which the results of these meetings can be translated into effective development policies. However, a key challenge in this communication is to ensure that the voices of all

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elements of society are heard (Pasaribu & Adhani, 2024). Often, there are gaps in participation, especially among citizens who have limited access to information and facilities. Therefore, further efforts are needed to equalize information and educate communities on the importance of their involvement in development planning (Regif et al., 2024; Sitorus, 2024). This is also in line with the principle of decentralization, which prioritizes community involvement in any development process as part of the pillars of local democracy (Fung & Wright, 2003; Young, 2000). The Development Planning Meeting (Musrenbang) serves as a participatory communication tool that allows stakeholders to convey their aspirations and make decisions based on community needs. In this context, community participation enables citizens to identify and address local problems, so that development is better aligned with the actual needs of the community (Sulaiman et al., 2024; Nisa, 2024).

Effect of Transparency in the Planning Process

Transparency in the development planning process in Medan City is an important aspect that supports the creation of more open communication between DPRD and constituents. Golkar faction DPRD members play an active role in ensuring that budgets and fund allocations for development projects are clearly accessible to the public. Transparent information allows the public to know the extent to which policies and decisions taken by the local government are in line with their needs. Therefore, clear and open communication about the use of the budget is very important to maintain accountability and public trust in the government (Hood, 2006). One way to increase transparency is to involve information technology. Technology makes it easier to disseminate information related to budgets and development projects, so that people can more easily access information that was previously difficult to reach, especially for those living in remote areas. This increased transparency is essential to support a more accountable and accountable development planning process (Heald, 2006). However, even with transparency measures in place, it is important to continue to improve the information delivery system so that it is more easily understood by the public, especially those with limited information literacy. For example, the budget for infrastructure projects allocated by the city government, which also involves the Golkar faction, should be visible and understandable to constituents. While information is readily available, effective oversight of budget utilization and project implementation is also necessary. In this regard, the Golkar faction plays an important role in ensuring that the allocated funds are used as planned and not misused. Transparent supervision will provide confidence to the public that development is done in a correct and fair manner (Piotrowski & Van Ryzin, 2007). In addition, transparency in planning also encourages community participation. With an open process, citizens can be directly involved as actors in development, which is crucial for effective spatial management (Matondang, 2022). Increased transparency also increases the accountability of oversight by DPRD, allowing them to effectively monitor development planning and address any irregularities that occur (Windari, 2022; Saragih et al., 2019). Clear communication is essential to socialize development initiatives, change people's attitudes, and increase their participation in the

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planning process (Amin, 2022). However, there are several obstacles to implementing transparency, including limited regulations. The current regulations governing DPRD's oversight functions are considered incomplete, hindering effective oversight and reducing the impact of transparency efforts (Saragih et al., 2019). There is also a perception problem, where there is a decline in public participation due to a mismatch between the planning and implementation stages. This indicates the need for better communication strategies to address the discrepancy (Alma`arif & Wargadinata, 2022).

Barriers to Effective Development Participation Unequal Access to Information

One of the main obstacles in promoting effective participation in development planning is unequal access to information. Although the Medan City Council has tried to convey development-related information through various communication channels, not all community groups have equal access to such information. Some communities, especially those living in remote or less developed areas, are often hampered by the limited infrastructure and technology available. As a result, inequalities in community participation occur, as they are unable to fully access relevant information and understand existing planning mechanisms (Norris, 2001). This limited access to information results in low levels of participation in important forums, such as the Development Planning Conference (Musrenbang). Poorly informed communities are less likely to attend such meetings, due to a lack of understanding of how their participation can influence development outcomes. It is therefore important for DPRD members to ensure that information is not only available, but also understandable to all levels of society. Utilizing technology as an information channel is particularly important. Given the increasing number of people using digital devices, online information dissemination can be an effective alternative to reach a wider audience. Therefore, initiatives to utilize technology in information distribution should continue to be encouraged. In addition, there are several factors that exacerbate inequality in access to information. Among these is the lack of adequate information. Many communities do not have sufficient access to relevant information, which limits their ability to engage meaningfully in the planning process (Reindrawati, 2023). This reinforces the importance of efforts to provide more open and accessible information to the wider community. Another obstacle to effective participation is inefficient decision-making structures. Decision-making frameworks often exclude marginalized voices, thus reinforcing existing power dynamics and limiting inclusiveness in development planning (Reindrawati, 2023). These inequalities can exacerbate social injustice and make the planning process unreflective of the needs of the whole community. In addition, communities often lack access to planning expertise and the resources necessary to participate effectively. These limitations reduce their capacity to understand the planning process in depth and contribute to its full potential. The skills and knowledge needed to participate in a constructive way in planning forums are critical, making it important to provide communities with relevant training and information (Reindrawati, 2023).

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Resistance to Change in the Planning Process

One of the obstacles that often arises in the development planning process is resistance to change, both on the part of DPRD members and the community. Some DPRD members may feel comfortable with the old ways of planning development that are centralized and do not involve the community directly. This resistance is often due to distrust of the capacity of communities to manage the planning process or doubts about the effectiveness of community involvement in development decision-making (Fung & Wright, 2003). Some legislators may be more accustomed to the existing system and feel that change will complicate an already smooth process. On the other hand, communities can also be skeptical of changes in the development planning process. Communities that have long felt disempowered in decision-making often doubt whether their participation will have a significant impact on their quality of life. This distrust can exacerbate resistance to desired changes in the planning process. Therefore, to reduce this resistance, DPRD members need to establish more transparent and inclusive communication, and demonstrate that community participation actually has an influence on development decisions. More intensive political education is key to overcoming this resistance. For DPRD members, political education can help them understand the importance of open communication with constituents, while for citizens, political education will strengthen their awareness of how their participation can contribute to better development (Young, 2000). With the right approach, this resistance to change can be reduced, and the development planning process can become more inclusive and effective. In addition to communication factors, historical context also plays an important role in resistance to change. Past experiences with unsuccessful government initiatives or harmful policies often lead to skepticism and resistance to proposed changes. For example, local communities often resist policies that are perceived as overreaching or detrimental to them (Fainstein et al., 2023). Psychological and sociological influences cannot be ignored either. Personality traits, cultural orientation and peer influence can shape people's attitudes towards change. Resistance to change often stems from factors such as uncertainty, fear of change, or anxiety about possible consequences (Miller & Guerrero, 2022). Local political dynamics also influence resistance to change in development planning. In some areas, such as Yogyakarta, political elites can dominate the planning process to advance their own interests, which in turn reduces public support for proposed development policies (Keban, 2019). This often results in resistance from communities who feel disengaged from the process. In addition, weaknesses in the public participation process, or disempowerment, are also a cause of resistance. When participation is limited and people feel disempowered, they tend to feel there is no connection between government actions and their needs. This leads to a disconnect between government policies and people's aspirations, which in turn exacerbates resistance to change in the planning process (Bazaanah & Nedzamba, 2022).

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Role of Golkar Faction in Encouraging Sustainable Development

Role of Golkar Faction in City Infrastructure Development

The Golkar faction of Medan City DPRD plays an important role in supporting infrastructure development that is prioritized in the city's development planning. In the 2019-2023 period, the Golkar faction supports the allocation of large funds for infrastructure projects, such as the construction and repair of roads, drainage systems, and other public facilities. Through this support, it is expected to improve the quality of existing infrastructure and fulfill people's needs for better facilities and infrastructure. However, in their implementation, these development projects are not free from challenges. Among them are the mismatch between the needs of the community and the existing development priorities, as well as limited budget issues. For this reason, the Golkar Faction needs to work together with the executive and the community to ensure that the projects implemented are truly in accordance with the needs of the community. Good communication between the legislature, executive and communities is key to ensuring that any development project is not only implemented based on technical needs, but also takes into account the wishes and priorities of local communities (Evans, 1996). Sustainable infrastructure development not only requires sufficient budget allocation, but also must consider the long-term impacts on the environment and communities. One of the challenges faced is how to ensure that development projects are not just temporary, but provide lasting benefits. Therefore, careful planning and close monitoring are essential to ensure the sustainability of existing infrastructure development (Bovens, 2014).

Legislative and Executive Communication in Development Policy Formulation

Realizing sustainable development in Medan city is not only related to infrastructure development, but also to adequate management of natural resources, social, and economic policies. In this case, the Golkar Faction plays a role in encouraging policies that not only focus on economic growth, but also pay attention to environmental sustainability and social welfare. Sustainable development requires a balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and community welfare (United Nations, 1987). However, the main challenge in realizing sustainable development is the tension between short-term development needs and more sustainable long-term interests. In this context, the Golkar faction needs to play a more active role in designing policies that support environmentally friendly development, mitigate the impact of climate change, and ensure efficient and equitable utilization of natural resources. One way to address this challenge is to involve the community in the decision-making process related to development planning and policies, so that they can understand and support the importance of sustainability in development (Ostrom, 1990). Sustainable development management also requires close cooperation between the government, the community, and the private sector. The Golkar faction, as part of the legislature, must be able to collaborate with various parties to create policies that support sustainable development, both in terms of environmental management, improving the quality of life of the community, and achieving economic development goals. This

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requires a more holistic policy, which does not only pay attention to one sector, but integrates various aspects of social, economic, and environmental life (Sen, 1999).

CONCLUSION

The Golkar Party through the Golkar faction of the Medan City DPRD plays an important role in the development of Medan City. The party plays an active role in accommodating people's aspirations and ensuring that policies reflect local needs through effective communication and various participatory forums such as recess and Musrenbang. This research highlights that the Golkar Party's involvement in the development planning process is able to encourage the creation of inclusive development that is responsive to the needs of the community. In addition, the Golkar Party's role in Medan City's development shows that political parties have the potential to be the main driver in sustainable development. By ensuring oversight of policy implementation and budget allocation, the party seeks to maintain the effectiveness of development program implementation. However, challenges such as gaps in community participation and access to information still need to be addressed to strengthen support for more equitable development. This research provides insights into the importance of communication strategies and political education to encourage wider participation, in order to realize sustainable development in Medan City.

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