

Public Understanding and Communication Strategy Evaluation of Local Regulation No. 09 Year 2004 on Zero Child Labour Zone in Kutai Kartanegara Regency

Rina Juwita

Universitas Mulawarman

Kampus Gunung Kelua, Samarinda 75123, Kalimantan Timur

Email: ghaida_lutfiyah@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Child labour is a universal phenomenon that occurs in most parts of the world. Indonesia as part of developing countries cannot be separated from the issue, including Kutai Kartanegara (Kukar) regency which is one of the richest areas in the country. Although Kukar regency is chosen as one of the model in the elimination of child labour, this is accompanied by people's understanding on Child Labor Free Zone program enacted by the local government. This study tried to explore people's understanding of Regulation No. 09/ 2004 on ZBPA and evaluate communication strategies effectively used to build and optimize the sustainability of the program. It is important as public participation can only be improved if the communication is conducted in a proper way.*

Key words: *public understanding, communication strategy, public policy*

Abstrak: *Pekerja anak merupakan fenomena universal yang terjadi di hampir seluruh belahan dunia. Indonesia sebagai bagian dari negara berkembang juga tidak terlepas dari masalah ini, termasuk didalamnya Kabupaten Kutai Kartanegara yang merupakan salah satu daerah terkaya di negeri ini. Terpilihnya Kab Kukar sebagai salah satu daerah model pengentasan pekerja anak, ternyata tidak dibarengi dengan pemahaman masyarakatnya mengenai program Zona Bebas Pekerja Anak yang diusung pemerintah setempat. Penelitian ini mencoba menggali pemahaman masyarakat terhadap Perda No 09/2004 tentang ZBPA, dan kemudian mengevaluasi strategi komunikasi yang efektif digunakan untuk membangun dan memaksimalkan keberlangsungan program tersebut. Hal ini penting untuk dilakukan mengingat partisipasi publik hanya dapat dibangun jika komunikasi dilangsungkan dengan cara yang tepat.*

Kata kunci: *pemahaman masyarakat, strategi komunikasi, kebijakan publik*

The working children or children who are 'forced' to engage into a workplace are considered as a universal phenomenon which is commonly found in most parts of the world. Economic and social cultural factors are mostly defined as the main issues which trigger those children to be involved in economic activity. The United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates there are about 250 million children in the world who are involved in the paid workplace. Those children are mostly employed as hawker; factory workers; working in construction, mining, timber industry; and even illicit drugs and prostitution. Of the total mentioned above, 7% is children who live in South America, 18% of children in Asia, and other 25% is in Africa (Nawawi, 2000).

The children themselves are absolutely considered as the future of a nation. The way they are educated and protected reflects the attitude of the nation in determining the future of the country. The Indonesian Act of 1945 on the second amendment of 28B article, paragraph (2) states that 'Every child has the right to survive, to grow and develop, and is also entitled to be protected from any violence and discrimination'. However, in reality, not all children have the opportunity to obtain such basic rights; especially children whose parents are less fortunate economically. These conditions later lead to a situation where many children who are still under-age involved in workplace; forced to work. This situation often hampers the child's physical and mental development, and poses more negative impacts on their lives, and further will only lead to a new poverty cycle in the future.

Furthermore, the problem of child labour is also found in East Kalimantan Province. As one of the richest provinces in Indonesia, this problem implicitly reflects the level of people's welfare in the area. It can be said that the high number of the working children also pictures the level of social welfare of the people in the region. The East Kalimantan Province alone has a big number of total revenue and budget; which ideally could be used to improve the people's welfare. However, the poverty level reaches about 7.7% of the total population, which means the equivalent of 229,230 people live under the national standard (Matanews.com, 2009). It is also estimated that there are about 28 thousands children left their schools since 2005 (kaltimprov.go.id), and this increases rapidly about a thousand children each year for various reasons (Kompas, 2009).

Kutai Kartanegara Regency is one of the districts in East Kalimantan Province which has been assigned to be a national model on child labour elimination in Indonesia, known as Zero Child Labour Zone (ZBPA). The local government itself declared that the program has successfully reduced the number of 11 thousands child workers in last 2002 into 60 children in 2009 (Tempo, 2009). However, according to a research' result conducted by the Centre for Research and Regional Development-Mulawarman University in collaboration with the Research and Development Agency – Kutai Kartanegara Regency in 2009 ago, there's still found the less effectiveness to the ZBPA program implementation. It can be said since one of the results of the study is the low level of public awareness on the program which might hamper the optimum of the program.

This issue becomes a huge homework for the government so the program might be sustained optimally as it has been proposed as the best icon of the region. In real life, some government policies are actually aimed for the good of the community, however, they either fail or are received negatively by the public because they could not obtain any public understanding toward the enactment of the

policies (cases on kerosene to gas conversion, the Muria nuclear power plant, the BOS funds, and others).

Public understanding itself is considered as an important part in determining the specific results which are aimed to be achieved in altering the public behaviour; which in this case is the elimination of child labour in Kutai Kartanegara Regency. Moreover, the region itself has been assigned as an ideal model for other regions in the country, and even in Southeast Asia. In addition, this region has also been selected as one of 15 'Cities for Children' in Indonesia based on the Minister of Women Empowerment Regulation No. 02 Year 2009 because it has local regulation supporting child growth and development (ZBPA).

In order to gain more understanding and support from the public towards the implementation of the policy, it becomes important for the government to develop appropriate communication strategies. Later it becomes the basic assumption to determine the public understanding of Zero Child Labour Zone program, to explore how public understands the program. Therefore, it may help the government to look for an appropriate communication strategy used in order to be able to embrace a wider community to fully participate on the sustainability of the ZBPA program.

The term 'understanding' itself is defined as the process of thinking and learning because the understanding is considered as a process, an act, and a way of understanding something (Purwadarminta, 1991; 636). On the other hand, the public is generally defined as a group of individuals in large. According to Bogardus, public is a number of people who are united in one bond and has the same stance towards social problems (1993). Blumer defines public as a group of people who (1) face a problem, (2) share opinions about how to solve the problem, and (3) engage in discussions about the issues (1951).

Therefore, since public in this case relates to the government policy, then the public, mentioned above, are the people who have interest in a particular policy in order to launch the implementation of the policy. Then, the public can be classified as all parties who have interest and concern to the policy, so they should always be informed and pay attention when the government implementing the policy of communication campaign.

The ZBPA program was declared in November 2002 and attended by various institution representatives. At that time Kutai Kartanegara Regency declared the program was accompanied by the Parliament chairman, and witnessed by the Minister of Labour, the Governor of East Kalimantan, and the ILO Director for Indonesian. The ZBPA declaration is pictured as a logic consequence of the

ratification of ILO Convention No. 138 by the Act No. 20 Year 1999 on the Children Minimum Age to Work, ILO Convention No 182 by the Act No. 1 Year 2000 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, and Employment Act No. 13 Year 2003 Article 68-75 relates to the prohibition of employing children and the procedure when the child participates in workplace. The Local Government' seriousness imposed the ZBPA program anchored in Local Regulation No. 09 Year 2004 which had started to be effective in 2008.

There are some targets declared by the Kutai Kartanegara Government in the ZBPA program. First, in 2008, there would be no child worker under the age of 15 years old, and all children under that age must obtain nine years of basic education. Second, in 2010, there would be no longer children worker under the age of 18 years; and the third is by the year 2012 all children will have received the 12 years of basic education.

Unfortunately, the country's current development discourse is often coloured with the specific interest trading-off between the society and the government. In the past time, the government often placed themselves as a centralized policy maker by placing the public as the subordinate in the name of stability and sustainability of the development process. Later, the participatory development paradigm emerges and strengthens in public discourse. Public has become more aware on the importance of the public understanding and equality with the government; so now the government cannot just place the public as the development object but more as the partner. To bring both parties together, the communication part is absolutely important as an instrument of mediation so the development process will keep running under all parties' control and work.

Every development ideas and program should be viewed as a reform effort (innovation), both technically and socially. Therefore, the first step to achieve public acceptance and participation in an optimal level surely needs some particular efforts aimed at changing desired knowledge, attitude, and behaviour towards the implementation of development programs as expected by the authorities. The steps are called diffusion of innovations (spreading new ideas) (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) which in political language is known as socialization.

Socialization program or diffusion of innovation is a form of social or development communication. The effectiveness of communication for development (in the sense of producing a positive effect), obviously requires a proper planning at the level of strategic, tactical, and even technical operational actions. Communication planning itself is defined as a necessity and an integral part of the planning and implementation of such development program. In planning the communication

itself, firstly a strategic plan should be created in order to be a guideline in carrying out the development communication activities (socialization) in the level of tactical and technical operational plans (McQuail, 1997).

RESEARCH DESIGN

This is a descriptive qualitative research, a study that tries to describe the level of understanding of the local regulation No. 09 Year 2004 on Zero Child Labour Zone. The result of this study is fundamental to analyse the communication media used during the time in order to find a more effective communication strategy to maximise public understanding on the policy.

The research was conducted in five selected districts based on the highest number of child workers in 2009 (Humas Pemkab Kukar, 2009). The location was in Muara Muntai District, Muara Wis District, Kota Bangun District, Samboja District, and Marang Kayu District.

FINDING: PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND POLICY COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The findings of this study are: (1) there is a different method of communication strategies both from the aspect of knowledge, the target/audience, endorser, communication media usage, message content and the obstacles faced in the field; (2) frequency of socialization at the district level was limited in a routine or coordination meeting once a year. It was felt inadequate by the public; especially if it is considered as new policy or regulation; (3) at the village level, face-to-face communication is absolutely required periodically to establish interactive dialogues to put the process work well and maximise the public awareness; (4) in term of communication content, it is expected by the public not only about the obligation to go to school for the school-age children and the sanction which would be applied to those who violate the regulation; but the public also requires all key information relate to the program of ZBPA. Such as; what is ZBPA program, what is the meaning of child labour and working children, kind of the worst forms of child labour, the government supporting program to eradicate child labour, and others; (5) the communication media should also benefit public media and community media so the communication process may run effectively; (6) communicators also need to understand the socio-cultural aspects of the society, and then convey the messages by carried out the local positive

values and norms which may encourage the success of the program; (7) for those whose region are hardly reached in remote territory should remain as a primary focus since the limited infrastructure might be a cause for the children to opt working rather than attending school. Therefore, the empowerment and involvement of local resources as well as the intensive socialization is important to bear in mind.

Based on the reasons above, the re-strategy of communication model on the Zero Child Labour Zone should cover these five following aspects: categorization of the target audience, communication methods, communication messages, communication channel, and determining appropriate communicator.

1. Targeting Communication Audience

The communication strategy target should cover general population residing in the territory of Kutai Kartanegara Regency; targeting children and parents, as they are the target group of the program; ZBPA leading sectors which are the actors whom responsible for the program implementation; and other stakeholders that may support the program implementation. It includes (1) Parliament and the local government as the authorities' institutions. The position of the government and the parliament in this regard become dominant since it is a driving force towards the sustainability of the program that has known nationally and even internationally; (2) any institutions that support the implementation such as trade unions and employers' associations, and (3) any other focal points that may help to gain public participation, such as NGOs, community organizations, community and religious figures, as well as other public elements.

2. Communication Methods

Communication strategies in the ZBPA campaign should use four methods: dissemination of information, persuasion, advocacy, and education which intertwine to each other through one principal communication activity. These methods include distributing ZBPA information massively and intensively to the entire target audience by using various communication channels, especially mass media, outdoor media and printed materials such as posters and booklets. ZBPA persuasion is aimed at shaping alignments, supports, and interests of the target audience by using community-based approach that allows a direct interaction between the supporting programs implementer with the target audiences and other stakeholders. Advocacy is carried out to build awareness and commitment of policy makers

from relevant institutions. Education is aimed to build a sense of shame, a sense of ownership of the program, and the awareness of the importance to improve the quality of local human resources by taking out of skills, job training, and supports so the public realises the urgency of this program.

3. Preparation of Communication Messages

Re-strategy of ZBPA communication program should manage the message contents, appeals, and composition well, described as follows: (a) Making a guideline for message preparation by taking into account the target audience' characteristic, the message should be able to evoke a sense of 'ownership' to the program, the message should be delivered in local communities' language, and the message also should be conveyed verbally and visually with a variety of media. (b) The message includes general and specific messages. (c) The urging message is done by considering the rational, emotional, social, spiritual, and moral approaches. (d) Coordination of delivered messages should go through various channels to each different audience; including the main messages contents, the message elements, and variation of message contents.

4. Strategic Use of Communication Channels

To increase the message effectiveness, the government should use various communication channels including the personal channels, traditional media, mass media, and new media (internet). The personal communication channels and the traditional media are used to build awareness and sense of belonging for the public to participate actively in implementing ZBPA. On the other hand, the mass media and the new media are used to build awareness of the stakeholders to pay attention and to commit in succeeding the ZBPA program. At the level of sustainability of this program, the government should use community-based channels to maintain the public ownership.

5. Strategy of Communicators

This strategy should consider several things. (a) Communicators should have credibility and thus can act as an agent of change (development investigators). (b) The message conveyor must be in line with the target audiences and the channels used. (c) It requires an endorser from regional level, and even better if coming from national level. (d) It is also important to have endorsers of child experts, opinion leaders or former victims. (e) The communicator also needs to take into account the target

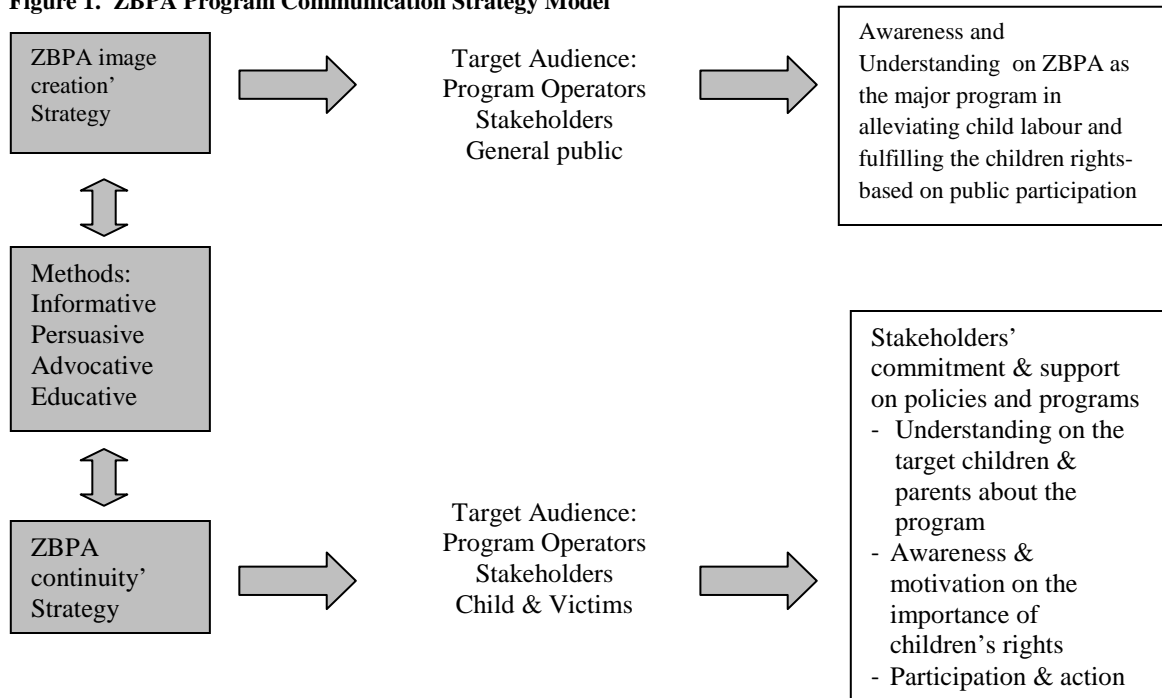
audience characteristics. (f) Lastly, the communicators also need to utilize the folk media, such as folk theatre, dances, ballads, and jokes.

In accordance with the communication strategies which have been formulated above, although there is a separation of communication strategies for creating ZBPA images and the sustainability of the program in general, they both must be mutually supportive to each other. Some efforts in building the image should be the basis or the drivers of the ZBPA program sustainability. On the other hand, the effort in maintaining the program sustainability should also establish and maintain the image created. Thus, both of these strategies need to be integrated.

The integration of the communication strategy elements is required in the operation of the re-program such communication strategy to the almost entire communication target. Program image is considered as the major factor and the commencement of the community support and participation. The communication program of ZBPA through informative, persuasive, advocative, and educative approaches can be implemented by the ZBPA team from the regency level down to district level by fully deploying the village's agencies, even the other parties who have concerns in eliminating the child labour as an effort to fulfil the children's rights. In its implementation, every action of the operation should set goals or targets of the future communications process; and then setting up the message strategy, channels, and choose the effective communicators or messengers.

Financial support in socializing ZBPA program is also very crucial in term of program sustainability. The financial support may come from the government agencies that carry out communication and socialization programs, or it might also directly held by the ZBPA Committee in Regency level. However, the support might be obtained from the local budget, donors, and the participation of the business institutions as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programs. The statement of source and application of the budget refers to the applied rules and regulations.

Figure 1. ZBPA Program Communication Strategy Model



The strategic model above would describe how a development program should be disseminated to the public as the object, subject, and stakeholders of the development program. So the development programs, which are carried out for the public welfare, no longer merely put the public as the object. In this case the government could not only become a centralized policy maker, but also positioning the public as the development partners. However, this participatory development paradigm can only happen if the public has had the similar understanding with the government on the implemented development programs. Therefore, it takes the role of communication as mediation instruments for an ongoing joint-control development.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research conducted, the results show that the public in Kutai Kartanegara Regency has very limited information on the Zero Child Labour Program implemented by the local government. This is presumably due to a condition that the ZBPA teams only focused on the involved child when the program launched. Whereas the other parts of the public, which are also considered as important

targets, have not received adequate information on the urgency and the vital information of the ZBPA program. The public also has a different perception about the program. This is because the government had been carrying the message more on the compulsory education program for the school-age children, and also the sanction for those who do not send the children into schools. So the public do not understand the meaning of the ZBPA program and the important matters relating to the necessary efforts eliminating the child labour.

Moreover, the communication media used were quite limited in variation. The coordination meeting carried out to deliver the message from the top level of structure to the district level only focused on the remaining number of the child labour. While the other media, such as pamphlets, brochures, billboards, and stickers, was only distributed once in the initial launching of the program. Some informal socialisation to the general public was also inserted in the dialogue and talks of some government officials while they were conducting a working visit of other activities. Therefore, the low understanding of the public on the ZBPA program resulted in the absence of an integrated and sustained support from the public to maximize the achieved goals. It is important to note because the public ignorance could lead to failure of the development programs due to many factors which could drive such children and families to re-engage in the workplace.

Finally, it is necessary to re-program the development communication strategy by positioning the public not just as the object, but more to the extent of government's partners. It is absolutely important to gain a mutual understanding in order to unify efforts toward the ultimate goal of the ZBPA program. This only can be done by formulating an appropriate guideline for the implementation of ZBPA communication strategy to support the ZBPA program guideline that has been formulated by the ZBPA committee at the regency level. The communication strategy should consider every element of communication, which include goal, target audience, message, instrument, resources, time scale, and evaluation process for improvement. A more comprehensive communication strategy, knowledge, and understanding of the entire public could help the maximization impact and the sustainability of a development program.

REFERENCES

- Blumer, H., 1951 "Collective Behavior," in A. M. Lee, ed., *Principles of Sociology*. 67-121, Barnes & Noble, New York.
- Bogardus, E.S., 1993. 'Measuring Public Opinion', *Sociology and Social Research*, Vol 17, pp. 465-489.
- Kompas, 2009. *Banyak Anak Putus Sekolah karena Bekerja*, Vol. 14 June 2009.
- Matanews.com, 'Kemiskinan di Kaltim Berkurang', July 2009. Retrieved from <http://matanews.com/2009/07/02/kemiskinan-di-kaltim-berkurang/>

McQuail, D., 1987. *Teori Komunikasi Massa*, Penerbit Erlangga, Jakarta.

Nawawi, 2000. 'Pekerja Anak di Indonesia: Masalah dan Upaya Perlindungannya', *Widyaiset*, Vol.1

Purwadarminta, 1991. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, Jakarta, Balai Pustaka.

Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971. 'Research on the Diffusion of Innovation', *Communication Research*, Vol. 8, pp. 586-611.

Tempo, 2009. *Masalah Ekonomi Penyebab Pekerja Anak Masih Tinggi*, Vol. 12, June 2009.

Penelitian dilakukan atas kerjasama Pusat Penelitian Sosial Humaniora-UNMUL dengan Provinsi Kalimantan Timur