



# Journal of Social and Political Sciences

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**Zulkarnain, Lubis, D. P., Satria, A., & Hubeis, M. (2023). The Strategy of Empowerment Communication to Fish Farmer of Catfish (*Pangasius hypophthalmus*) in the Village of Indonesia: Case Study in Koto Mesjid Village, Kampar Regency, Riau Province. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*, 6(2), 172-187.**

ISSN 2615-3718

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1991.06.02.418

The online version of this article can be found at:  
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

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Published by:  
The Asian Institute of Research

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# The Strategy of Empowerment Communication to Fish Farmer of Catfish (*Pangasius hypophthalmus*) in the Village of Indonesia: Case Study in Koto Mesjid Village, Kampar Regency, Riau Province

Zulkarnain<sup>1</sup>, Djuara P. Lubis<sup>2</sup>, Arif Satria<sup>2</sup>, Musa Hubeis<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Social Economic of Fisheries, Faculty of Fisheries and Marine affairs, Riau University

<sup>2</sup> Postgraduate School, Bogor Agricultural University

## Abstract

The research about strategy of empowerment communication to fish farmer was conducted in Koto Mesjid Village of Indonesia with the aim of formulating a communications strategy for fish farmer's empowerment in the production and marketing of aquaculture efforts. The method for determining the strategy was designed based on the results of the analysis of communication behavior of fish farmers in empowerment activities around fish farmers, information access and control, production and marketing behavior, opinions from key informants, field facilitators, and fish farmers as administrators of PT Telkom's fostered partners. To facilitate strategy formulation, the design of a communication strategy uses a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The results of the research explain that the formulation of the strategy for empowering fish farmers in Koto Mesjid Village is through participatory empowerment communication, including: (1) utilizing the power of communication networks in an effort to form cooperative institutions (2) increasing the capacity of fish farmers characteristics through training and mentoring activities (3) implementing aquaculture business by utilizing production facilities, using appropriate and sustainable technology; (4) increasing the capacity and optimizing the performance of field facilitator in accordance with the standard facilitator performance to facilitate togetherness and independence of aquaculture businesses (5) increasing access to production information and building broad market access so that they have a bargaining position on product prices and are sustainable with government support; (6) implementing regular evaluation and monitoring of production and marketing of aquaculture business activities.

**Keywords:** Strategy, Communication, Empowerment, Fish Farmers, Village

## 1. Introduction

The communication strategy must be able to show how operational it is practically carried out, in the sense that the word approach can differ at any time depending on the situation and conditions (Effendy, 1990). In simple terms, a communication strategy can be formulated by examining Lasswell's theory in depth which includes: Who? Says what? In which channel? To whom? With what effect? To communicate appropriately according to the existing media, face-to-face communication and communication with the media can be used. Face-to-face communication plays a role in changing behavior, and media communication is for informative communication (Muhammad 2004).

The strategy contains two components, namely: (1) Future Intentions or long-term goals and (2) competitive advantage or competitive advantage (Dirgantoro, 2001). The development communication strategy will have a positive impact if the goals of the development program can be achieved and changes in the behavior of the target audience as the ultimate goal can be observed and measured. Its achievements are characterized by: (1) the emergence of public awareness to understand the benefits of innovation, (2) the embodiment of concrete community actions in the form of adopting these innovations, and (3) the emergence of quality human resources as a result of adopting innovations. While the criteria for success are: (1) the existence of elements of understanding, concern, and the ability of the community to select and implement various innovations, (2) active commitment and agreement to increase the success of various dimensions of development programs, and (3) a better life (Hubies, A.V., et al., 1995).

According to Melkote (2006) communication expert Rogers made a major contribution to the development of agricultural development communication through various studies on the diffusion of innovation, participation, empowerment, and social change in society. According to Chambers (1995) community empowerment is a concept of economic development that encapsulates social values. Community empowerment is a development strategy that focuses on the interests and needs of the people that lead to community independence, network participation and justice (Hikmat, 2004).

In an effort to empower catfish farmers in Koto Mesjid village, Kampar Regency, it is necessary to design a communication strategy for the right catfish farmers, so that the business can develop and be capable, independent and prosperous.

### *1.1. Problem Statement*

Based on the background, the formulation of this research problem is: How to formulate a communication strategy for empowering fish farmers in rural of Indonesia, especially in the Village of Koto Mesjid ?

### *1.2. Research Objectives*

This study aims to formulate a communication strategy for empowering fish farmers in rural of Indonesia, especially in the village of Koto Mesjid

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Communication strategy in empowerment*

The results of Kifli's research (2007) from the results of his research on empowering the Dayak community explained that the communication strategy that needs to be developed to empower traditional leaders as liaison persons is in the form of empowering community group communication. Group communication that can be developed is in the form of empowering group meetings within the community by developing a pattern of participatory delivery of opinions by all members of the meeting. These traditional meetings can be in the form of traditional parties, traditional ceremonies or traditional meetings that are routine or temporary. Through traditional meetings guided by influential traditional leaders in the community, various matters other than customary issues can be conveyed and discussed. In this way, it is hoped that a common understanding will be reached about a matter or problem within the members of the community. In order for the resulting decisions to be mutually agreed upon by all components of the community, these meetings must take place in a participatory atmosphere.

Noor (2008) in the results of his research on community development communication strategies at the center of fisheries explained that to develop villages, especially fishing communities, a participatory model approach and the principle of integration are needed. This participatory approach is through efforts to mobilize the most basic forms of group organization together with their participation to build themselves and their environment. The principle of integration means vertical and horizontal. Vertical integration is related to the fisheries production

chain in terms of resource management, catching, processing, marketing, including shipbuilding and workshops. Horizontal integration in relation to the mobilization of supporting resources outside fisheries such as PAM, electricity, markets, health, education and so on.

Furthermore, Rangkuti (2009a) in his study of communication strategies to build food self-sufficiency explained that to empower rural farmers, a strategy for developing a cooperative organizational communication model is needed with a complete set of supporting elements packaged in an integrated program so that all stakeholders can play a role through an effective information communication network and efficient.

The research results of Masrurah, (2010) regarding the development communication model in disseminating village regulations by conducting case studies in Sidomukti Village, Plaosan District, Magetan Regency, East Java explained that there were three issues that were studied in the study, namely: 1) what was the background to the village regulation Wilwamati; 2) what is the development communication process used in disseminating village regulations, 3) what factors support the implementation of the natural village regulation. From the results of this study it was found that: 1) the background of the Perdes is due to the large number of children who watch television while studying so that a pattern of dependence forms within them; 2) the communication model used in disseminating village regulations is a one-way communication model, a two-way communication model and a Westley and Maclean communication model where all of these models can be summed up as a multi-stage communication model, while there are 2 forms of communication used, namely interpersonal communication and communication groups, whose nature is persuasive; and 3) the factors that support the implementation of village regulations are three factors, namely, (a) the role of the village government, (b) community participation, (c) the achievement factor increases.

## *2.2. Communication and Community Empowerment*

Communication that contains various development information, including from the reverse side, should communicate about the problems and needs of local communities from below, this is important in fisheries development. Every communication strategy should be based on various assumptions and requires certain conditions.

Community empowerment is an important thing to do because through empowerment community life can be better, if empowerment is carried out in accordance with participatory empowerment procedures and models that can be used as a reference for implementing activities, especially in fish farmers empowerment activities. In the concept of empowerment, according to Prijono and Pranarka (1996), humans are subjects of themselves. Empowerment process that emphasizes the process of giving the community the ability to become empowered, encouraging or motivating individuals to have the ability or empowerment to make life choices. It is further said that empowerment must be aimed at groups or layers of society that are left behind.

According to Sumodiningrat (1999), community empowerment is an effort to make people self-sufficient through the realization of their potential abilities. As for community empowerment, it always involves two interrelated groups, namely the community as the empowered party and the concerned party as the empowering party.

Empowerment as stated by Ife (1995) has two different concepts, namely power and disadvantage. First, empowerment is seen from the giving of power to individuals or groups. Allowing them to determine power in their own hands. Second, empowerment is seen from a lack of luck, this is more based on the social structure which results in the community not having adequate space to participate in the process of regional development. Empowerment is one of the goals of community development, by providing resources, opportunities, knowledge and skills to increase the capacity or ability to determine one's own future and to participate in influencing community life.

Several views on community empowerment are as follows (Ife 2002):

1. Structurally, empowerment is an effort to liberate, fundamentally structural transformation, and elimination of oppressive structures or systems.

2. Pluralism, empowerment as an effort to increase the power of a person or group of people to be able to compete with other groups in a certain 'rule of the game.'
3. Elitism, empowerment as an effort to influence elites, form alliances with these elites, and try to make changes to elitist practices and structures.
4. Post-Structuralist, empowerment is an effort to change discourse and respect subjectivity in understanding social reality.

The essence of the conceptualization of empowerment is centered on humans and humanity, in other words humans and humanity as normative, structural, and substantial benchmarks. Thus the concept of empowerment as an effort to build the existence of personal, family, community, nation, government, state and world order within the framework of a just and civilized humanity actualization process. Community empowerment is a concept of economic development that encapsulates social values. This concept reflects a new paradigm of development, namely one that is "people centered, participatory, empowering, and sustainable" (Chambers 1992).

Community empowerment is an effort to increase the dignity of layers of society who are currently unable to escape the trap of poverty and underdevelopment. In other words, empowerment is enabling and empowering the community. In an effort to empower the community can be seen from three sides, namely:

1. Creating an atmosphere or climate that allows the community's potential to develop (enabling). Empowerment is an effort to build this power by encouraging, motivating and raising awareness of its potential and trying to develop it.
2. Strengthening the potential or power possessed by the community (empowering) by providing input and opening access to various opportunities that will make the community empowered. Efforts that are very basic in empowerment are increasing the level of education, health status, and access to sources of economic progress such as capital, technology, information, employment, and markets. Development of basic physical infrastructure and facilities, such as irrigation, roads, electricity, as well as social services such as schools and health service facilities, which can be reached by the lowest strata of society, as well as the availability of funding, training and marketing institutions in rural areas, where the population is concentrated those whose empowerment is very lacking is also important to do. The most important aspect is increasing people's participation in decision-making processes that concern themselves and their communities. Community empowerment is very closely related to strengthening, civilizing and practicing democracy. Friedman (1992) states "The empowerment approach, which is fundamental to an alternative development, places the emphasis on an autonomy in the decision marking of territorially organized communities, local self-reliance (but not autarchy), direct (participatory) democracy, and experiential social learning."
3. Empowering also means protecting. In the process of empowerment, the weak must be prevented from getting weaker, due to their lack of power in the face of the strong. Community empowerment does not make people more dependent on various charity programs. This is because basically everything that is enjoyed must be produced on its own effort (which results can be exchanged with other parties).

Jan Servaes links the concept of empowerment in social planning and participatory communication to participation in collective decision-making. Empowerment ensures that people are able to help themselves.

One of the most widely used empowerment concepts today is empowerment as a central organizing concept. Power injustice is a central problem that must be solved in development. Furthermore, empowerment is defined as a process in which individuals and organizations gain more control and mastery of socio-economic conditions, with higher democratic participation in their own communities.

Community empowerment according to Friedmann (1992), is interpreted as gaining power and linking it to the ability of the poor to gain access to resources such as: social networks, social organizations, information, surplus time, means of production, knowledge and skills, living space that can be maintained, financial resources that form the basis of power in a system. This access is used to achieve independence in decision making.

Referring to the opinion of Friedmann (1992), the concept of empowerment can be defined as an effort (in the form of a process, strategy, program or method) aimed at helping the poor towards independence through redistributing the power needed, which can be realized through: mutual cooperation, cooperation, jointly agreed and supported group activities, partnerships and similar activities aimed at improving the welfare of individual members of society. This understanding of empowerment shows that empowerment is an appropriate process if applied to develop certain communities that are experiencing backwardness.

The concept of empowerment in community development discourse is always associated with the concept of independence, participation, networking and justice. Basically, empowerment is placed on individual and social strength. According to Hikmat (2001) empowerment implies a strong and strong mental attitude. Empowerment as a decision-making process by people who consequently implement the decision. People who have achieved collective goals are empowered through their independence and it is even necessary to be more empowered through their own efforts and the accumulation of knowledge, skills and other resources in order to achieve their goals (Hikmat, 2001).

Slamet (2003) defines empowerment as being able, empowered, understanding, understanding, motivated, having the opportunity, being able to take advantage of opportunities, having energy, being able to work together, knowing various alternatives, being able to make decisions, being willing to take risks, being able to find and capture information.

Forms of participatory development communication in the concept of empowerment according to Serveas (2002) include grassroots dialogue forums, new functions of communication in participatory media, knowledge-sharing on a co-equal base), and the development support communicator model (Development Support Communication). Grassroots dialogue is based on the rules of participation to bring together sources and agents of change directly with the community. The method used is awareness through dialogue. Furthermore, the community is invited to formulate problems and find solutions as well as carry out activities to solve problems. In this regard, the communicator also plays a role as a liberator of society in the development process.

### *2.3. Fish Farmers*

According to Law no. 45 of 2009. Fish farmers are people whose means of livelihood are cultivating fish. while small fish farmers are people whose livelihood is cultivating fish to fulfill their daily needs. Fish farming is an activity to raise, raise and/or breed fish and harvest the results in a controlled environment, including activities using ships to load, transport, store, cool, handle, process and/or preserve them.

Aquaculture business actors are divided based on several things depending on the scope of their business activities. According to Effendi and Oktariza (2006) in general, aquaculture actors are divided into five, namely: (1) Fish farmers, namely those who have fish production businesses with activities starting from preparation to post-harvest. Fish farmers are further divided into several categories, usually depending on: the type of fish cultivated (ornamental fish or consumption fish), business location (farmers operating brackish water ponds, seawater/mariculture farmers, freshwater farmers), production stage (hatchery farmers), , nursery, or enlargement). (2) Providers of production inputs, namely those in the downstream subsystem, such as fertilizer, pharmaceuticals, hatchery entrepreneurs, and production equipment entrepreneurs. (3) Fish processors, namely aquaculture business actors engaged in the business of processing basic fish products, for example processing meatballs, shredded meat, nuggets, fish sausages and so on. (4) Traders or distributors, who are engaged in the business of selling aquaculture products and their processed products. In the marketing chain, these actors range from collectors, wholesalers, to exporters and retailers. (5) Parties that support aquaculture activities that act as supporting factors for aquaculture business, such as financial institutions (banks, cooperatives, savings and loans, etc.), government seed supply institutions such as Fish Cultivation Development Centers and Fish Seed Centers (FCDC and FSC), raisers and others.

### 3. Research Methodology

This research was conducted from December 2014 to September 2015, which took place in the area of a center for cultivating catfish (*Pangasius hypophthalmus*) in a pond, to be precise, in Koto Mesjid Village, Kampar Regency, of Riau Province, Indonesia. The location determination in this study was carried out because this area was selected as a pilot area for aquaculture production centers in Riau Province of Indonesia. The place where fish farmers empowerment activities from the government and PT. Telkom. Defined as a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program area and as a CSR Award nominee in 2011.

The method for determining the strategy was designed based on the results of an analysis of the communication behavior of fish farmers in production and marketing activities in the scope of fish farmers, information access and control, production and marketing behavior, opinions from key informants, field facilitator, and fish farmers as administrators of PT Telkom's fostered partners.

To make it easier, the design of a communication strategy for empowering fish farmers uses Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis. The SWOT analysis is followed by setting priorities to achieve the goals.

This research was analyzed descriptively. Primary data collection was carried out through individual and group interviews with fish farmers. In addition, in order to further analyze the research findings, in-depth interviews were conducted with community leaders, village officials, the Fisheries Service, assistants, and fish farmers as administrators of PT Telkom's fostered partners, while secondary data was obtained through a review of documents and literature from various related sources.

### 4. Results and Discussion

Empowerment of fish farmers in Koto Mesjid Village is carried out through assistance with access to business capital development, provision of production inputs and development of other supporting infrastructure. This activity was carried out by the Kampar Regency Government and PT. Telkom as a way of developing the local economy at the village level with the intention of providing acceleration in the form of a stimulant that can drive local economic development so that it is hoped that there will be a strengthening of social capital in the community. Social capital is a system that refers to the results of social and economic organization, such as general view (world view), trust (trust), exchange (reciprocity), economic and information exchange (informational and economic exchange), formal and informal groups (formal and informal groups), as well as associations that complement other capital (physical, human, cultural) so as to facilitate collective action, economic growth and development (Colleta & Cullen 2000).

Empowerment of fish farmers is interpreted as a process of change towards a better direction aimed at transforming the behavior of fish farmers so that they are highly knowledgeable, positive, skilled and independent in running their business, so as to be able to make their business sustainable.

Sustainability means that the business continues to grow without neglecting environmental sustainability, and can improve the welfare of the fish cultivating family or community itself. Efforts to empower fish farmers can be developed by creating a conducive climate and synergistic cooperation between the various parties involved in aquaculture development, namely assistants or extension workers, fish farmers, and agribusiness institutions that facilitate aquaculture businesses, such as financial institutions that provide business capital, providers of production inputs, information providers, and institutions that market fish. In this case, the role of existing institutions for fish farmers is very important to increase the empowerment of fish farmers by utilizing the potential and functions of these various parties (Fatchiya 2010).

#### 4.1. Analysis of Fish Farmers business

The situation in Koto Mesjid Village, Kampar Regency, shows that the socio-economic level of the cultivating community has developed in a better direction, which is indicated by the high level of income and asset ownership in the aquaculture business. The majority of fish farmers are adequate in meeting their production input needs. This can be seen from the production activities, the availability of seeds, feed, fertilizers and medicines in the activities of raising fresh catfish. However, this existence is not evenly distributed among every fish farmers. Production inputs are controlled by fish farmers who have large capital, high incomes and have a respected position in their community. In the analysis of communication networks, it is known that some fish farmers who have the least communication interactions within their environment are those with low incomes and find it difficult to relate to their environment.

The communication network formed in the production and marketing activities of the aquaculture business in Koto Mesjid Village is interlocked due to the dominant role of several individuals in their environment. This dominant role causes dependence and difficulties for group members to develop to obtain information from many individuals in running their business. Fish farmers as group members will face several obstacles if the central individual in the environment is unable to be contacted so that it has an impact on the aquaculture activities they carry out.

The support of several government and private institutions in the development of agribusiness for fish cultivating businesses is only limited to running programs or projects. Thus the empowerment activities carried out are not in accordance with the expectations and goals of the empowerment itself. Empowerment of fish farmers has not been carried out intensively, this can be seen from the perceptions of fish farmers on the performance of government assistants who are still low, control over the supply of production inputs is dominated by only a few people, access to marketing is still dependent on collecting traders, and dependence on information from group administrators and influential individuals in their environment.

The low capability and bargaining position in the marketing activities of the production of aquaculture business, so that marketing problems are still encountered, including dependence on market prices, high factory feed prices causing low business profits, still low ability to plan and evaluate business. In general, knowing the current condition of fish farmers in Koto Mesjid Village can be explained as follows:

(1) Stopping the revolving of access assistance for business development capital assistance obtained from PT. Telkom due to several fish farmers unable to fulfill the obligation to pay off financing to PT. Telkom.

Based on the results of the interview with Mr. G explained:

*"Since the high price of feed on the market for fishery production, the current high cost of living, since then there have also been arrears in payment of access to capital financing from PT. Telkom. even though people say fish farmers here have a lot of money"*

(2) Availability of inputs for aquaculture production is sufficient, however, to increase the business scale, it is necessary to increase financing and adequate pond area. Until now, this is still not evenly distributed among fish farmers.

Interview with Mr. W. explained:

*"Fish farmers need an increase in business scale so that income and profits can be achieved more, but at this time we, on average, fish farmers still have capital that is still relatively unable to develop higher, the area of the pond is still limited, from PT. Telkom we only have a maximum of get maximum assistance of seventy million per fish farmers. We tried to apply for a loan from the bank, thank God Bank Nagari has opened up opportunities for us."*

(3) The performance of field facilitator assigned by the government, both those with the status of Civil Servants and contract field facilitator, is still low.

Interview with Mr SH explains:

*"Actually, we don't really know about the existence of assistants appointed by the government, such as PPL officers, they are very rare in this village, so for us, yes, it's hard to say they are working. How come, how come, why don't you do it?"*



(4) There are still individual fish farmers who have low income and low experience and have the least interaction with fellow fish farmers in their environment, resulting in weak ability to access production and marketing information in running the aquaculture business they are engaged in.

(5) The formal education of fish farmers is generally still in the moderate category, this causes the dependence of production and marketing knowledge and information on farmers with higher education and fish farmers group administrators.

(6) There is still little implementation of training activities related to the production and marketing activities of aquaculture businesses, such as training on Good Fish Cultivation Practices (GFCP) and training on financial management and systems for handling fishery products.

(7) Dependence on fish seed only from an individual provider of seed is a separate obstacle, especially when orders are abundant or when seed production is experiencing problems. So for the spread of seeds in fish ponds will also experience problems. Meaning that the availability of seeds still depends on several other individuals among fish farmers.

Interview with Mr W stated:

*"The attachment of fish farmers to seed providers like Mr SH in this area, no one has been able to match it, the quality of the seeds produced is of good quality and sufficient to accommodate the needs of us fish farmers."*

(8) The technical capability of fish hatchery, especially catfish requires special skills and expertise, so that in general fish farmers in this area are not able to carry out hatchery independently.

(9) Fish feed is also an obstacle that is always faced by fish farmers, especially price fluctuations. Prices often increase so that fish farmers experience a decrease in profits from their production. Artificial feed has been cultivated by fish farmers in Koto Mesjid Village but is still in the form of traditional technology so that the quality of the feed is not guaranteed. This situation will affect the quality of fish production produced.

The interview with Mr. G stated:

*"In mid-2012 to the end of 2013 fish farmers were faced with high feed prices, the artificial feeds that were available were not able to meet production needs, not to mention the quality was a bit lower than factory pellets. so that it has an effect on production, thank God since the beginning of 2104 yesterday artificial feed products have gotten better and fish prices have increased so that they are able to use factory pellets"*

(10) Water quality and fish disease are also problems faced by fish farmers. Fish farmers often face circumstances that are out of the ordinary, when the summer changes to the rainy season or vice versa.

(11) Until now, the marketing of fish cultivation business results still depends on collecting traders from outside the area and local collecting traders. This dependence causes fish farmers not to have a fishery market that has access to a wider range. This situation causes the profits obtained by fish farmers to be smaller than the profits obtained by collectors, both local and from outside the area.

(12) Fish farmers do not yet have a joint business in carrying out aquaculture activities. Especially the container of business results, providers of production facilities and infrastructure. This situation causes dependence on individual providers of seeds, fertilizers and other inputs. The absence of this institution makes the condition of fish farmers even though they are a group of fostered partners but they are still trying to work separately.

(13) The weak bargaining position of fish farmers in determining the price of fresh fish production, because fish produced by aquaculture in this area are still sold by each individual to local collectors and collectors from outside the area so that the price of fish is still determined by the collecting traders, based on existing market price. So it is very difficult for fish farmers to be able to regulate prices.

Interview with Mr D, stated:

*"The fresh catfish harvest in our area is sold to traders to collectors in this village and collectors from outside the area who go in and out of the village every day. Specifically for the collecting traders in this village, he processes it into smoked fish. Eighty percent of our catfish yields are purchased by local collectors, while the rest are from outside."*

(14) Fish farmers have not been able to expand their communication network to several other individuals, especially outside their environment. Weak relations with researchers, government assistants, service agencies and the mass media are problems that are still being faced by fish farmers. The low intensity of interaction with these parties and the lack of innovative technology offered is because fish farmers still rely on the existence of networks

in their environment. Most of the production and marketing information is obtained from fellow fish farmers, group leaders, and collectors.

(15) The low performance of local government assistance. This situation is due to the low competence of assistants, the readiness to provide assistants is only limited to projects and does not carry out assistance based on mentoring work standards. The assistant's knowledge of fish farming techniques is still low, often resulting in the assistant being unable to help solve the problems faced by fish farmers.

(16) The role of group leader as well as companion still has low dynamics. This situation causes the group to not become an effective interactive vehicle in the learning process or to strengthen bargaining positions. The group leader should be able to encourage fish farmers to become dynamic groups, to carry out group activities that are routine or periodic, to connect groups with stakeholders, researchers, aquaculture technicians and be able to motivate them to develop and progress.

(17) The condition of the area and the potential for business feasibility, both economically and ecologically, has a fairly good chance of business continuity, which is indicated by: high production and productivity of fish, high income of fish farmers, existence of groups, profits earned, availability of production assets such as ponds and a large area.

Based on the explanation that has been described, an analysis can be carried out to develop a communication strategy in setting the development goals for aquaculture business as expected by the government by seeking the development of the minapolitan area.

The goal of community development for fish farmers is formulated through a communication strategy to empower fish farmers based on the potential of aquaculture fisheries resources, the socio-economic characteristics of fishery business actors, communication networks in production and marketing activities, and the business climate which includes financial institutions, inputs production, information, and marketing in Kampar District.

Based on the above, the application of a communication strategy to empower fish farmers in the production and marketing activities of aquaculture businesses in Koto Mesjid Village was prepared and designed using SWOT analysis. This designed SWOT analysis is a systematic identification of various factors based on logic to formulate a communication strategy as a program. This analysis is obtained by maximizing the supporting factors but simultaneously minimizing the inhibiting factors.

Based on the preparation of the SWOT analysis that has been carried out, several strategies can be designed as a form of recommendations and formulations to overcome several problems related to community empowerment activities. Empowerment activities that refer to a good strategy will provide added value and towards program improvement and achievement of better empowerment results. Empowerment of fish farmers from a systems approach point of view can be carried out by referring to the existing situation in the fish cultivating community. Furthermore, the program can be implemented from available inputs, such as: fish cultivating organizations, government, fisheries assistants/extensions, researchers, and agribusiness support institutions. Based on the existing inputs, a participatory mentoring process is carried out to produce outputs as expected. The expected output of the assistance process carried out is the realization of fish farmers empowerment. In the end, the outcome (impact) from this external is the emergence of a sustainable business, namely a business that develops without neglecting environmental conditions, and increases welfare.

Table 1: SWOT analysis of the communication strategy for empowering fish farmers in the production and marketing of catfish farming in Koto Mesjid Village, Kampar Regency, Riau Indonesia

<p><b>Internal Factor</b></p> <p><b>Eksternal Factor</b></p>	<p><b>Strenght (S)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adequate income</li> <li>2. Availability of production inputs</li> <li>3. Potential and suitability of available land</li> <li>4. Productive age of fish farmers</li> <li>5. Performance of active self-help assistants</li> <li>6. Awareness of fish farmers towards new modern production technologies</li> <li>7. Strong communication network ties between fish farmers</li> <li>8. The standard of living and mindset of fish farmers are getting better</li> </ol>	<p><b>Weakness (W)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Land has not been optimally utilized</li> <li>2. The independence of fish farmers who still depend on the existence of self-help partners</li> <li>3. The low performance of field facilitator officers from the government</li> <li>4. Production and marketing technology is still simple</li> <li>5. Weak ability to distribute marketing only to collectors</li> <li>6. There are still limited economic institutions supporting the marketing of fishery products</li> <li>7. Cooperatives have not developed</li> <li>8. Lack of government support to stimulate and facilitate market access</li> </ol>
<p><b>Opportunity (O)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Natural environment and other supporting natural resources</li> <li>2. Improved technology, information and transportation facilities that support business development.</li> <li>3. An enabling climate for product development</li> <li>4. High public interest in product consumption</li> <li>5. Local government policies that support the development of aquaculture businesses</li> </ol>	<p><b>Strategy SO</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participatory empowerment of fish farmers</li> <li>2. Aquaculture business partnership</li> <li>3. Increasing access to productive assets, technology and management</li> <li>4. Business assistance to increase employment opportunities</li> <li>5. Fostering and developing fishery product processing businesses for joint business groups</li> </ol>	<p><b>Strategy WO</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Training, guidance and counseling in order to increase the independence of fish farmers.</li> <li>2. Optimizing the performance of mentoring/PPL from the government</li> <li>3. Improvement and development of fishery product processing business</li> <li>4. Increasing and expanding market access and assisted by local governments</li> <li>5. Formation of fish farmers cooperative institutions</li> </ol>
<p><b>Threat (T)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sudden change in water quality and attack of fish disease</li> <li>2. Formation of fish farmers groups that are not yet participatory and still seem forced, so that the process of institutional strengthening is not working.</li> <li>3. Dependence on providers of production inputs and collectors salesman</li> <li>4. Increasing production costs from year to year</li> <li>5. The price of production is still low because it depends on collectors salesman and the market</li> </ol>	<p><b>Strategy ST</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Intensification and extensification of the use of cultivation technology innovations</li> <li>2. Formation of joint business groups in participatory.</li> <li>3. Providing assistance to the marketing efforts of community business results</li> <li>4. Improvement and development of production technology to reduce production costs</li> <li>5. Improving product management and quality through product production and marketing training</li> </ol>	<p><b>Strategy WT</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participatory and responsible facilitation performance improvement</li> <li>2. Formation and institutional development of fish farmers cooperatives in terms of production and marketing of fishery products</li> <li>3. Increasing the partnership program through cooperative institutions with banks</li> <li>4. Development and strengthening of village economic institutional systems through fish farmers cooperation and local government facilitation</li> </ol>

Source: primer data analysis

#### 4.2. Communication strategy in empowering fish farmers

Communication strategy is the overall planning management of communications to achieve the desired communication effect. The effect of communication in development is defined as a communication situation that allows for conscious, critical, voluntary, genuine and responsible community participation (Hamijoyo 2001). The

formulation of a communication strategy is inseparable from understanding the elements involved in the communication process. Congestion and blockages in the communication process indicate that the communication strategy used is inappropriate. Based on the general conditions and problems contained in the network of production and marketing activities for aquaculture businesses, in realizing the empowerment of fish farmers in Koto Mesjid Village, a communication strategy was developed, namely:

#### 4.2.1 Participatory Communication Strategy

The participatory communication strategy emphasizes a balanced flow of two-way communication and is audience-oriented, in this case, fish farmers. The participatory communication paradigm explains that all people are invited to participate more in the communication process up to decision making. Development support communication is carried out in a horizontal communication model, communication interactions are carried out in a more democratic manner. In the process of communication, there is not only a source or receiver. The source is also the recipient, the recipient is also the source in the same position and at the same level. Therefore, communication activities are not giving and receiving activities but "sharing" or "dialogue." The contents of the communication are no longer "messages" designed by sources from above, but facts, events, problems, needs which are codified into "themes." And it is this theme that is highlighted, discussed and analyzed. All voices are heard and considered to be taken into consideration in decision making. So those involved in this communication model are no longer "sources and recipients" but participants" with one another (Wibowo 1994).

Participatory communication strategy is a new approach in development communication. The participatory approach is based on the spirit of togetherness in articulating and perceiving things in thoughts, attitudes and actions including ways of solving problems together. The concept of togetherness determines the purpose of the communication process so that all parties involved have the opportunity to exchange and negotiate the meaning of the message towards harmony and harmony of shared meaning. Because communication activities take place in public spaces, it allows everyone to access information and open dialogue equally (Dilla 2007).

The communication strategy in an effort to empower fish farmers that are deemed worthy of development is a participatory communication strategy that produces a balance in the perspective of exchange theory through established institutional channels supported by effective forms of transactional communication, both vertical and horizontal in the fisheries socio-economic system.

The intended participatory communication strategy is institutional development and organization of fish farmers to form a partnership pattern. Cooperatives can be used as a forum that supports the partnership pattern to support the interests of its members (fish farmers). To build effective and efficient cooperatives, the fisheries cooperative model with catfish as the main commodity is an alternative that can be developed to accelerate the development of a modern fisheries business with the support of a fisheries communication information system. Fishery cooperatives with superior catfish commodities that are oriented towards empowerment, welfare, independence and fairness among fish farmers in rural areas, especially Koto Mesjid Village, will be able to encourage the emergence of reliable cooperatives in development.

Based on the SWOT analysis and explanation above, a communication strategy draft for empowering fish farmers in the production and marketing of fishery products is proposed, namely:

- (1) Utilizing the power of communication networks in the effort to form cooperative institutions that have the principle of togetherness to create independent, prosperous and just fish farmers.
- (2) Increasing the characteristic capacity of fish farmers through training and mentoring activities for fish farmers.
- (3) Carry out aquaculture business activities by utilizing production facilities, using appropriate and sustainable technology.
- (4) Increasing the capacity and optimizing the performance of field assistants in assisting fish farmers in accordance with mentoring performance standards, to facilitate togetherness and independence of aquaculture businesses within the scope of fish farmers.
- (5) Increasing access to production information and building broad market access in order to have a bargaining position on product prices and be sustainable with government support.

(6) Implement periodic evaluation and monitoring of production and marketing activities of aquaculture business. Utilizing the power of communication networks in an effort to form cooperative institutions that have the principle of togetherness.

4.2.2. Utilizing the power of communication networks in an effort to form cooperative institutions that have the principle of togetherness.

The strategy for realizing prosperous and independent fish farmers needs to be done through the establishment of strong socio-economic institutions in the form of fish cultivator cooperatives. Fish farmers need to get good attention from various groups, especially the group administrators and the fish farmers themselves.

Institutions that are formed between fish farmers can be used as a place to build collaborative training and mentoring activities with various institutions, both government and private agencies. A strong institution will pay attention to the resources of its members, so that the success of members is mutual success and progress.

Through the development of cooperatives that have a clear vision and mission, efforts to increase the ability of individual fish farmers can be increased. Some of the characteristics of fish farmers who have lower formal education, lower income and have few assets, in their environment are generally very less able to get new information, lack of relationships with each other, they generally tend to experience difficulties in carrying out business functions and solving problems. For this reason, attention is needed with the formation of socio-economic institutions so that they can carry out business activities both through individual fish cultivator cooperation and cooperation with banking partnership institutions or other business institutions. So that individual and group problems can be resolved for all levels of fish cultivating society, and no individual community is "left out."

Fish farmers, especially the management of the Foster Partner Forum of PT Telkom, have an important role in determining the sustainability of their members' businesses, especially in maintaining togetherness and motivation within the group as well as environmental sustainability. The chairman of the forum has a role in initiating the formation of fish cultivator cooperative institutions. The role of institutional administrators for fish farmers in villages designated as fisheries center areas in Kampar Regency plays the role of star, cosmopolite and opinion leader. Therefore, empowerment activities that involve institutional administrators should be directed at creating togetherness and the interests of equal distribution of benefits received by members. The existence of an institutional chairman is needed and it is hoped that his awareness will be for the benefit and benefit of all members. Leadership training and management of social institutions need to be initiated by farmers.

Empowerment of fish farmers through institutions is very important, because the existence of institutions is an effective learning platform for the realization of the empowerment and independence of fish farmers. Interaction between fish farmers can share knowledge and experience. Member solidarity in high institutions can create institutions as a forum for sharing and strengthening each other so that fish farmers have a bargaining position in various activities, especially in marketing fishery products.

4.2.3. Increasing the knowledge capacity of fish farmers through training and mentoring activities

Fish farmers continue to improve their knowledge and skills in the field of aquaculture with limited existing facilities, knowledge of good cultivation, pests and diseases must be continuously developed. Communication networks between fish farmers, either face-to-face or with the benefit of communication technology, can be implemented to improve the ability of each fish cultivator to access various information about aquaculture business.

4.2.4. Development of aquaculture business activities by utilizing production facilities, using appropriate and sustainable technology.

Fish farmers in carrying out their business should be really diligent and take advantage of existing production facilities. The land area can be used for pond expansion, the quality of making traditional feed which is relatively

cheaper needs to be improved, the seed stocking density using the cultivation technology system is twice the stocking density, some of which are harvested when they are still of medium size, then the results obtained can be used as an additional production cost for the remaining stocking density, so as to produce optimal fish production which is expected to be sustainable.

#### 4.2.5. Improvement of Field facilitators Performance and Communication Network

The companion role is very important in empowering fish farmers. Facilitators should be able to manage programs from planning to monitoring and evaluation, developing community organizations in the form of fish cultivating institutions, KUB, to developing networks such as fish cultivator forums or marketing networks, which are accompanied by local leadership training so they can manage these organizations. well. Assistance must strive for empowerment by accompanying the process of forming and organizing community groups as facilitators, communicators or dynamics and helping to find ways to solve problems that cannot be done by the community alone. Assistance personnel must have four characteristics, namely: (1) must be skilled in solving problems (problem solving), (2) must care and have partiality to the empowered community (sense of community), (3) must have a vision (sense of mission) , and (4) must be honest with oneself and with others (honesty with others and with self).

The role of the companion in learning is not to be a teacher who transfers knowledge to his students, but the companion should be a motivator and facilitator who arouses interest in learning and explores the knowledge and experience of the fish farmers themselves.

Extension institutions play an important role in improving the performance or competence of fisheries assistants/extensioners. The Extension Agency and Regional Development Planning Agency of Kampar Regency Riau Indonesia, which facilitates the availability of field facilitators as the person in charge of counseling/assistance activities at the district level has not yet materialized in Kampar Regency, so it is still in the process of being consolidated as an organization. Related to this, it is necessary to accelerate integration in mentoring and counseling in Kampar Regency. So that empowerment and service activities for fish cultivating communities can run faster and better.

The communication network in the production and marketing activities of aquaculture business is determined by the cooperation and interaction between individual fish farmers. Communication networks play many roles in the transfer of information and knowledge. The communication network that is formed cannot be separated from the role and performance of the assistants, especially in the application of production technology and harvest handling for fish farmers. The assistance that is carried out is based on a participatory paradigm from all parties involved in dialogic assistance and communication activities. This paradigm is reflected in various forms, both from the role of fish farmers and assistants, learning processes, mentoring methods, activity materials, information sources, and forms of cooperation between fish farmers.

Dialogical and convergent communication between fish farmers, assistants and related agencies is reciprocal communication, understanding each other's intentions and providing mutual benefits.

#### 4.2.6. Increased access to broad production and marketing information so that they have a bargaining position on product prices and are sustainable with government support.

Economic institutions providing marketing production and distribution infrastructure facilities play an important role in empowering fish farmers. As a provider of production inputs and harvest containers or as a marketing agency. Institutional support for production and marketing, especially in providing broodstock, seeds and accommodating production results, is an important factor in increasing the capacity of fish farmers and the sustainability of their businesses. So far, the majority of fish farmers have obtained brood stock and seeds as the main input for aquaculture from the Graha Pratama Fish Hatchery Unit (FHU), but the seeds produced are still unable to meet the demands of fish farmers, due to the large number of requests from various regions. Institutions that play a role in providing superior broodstock and seeds include BBAT and BBI Kampar Regency. However,

the function of these two institutions to provide superior seeds in sufficient quantities is not optimal. Production and quality are relatively low, less competitive than the Graha Pratama Fish Hatchery Unit. For this reason, the production capacity of BBAT and BBI should be increased.

So far, marketing institutions for fish cultivation products have focused on collecting traders, so the selling price of fish is determined by the buyer and market conditions. Fish farmers do not have a bargaining power over price determination. The institutional role that plays a role in accommodating harvests should be the existence of fish cultivator cooperatives, which are engaged in serving members to meet production and marketing needs.

Government support in seeking to expand production and marketing capabilities for fish cultivating cooperative institutions is urgently needed, the government can play its role through regulations and policies by issuing regional regulations and market facilities and establishing regional cooperation to expand market access as an effort to distribute fishery products. So that fish farmers are expected to be able to have a better bargaining position from the products they produce.

#### 4.3. Output

The expected output from aquaculture business activities carried out by fish farmers is the realization of better and better quality business empowerment and sustainability. This is marked by a change in the standard of living and the mindset of fish farmers towards a more stable one. Fish farmers become prosperous, independent and fair businesses so that they are able to carry out business functions, plan and evaluate businesses, solve problems, and adapt to changes that occur in their surroundings. Through the role of communication networks in accelerating changes in the standard of living and the mindset of fish farmers in running their business, it is hoped that they will become fish farmers as well as entrepreneurs who are well-established and prosperous, independent and just.

The independence of fish farmers in their business is shown by several characteristics including: (1) a change in the standard of living and behavior towards a better direction; (2) able to establish cooperative communication networks with fellow members of fish farmers or other individuals within and outside their environment; (3) have the ability and skills to carry out technical production and marketing of fishery with quality results and understand and know the solutions to environmental changes that occur; (4) ability in financial management, such as being able to make business plans, a simple profit and loss balance sheet, being able to develop business capital to become larger; (5) able to organize and manage the workforce; (6) taking into account the conditions and market demand for the production produced; (7) able to evaluate production and marketing conditions appropriately; (9) continue to strive for innovation and explore new information; (10) making constraints an opportunity to find new ideas in the business at hand; (12) prepare possible obstacles that occur as a basis for learning to be more developed and advanced; (13) be responsible and courageous towards the possible risks that will be faced.

#### 4.4. Outcome (Impact)

The impact (outcome) that occurs as a result of empowering fish farmers is a change in the standard of living and mindset in a better direction. The expected changes are business continuity, increased welfare, independence and fair business. To realize this, fish farmers need to pay attention to their business activities in an integrated manner, starting from planning, monitoring and evaluating the benefits and risks that will be faced. Business sustainability can be achieved if fish farmers pay attention to this, coupled with the condition of the carrying capacity of the environment.

Business continuity will be marked by: increased standard of living, including increased income, increased savings, increased average production and business scale as well as improved infrastructure. Sustainability of the carrying capacity of the environment is indicated by: availability and quality of pool water, pest and disease control. Social sustainability is marked by an increase in the mindset of fish farmers, which is characterized by an increase in children's education, an increase in individual knowledge, an increase in technology adoption, health, self-confidence and an increase in access to information in communication networks that are mutually beneficial and fair within and outside the environment.

#### 4.5. Carry out evaluation and monitoring

Monitoring and evaluation activities are aimed at correcting errors and discrepancies that occur during business implementation, in order to return to the plan that has been determined from the start. The results of monitoring and evaluation are in the form of recommendations for improvements in production and marketing activities. This recommendation can be used as material to improve planning and further development efforts for aquaculture business. Based on the explanation of the fish cultivator empowerment system above, policies and strategies for empowering fish farmers in production and marketing activities are emphasized through the role of networks in realizing changes in the standard of living and mindset of fish farmers.

Empowerment of fish farmers in the long term as something to be expected and achieved in the future is the realization of a fish cultivating society that is prosperous, independent and just in its business and the sustainability of the business being carried out. Meanwhile, in the medium term, the policy formulated is to improve the quality of life of fish farmers, both in carrying out their business functions, solving problems, planning and evaluating businesses, as well as adapting to changes in their surroundings. In the short term, this policy goal is achieved through changes in the standard of living and mindset of fish farmers, especially income, employment opportunities, adoption of technology, infrastructure and knowledge.

### 5. Conclusion

Based on the results and explanations that have been prepared, it can be concluded that the communication strategy for empowering fish farmers in the production and marketing activities of aquaculture business in Koto Mesjid Village is outlined in the step of revitalizing the concept of development communication by improving the performance of participatory empowerment communication which includes: (1) utilizing the strength of the communication network in the effort to form cooperative institutions that have the principle of togetherness to create independent, prosperous and just fish farmers; (2) increasing the characteristic capacity of fish farmers through training and mentoring activities for fish farmers; (3) carrying out aquaculture business activities by utilizing production facilities, using appropriate and sustainable technology; (4) capacity building and performance optimization of field assistants in assisting fish farmers.

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