Community Involvement in Public Activities as a Manifestation of Active and Responsible Citizenship

Riskawati[1*], Akbar Aba[2], Hendri Irawan
[1]Makassar State University, Indonesian
[2]Muhammadiyah University of Makassar, Indonesian
[3]Surabaya State University, Indonesian

ABSTRACT

Community participation is a tangible manifestation of active citizenship that reflects the responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society. Based on the theories of active citizenship and democratic participation, this study aims to examine the concept of community participation, identify its forms and typologies, and analyze its application in the context of governance and development in Indonesia. This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature review method through content analysis of various relevant academic literature. The results show that community participation encompasses three main dimensions, namely political, social, and civic participation, which are manifested in the stages of planning, implementation, utilization of results, and evaluation of development. Although decentralization opens up broader opportunities for participation, its implementation still tends to be passive due to internal and external factors. This study concludes that strengthening community participation requires a comprehensive approach through education, empowerment, bureaucratic reform, transparency, and the use of digital technology to realize substantive democracy.

Correspondence: Riskawatibintuluqman@unm.ac.id *
How to Cite: Riskawati., Aba, A., & Irawan, H. (2025). Community Involvement in Public Activities as a Manifestation of Active and Responsible Citizenship. *Indonesian Journal of Civic and Law Studies*, Vol. 1 (2), Page 22-29.

Introduction

Community involvement is one of the foundations for realizing a healthy and sustainable democracy. In the context of national life, participation is not only a political right, but also a tangible manifestation of active and responsible citizenship. The concept of active citizenship emphasizes the involvement of citizens in various aspects of public life, ranging from decision-making, policy oversight, to the implementation of development programs(Kusmanto, 2014; Riyanto & Kovalenko, 2023).

Indonesian, as a democratic country, recognizes the importance of public participation in the government system. This is evident in various regulations and policies that provide space for the public to be actively involved in public processes. The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia mandates that sovereignty resides with the people and is exercised in accordance with the Constitution. This constitutional mandate explains that public participation is not only a right, but also an obligation of every citizen in maintaining and developing democratic life (Budiardjo, 2008).

In its development, community participation has expanded in meaning and form. Political participation in a democracy is a voluntary activity of the community in taking part in the process of electing leaders and being involved, either directly or indirectly, in the formulation of public policy (Surbakti, 2010). This perspective shows that the quality of participation is not only measured by the quantity of involvement in general elections, but also by involvement in political organizations, professional organizations, and various other community activities

The digital age and advances in information technology have opened up new opportunities for public participation. Technology-based social transformation has expanded access to information and increased public involvement in political discussions and social movements, encouraging the emergence of new, more dynamic patterns of participation (Romadhona et al., 2023).

This phenomenon shows that community participation continues to undergo transformation in line with social dynamics and technological developments. However, community participation practices in Indonesia still face various challenges. The results of the study show that most people tend to comply with existing public policies, but many are still not active in providing input or participating in the policy-making process (Manganti, 2023).

The era of decentralized government has indeed expanded the space for public participation in the formulation and implementation of public policies, which were previously dominated by a centralized approach. However, its implementation in the field still faces various obstacles.

Several factors, such as low political literacy, information access gaps, authoritarian culture, and minimal public trust in state institutions, are obstacles to meaningful participation. Low public participation is a bad sign because it shows that many people do not care about state affairs, making the government less responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people (Mashuri, 2014).

On the other hand, there are also various good practices of community participation that have shown positive results. Community participation in regional development planning, public consultation forums, and participatory monitoring mechanisms have made a real contribution to improving the quality of development policies and programs. The participation of parents, teachers, and the community in educational decision-making can also help improve the overall quality of education (Lisa & Kurnia, 2023).

These experiences show that when communities are given adequate space and capacity, they can become strategic partners of the government in development. In the context of active and responsible citizenship, community participation is not only oriented towards the fulfillment of rights, but also towards the implementation of obligations and responsibilities as citizens. Active citizens are those who not only demand their rights, but also contribute constructively to the common good, respect diversity, and uphold democratic values. The application of Pancasila in Indonesian society requires the active participation of the community as agents of change who participate in maintaining and developing these values (CAUSA, 2024). Thus, public participation is an important medium in shaping strong and high-quality citizenship.

A good form of democracy is supported by a strong civil society. Civil society participation will determine whether a democratic society is created or not. A democratic society is the ideal of the Indonesian nation, especially since the reform movement began in 1998. However, to date, community participation remains weak, both in social and political contexts (Samudra Biru, 2021).

Furthermore, public participation is not only an indicator of democratic maturity, but also key to improving the quality and accountability of governance. According to Dwiyanto, et al., (2022) In his book Reinvensi Birokrasi: Memperkuat Partisipasi Publik dalam Tata Kelola Pemerintahan (Reinventing Bureaucracy: Strengthening Public Participation in Governance), inclusive and meaningful public participation can prevent policy deviations, ensure more targeted resource allocation, and build trust between the government and citizens.

n the context of post-reform Indonesia, demands for good governance have grown stronger, with public participation becoming one of its main pillars, alongside transparency and accountability. However, on the other hand, a study conducted by the LIPI Population Research Center (in Priyono, 2020) revealed that although the legal framework for participation is adequate, as stipulated in Law No. 25 of 2004 on the National Development Planning System and Law No. 6 of 2014 on Villages, its implementation in the field is often still formalistic. Musrenbang, which should be a strategic forum for participation, in many cases has become nothing more than an annual ritual without having a significant impact on final decision-making.

This shows that there is a gap between regulation and practice, caused by structural and cultural factors that still hinder substantive participation. Therefore, continuous efforts are needed to strengthen the role of society in order to create a democratic social order.

Method

This study uses library research with a qualitative approach. Library research is a technique for collecting data and information by examining various books, literature, notes, and reports related to the problem to be solved (Mestika, 2017). This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to analyze the concept of community participation in depth through theoretical studies and empirical findings from various studies that have been conducted in Indonesia. The data sources in this study consist of secondary data obtained from books, scientific journals, and policy documents. Data collection was carried out through documentation studies by identifying literature sources relevant to the research topic and collecting literature from various online journals, digital libraries, and academic databases. Literature selection was based on the following criteria: publications within the last 10 years (2015-2025), relevance to the topic, and credibility of the source. Recording and coding data from various literature sources.

Results and Discussion

The Concept of Community Involvement in Public Activities as a Manifestation of Active and Responsible Citizenship

Community participation can be understood as the active involvement of citizens in various aspects of public life, from planning and implementation to the evaluation of development programs. Kusmanto (2014) emphasizes that public political participation is closely related to a country's democracy, where sovereignty lies in the hands of the people and is exercised through joint activities to determine the goals and future of the nation. In the context of development, participation is active involvement in the process of determining the direction and strategy of development policies implemented by the government.

Active and responsible citizenship cannot be separated from community participation. The actualization of Pancasila in Indonesian society requires the active participation of the community as agents of change who participate in maintaining and developing these values (CAUSA, 2024). Mechanisms such as public meetings, group discussions, and consultations can provide a forum for the community to voice their aspirations and views regarding proposed policies. In this context, the community is not only the beneficiary but also an agent of change that participates in preserving and developing the nation's philosophical heritage.

Based on a review of the literature, public participation has three important dimensions. First, political participation is a voluntary activity of the public in taking part in the process of electing leaders and being involved either directly or indirectly in the formulation of public policy (Surbakti, 2010). Second, social participation places the community as a party involved in the development process, starting from consultation or decision-making in all stages of the development project cycle. Third, citizen participation emphasizes the direct participation of citizens in decision-making in government institutions and processes, shifting the concept of participation towards various forms of citizen involvement in policy-making and decision-making in various key arenas that affect their lives.

Forms of Community Involvement in Public Activities as a Manifestation of Active and Responsible Citizenship

The forms of community involvement in public activities can be categorized based on the following stages:

- During the planning stage, community involvement can be gauged by their attendance at socialization events, deliberations, counseling sessions, and training sessions held by the government, as well as their contribution of ideas in the formulation of program plans (Kompas.com, 2020).
- During the implementation phase, the community participates by providing labor, raising funds or donating cash, and other forms of contribution. Participation in the form of self-help, whether in the form of money, labor, goods, or ideas, minimizes construction costs while maximizing results (Aripin, 2018).
- In the utilization stage, community involvement can be seen through participation in creating a clean environment and utilizing development outcomes for mutual prosperity.
- In the evaluation stage, the community is involved in assessing the extent to which development implementation is in line with the plan and can encourage a more transparent and accountable development process.

Based on the type, community involvement can vary according to ability, including involvement in contributing ideas (contributing ideas and concepts), direct involvement with

labor (contributing labor in various activities), involvement by contributing property (contributing property or money), skills and abilities (encouraging various forms of business), and social participation (participating in social gatherings, cooperatives, and other social activities).

In Indonesia, community participation has been facilitated through various mechanisms such as Development Planning Consultative Meetings (Musrenbang), public consultation forums, participatory monitoring, and civic engagement in local communities (Muqorobin et al., 2024).

Implementation of Community Involvement in Governance and Development Practices in Indonesia

Study results Manganti (2023) revealed that the implementation of decentralized government has opened up wider opportunities for community involvement in the formulation and implementation of public policy, which was previously dominated by a centralized government system. Through a survey involving 87 respondents aged 16–50 years, it was found that the majority of the community showed compliance with the policies implemented, but the level of active involvement in providing input or participating in the policy formulation process was still relatively low. These findings confirm that the current form of community participation is still predominantly passive and does not yet reflect meaningful or substantive participation.

In the context of regional development, community involvement has shown positive results in several regions. Research Widodo (2018) An evaluation of community participation in infrastructure development shows that during the planning stage, community members participated by voicing their opinions and taking part in drafting program plans, while during the implementation stage, community members participated by providing labor, materials, donations, and logistics, which contributed to cost efficiency and the quality of development outcomes. Research Muqorobin et al. (2024) Regarding civic engagement, youth communities show that communities such as Human Initiative have successfully promoted values of social awareness, responsibility, and active participation through planned programs in the fields of education, humanitarianism, and economics with cross-sector collaboration strategies and fundraising that empower communities and offer concrete solutions to social challenges. Digital technology-based social transformation has also expanded access to information and increased community involvement in political discussions and social movements, as well as encouraging the emergence of new, more dynamic patterns of participation (Romadhona et al., 2023).

On the other hand, the implementation of participation in more specific areas of governance, such as public services, still shows variation. Research conducted by the State Administration Agency (LAN) of the Republic of Indonesia (2021) revealed that public participation in the formulation of Public Service Standards (SPP) in various regions is still very low.

This finding is in line with the aforementioned survey by the Indonesian Ombudsman, confirming that the existing space for participation has not been fully utilized by local governments to optimally listen to the aspirations of the community. As a result, many of the Service Standards that have been developed do not truly reflect the needs and expectations of the public, which in turn can affect the quality of the services themselves.

However, promising practices have also emerged from the village level, which has been given broader authority through the Village Law. Prasetyo et al. (2022) In his research in several villages in Central Java, he found that the participation mechanism through Village Consultative Meetings (Musdes) in planning the use of Village Funds showed significant results. In villages with responsive leadership and communities with critical awareness,

Musdes succeeded in becoming a productive arena for negotiation. The community not only attended, but actively voiced their development priorities, such as basic infrastructure improvements and economic empowerment programs, which were then accommodated in the Village Government Work Plan (RKPDes). This study shows that when authority and resources are provided along with adequate community capacity and local leadership, substantive participation can be realized.

Riyanto and Kovalenko (2023) emphasizes that active community participation plays an important role in realizing a welfare state, where participation can help ensure that government policies truly represent the interests of the people and provide maximum benefits for the welfare of the community.

Strategies to Strengthen Community Involvement as a Form of Active and Responsible Citizenship

Strengthening community involvement as a form of active and responsible citizenship requires a comprehensive strategy involving various approaches. Strategies to increase community capacity can be carried out through education to raise citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities in development through socialization, training, and public campaigns (Desa Cikoneng, n.d.).

Community empowerment must be sustainable, democratic, and equitable, applying the principles of voluntarism, autonomy, self-reliance, egalitarianism, democracy, openness, togetherness, accountability, and decentralization (Bakri, 2017). Strengthening civic education plays an important role in sustainable development by developing citizenship competencies, civic participation skills, and character building for citizens, which includes aspects of *Civic Knowledge, Civic Skills*, and *Civic Disposition* (Gultom et al., 2024).

Institutional strengthening strategies include bureaucratic reform and increased transparency, whereby the government needs to strengthen coordination and collaboration with the community in planning and implementing welfare programs and ensuring transparency and accountability in managing public resources (Riyanto & Kovalenko, 2023).

The government needs to create space and provide mechanisms to manage community participation, both at the central and regional levels, such as recruiting volunteers for various development programs and motivating at-risk groups (Kemkes, 2021). Strengthening the smallest government structures such as RT, RW, hamlets, villages, or kampungs aims to reinforce community-based development programs, so that information can be conveyed to individuals, families, and social structures in the community.

The strategy of utilizing technology through the digitization of participation can expand community access to participation, where digital platforms and social media are used as new channels for the community to voice their aspirations and exercise oversight (Romadhona et al., 2023).

The development of a transparent and accessible e-government system and the implementation of open government data enable the public to access public information and participate in policy oversight. Participatory development strategies apply a bottom-up

approach in which proposals from the community become important inputs in regional development efforts, implementing a community development model that relies on the utilization of community potential with the support of government facilitation (Daroini, 2018), and encouraging multi-stakeholder collaboration between the government, civil society, the private sector, and community organizations that have proven effective in empowering communities (Muqorobin et al., 2024).

The role of political parties and community organizations is strengthened by democratizing internal party processes in the selection of public candidates, leadership selection, and policy formulation, as well as strengthening the function of community organizations in *electoral activity, lobbying, organizational policy making*, and *social empowering* (Ghafur & Wardhana, 2021; Randiawan, et al., 2023). Strategy to increase public trust through accountability and responsiveness by establishing an effective oversight system and ensuring that the government is responsive to the aspirations of the people, where community control mechanisms play an important role in realizing transparency and accountability (Aripin, 2018). Effective communication between the government and the public is key to increasing participation, where dialogical two-way communication can build trust and raise public awareness of the importance of their role in the development process and in the life of the nation and state.

Conclusion

Infrastructure and community empowerment programs. Through community groups, young people have contributed significantly to building stronger active and responsible citizen engagement. Digital transformation also opens up new opportunities for more dynamic participation. However, the level of active participation in policy formulation still needs to be improved because the community tends to be more compliant with existing policies than actively involved in their creation. Community participation is a concrete manifestation of active and responsible citizenship. Within the framework of Indonesian democracy, participation is not only understood as a political right in general elections, but also includes substantive involvement in all stages of development, from planning, implementation, utilization of results, to evaluation. The era of decentralization has expanded the space for public participation in the formulation and implementation of public policies. Participation practices in various regions have shown positive results, especially in infrastructure development and community empowerment programs.

References

Aripin, A. (2018). Pentingnya Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pembangunan. Jurnal Pembangunan Masyarakat, 5(2), 112-125.

Bakri, R. (2017). Pemberdayaan Masyarakat: Konsep dan Strategi. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321224287

Budiardjo, M. (2008). Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama

CAUSA. (2024). Aktualisasi Pancasila dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Indonesia. CAUSA: Jurnal Hukum dan Kewarganegaraan, 2(3), 571-589.

Daroini, A. (2018). Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Berbasis Potensi Lokal. Jurnal Pengembangan Masyarakat, 3(1), 45-58

Dwiyanto, A., et al. (2022). Reinvensi Birokrasi: Memperkuat Partisipasi Publik dalam Tata Kelola Pemerintahan. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.

Gultom, V. F., Suparman, & Sari, D. P. (2024). Peran Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan dalam Pembangunan Berkelanjutan. Jurnal Pendidikan Kewarganegaraan, 11(1), 89-102.

Ghafur, A., & Wardhana, A. (2021). Penguatan Peran Partai Politik dalam Meningkatkan Partisipasi Politik Masyarakat. Jurnal Politik dan Pemerintahan, 8(2), 156-170.

Priyono, E. A. (2020). Partisipasi Publik dalam Perencanaan Pembangunan: Mengkritisi Efektivitas Musrenbang. Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik, 24(1), 67-82.

Manganti, G. S. (2023). Analisis Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pelaksanaan Kebijakan Publik. De Cive: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Pancasila dan Kewarganegaraan, 3(11), 380-389.

Mashuri, M. (2014). Partisipasi Masyarakat sebagai Upaya Pembangunan Demokrasi. Menara Riau, 13(2), 178-186.

Mestika, Z. (2017). Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan. Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.

Muqorobin, M., Isnaini, M., & Rahmawati, D. (2024). Civic Engagement dan Penguatan Civil Society: Studi Kasus Komunitas Jakarta Mengabdi. Jurnal Kajian Masyarakat Sipil, 6(2), 234-250

Randiawan, R., Suryadi, K., & Nur, M. (2023). The Concept of Democracy Education as an Effort for Developing The Political Culture of Participating Communities. International Journal Pedagogy of Social Studies, 8(1), 1-8.

Romadhona, H., Zulfairah, Sadewa, I., & Rustam, K. A. S. (2023). Transformasi Sosial dan Perubahan Politik di Era Digital Serta Dampaknya terhadap Partisipasi Kewarganegaraan. Jurnal Greenation Sosial dan Politik, 1(3), 119-126.

Riyanto, M., & Kovalenko, V. (2023). Partisipasi masyarakat menuju negara kesejahteraan: memahami pentingnya peran aktif masyarakat dalam mewujudkan kesejahteraan bersama. Jurnal Pembangunan Hukum Indonesia, 5(2), 374-388.

Samudra Biru. (2021). Demokrasi dan Civil Society: Inovasi Tata Kelola Pemerintahan dan Peran Masyarakat Sipil di Indonesia. Samudra Biru.

Surbakti, R. (2010). *Memahami Ilmu Politik*. Jakarta: Grasindo.

Ombudsman Republik Indonesia. (n.d.). Laporan Hasil Survei Kepatuhan Terhadap Standar Pelayanan. Jakarta: Ombudsman Republik Indonesia.

Kompas.com. (2020). Bentuk Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pembangunan. Diakses dari https://www.kompas.com

Kusmanto, H. (2014). Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Demokrasi Politik. JPPUMA: Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan dan Sosial Politik UMA, 2(1), 78-90.

Lisa, M., & Kurnia, H. (2023). Upaya Meningkatkan Pendidikan Indonesia Berdasarkan Nilai-Nilai Pancasila. Jurnal Kewarganegaraan, 7(1), 477-487.

Undang-Undang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 1945

Undang-Undang No. 25 Tahun 2004 tentang Sistem Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional.

Undang-Undang No. 6 Tahun 2014 tentang Desa.

Widodo, S. (2018). Evaluasi Partisipasi Masyarakat dalam Pembangunan Infrastruktur Desa. Jurnal Pembangunan Wilayah dan Kota, 14(3), 198-212.